

**PROGRESSIVE MASSACHUSETTS  
2018 CONGRESSIONAL  
ENDORSEMENT QUESTIONNAIRE**



**Date:** 7/12/2018

**Candidate:** Bopha Malone

**Office Sought:** US House of Representative MA3 District

**Party:** Democrat

**Website:** [www.BophaForCongress.com](http://www.BophaForCongress.com)

**Twitter:** @BophaMalone

**Facebook:** @BophaForCongress

**Other Social Media:** Instagram: BophaMalone

Email questions to [elections@progressivemass.com](mailto:elections@progressivemass.com).

*Questionnaire Responses (excepting sections labeled CONFIDENTIAL) will be published on our website.*



## **I. About You**

**1. Why are you running for office? And what will your top 3 priorities be if elected?**

My top priorities when elected will be education, immigration, and health care.

The secret to the American Dream is simple: it means access to good paying jobs, education and healthcare. I am running to ensure that everyone has the freedom to achieve their American Dream, just like I did. I came to the United States at age 9, as a refugee, with nothing but the clothes on my back, and no ability to speak English. I have been proud to achieve the American Dream because America offered me and my family a lifeline and because of good organizations and mentors while I was growing up.

But more and more, the American Dream is out of reach for most people. As a vice president at Enterprise Bank, I worked closely with underserved communities, offering them access to banking and to resources to turn ideas into businesses. I also am called to give back to the Lowell community, that has given me so much. I am a community activist. I serve on several boards,

including Middlesex Community College, Lesley University (my alma mater), Lowell General Hospital, and Girls Inc., and Women Working Wonders to ensure that diverse voices are heard. I also chaired the Cambodian Mutual Assistance Association, organization that helps Cambodians and other immigrants through social and economic programs.

These experiences have shown me that there are so many people being under or not represented, and I want to give a voice to those who have been overlooked, so that they too can achieve what they seek.

## 2. What prepares you to serve in this capacity?

For over ten years, I have worked and served my community. Through my job, I have helped thousands of people buy their first homes and build their businesses. In addition, I have been very effective in advocating for others and I believe I can do this on a larger scale. For example, within the Acre Neighborhood in Lowell, we have seen a community go through cycles of poverty and housing crises. I worked with the city to acquire a \$475k grant; in little over a year, we have seen an increase in job training and placement programs. There is a measurable difference in the understanding of the importance of early childhood readiness. Civic engagement is on the rise in this community, and the residents are able to advocate for themselves. As a trustee of Middlesex Community College, it was clear that the student body needed financial support just to manage day to day issues like housing and groceries. I advocated and received a 1.7mm federal grant that assisted the Asian Native American Pacific Islander students, who were frequently lacking general financial support.

I want to do more, and I believe that my daily experience as an advocate for those without a strong voice will benefit our entire district when I'm elected.

## II. The Issues

*Our questionnaire is based on our Progressive Platform: Shared Prosperity, All Means All/Racial and Social Justice, Good Government and Strong Democracy, and Sustainable Infrastructure and Environmental Protection.*

*Each section begins with an open-ended question about a plank in our platform. The subsequent questions will be mostly yes/no questions. In such cases, your response should begin with YES or NO. You are welcome to expand beyond just YES/NO to further elaborate on your position, but please keep answers < 150 words.*

### A. An Equitable Tax System

#### 1. What does tax justice mean to you?

Tax justice means that everyone pays their fair share. Corporations that earn more should reinvest more. Creating corporate welfare and giving the top 1% a tax break is not tax justice, and that's what the Trump administration did. A fair tax system would put working

class families first. We need more people in Congress that are NOT elites and can understand the struggles of working class and low income families – not special interests.

2. **Financial Transaction Tax.** Would you support legislation that imposes a tax of a fraction of a percent on transactions done by Wall Street firms and stock traders? **Yes.**
3. **Capital Gains Tax.** Would you support taxing capital gains and dividends at ordinary income rates for households with income over \$250,000? **Yes.**
4. **Corporate Tax Avoidance.** Would you support legislation to tax corporations on all of their profits, ending the current practice that allows US corporations to avoid paying taxes on overseas profits? **Yes.**

## **B. Jobs That Pay a Living Wage**

1. What is the role of Congress in creating good-paying jobs? In which sectors do you see the most potential?

Congress needs to play a major role in helping to create good paying jobs. We need to make it easier for small businesses to open and get loans to create and expand their businesses. We need to provide incentives for various businesses to come into the district.

2. **Minimum Wage.** The gap between productivity and wages has grown dramatically since 1973. Moreover, the federal minimum wage remains stuck at \$7.25—what it was in 2009. Would you support legislation to raise the federal minimum wage to \$15 per hour? **Yes**
  - a. And eliminate the sub-minimum wage for tipped workers? **Yes**
  - b. And index the minimum wage to inflation? **Yes**
3. **Job Guarantee.** Would you support legislation to create a federal job guarantee? If so, what would it look like?

Yes, it's important that every American that wants a job and is willing to work can get one. I would make sure that they are paid at least \$15 an hour and that they get health care benefits. Although Sen. Sanders' program isn't perfect, I believe it's a good start, and I would support it.

4. **Retirement Security.** With the decline of pensions and other defined-benefit retirement plans in the workplace, retirement is becoming more insecure, and seniors are having to work longer just to stay afloat. Would you support legislation to....
  - a. Increase the benefits provided by Social Security? **Yes**
  - b. Raising the cap on earnings that are taxed for Social Security? Currently, only earnings up to \$118,500 are subject to the payroll tax. **Yes**

5. **Paid Leave.** The US is the only industrial nation without paid family leave. Would you support federal legislation ensuring that workers can take up to 12 weeks of paid leave for a pregnancy, the birth or adoption of a child, to recover from a serious illness, or to care for a seriously ill family member? **Absolutely!**
6. **Paid Vacation.** The US is the only industrial nation that does not require employers to provide any paid vacation time. Would you support legislation requiring employers to provide employees at least two weeks of paid vacation time? **Yes.**
7. **Union Rights.** Unions play a key role in building a strong middle-class; however, unions have been under attack in recent years. Would you support legislation like the Workplace Democracy Act that prohibits “right-to-work” laws and requires employers to recognize a union when a majority of workers in a bargaining unit sign valid authorization cards? **Yes!**

### **C. Quality, Affordable Health Care**

1. What do you see as the role of the federal government in health care?  
  
Our government needs to take a stronger role in healthcare. It’s time for Medicare for All. Tying health care to a job is immediately -and obviously – harming those who need a support system the most. No one should go bankrupt due to an unforeseen illness. As a trustee of Lowell General Hospital, I see that our system is too complex for administrators, doctors and patients. This alone needs to be simplified.
2. **Medicare for All.** Would you support the creation of a single payer/“Medicare for All” health insurance system in the country that would guarantee health care as a right? **Yes!**
3. **Medicaid.** Would you oppose any effort to add a work requirement to Medicaid? **Yes.**
4. **Medicare.** Would you oppose any effort to increase the means-testing of Medicare? **Yes.**
5. **Drug Price Negotiation.** Would you support legislation requiring the federal government to negotiate the price of Medicare prescription drugs with pharmaceutical companies? **Yes.**
6. **Access to Prescription Drugs.** Would you support legislation to reduce monopolies for brand-name drugs and help generic competitors come to market more easily? **Yes.**
7. **Reproductive Rights -- Part I.** Would you oppose any legislation that seeks to roll back a woman’s fundamental right to choose an abortion as set out in *Roe vs. Wade*? **Yes!**
8. **Reproductive Rights -- Part II.** Would you supporting legislation to repeal the Hyde Amendment, which bars the use of federal funds to pay for abortion except to save the life of the woman, or if the pregnancy arises from incest or rape? **Yes!**

## **D. Quality, Free Publicly Funded Education**

1. What role should the federal government play in guaranteeing high-quality K-12 education for all students?

Education is a foundation that can eradicate poverty, strengthen our economy, and improve national security. The government must ensure that every child, no matter what their zip code, has access to free, high quality education from K-12. Access to higher education also needs to be improved; I believe that community colleges should be free. I would also go beyond that to make State Colleges and trade school free as well. It's important to invest in our children. When they succeed, we all succeed!

2. **Race to the Top.** The Race to the Top program, created in 2010, was a competitive grant program for school districts that incentivized public school districts to adopt performance-based evaluations for teachers and to increase the number of charter schools. How would you evaluate the success of the program?

Obama's Race to the Top program was a creative step forward in the right direction and helped encourage states to adopt innovative new education policies. We need to continue to find creative ways to advance education and improve schools in MA3 and nationally.

3. **Achievement Gap.** Since 2005 alone (13 years of K-12 education), Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), which provides funding to states and districts to improve education for disadvantaged students, has been underfunded by \$347 billion. Would you support legislation to fully fund Title I? **Yes! I truly believe that we can do this. We must reprioritize our investments.**
4. **Special Education.** When Congress first passed the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the federal government promised to pay 40 percent of the cost of educating students with disabilities. That promise has not been kept, with federal funding standing at just 15.7 percent. Would you support legislation to fully fund IDEA? **Absolutely!**
5. **Student Loan Debt.** Student loan debt is holding back the economy, as graduates are unable to make important long-term investments in their future. Senator Elizabeth Warren has filed legislation to allow those with outstanding student loan debt to refinance at current, lower interest rates. Would you support such legislation? **Yes. I would also work to allow struggling borrowers to discharge their student loans in bankruptcy.**
6. **Tuition-Free Higher Education.** More and more jobs are requiring a college degree, but the cost of higher education has been growing faster than wages, contributing to a ballooning student debt burden. Would you support legislation to guarantee free tuition at public colleges and universities? **Yes.**

If so, how should such a program operate?

There are a number of ways to fund this. I would reprioritize some of our investments. For example, I would decrease our defense spending and add that to education. I would also

also make the top 1% and major corporations pay their fair share of taxes, which would help decrease the deficit and enable the federal government to invest more in education for our youth. I would also work to put in place a program that enables companies to fund tuition for students pursuing degrees in fields for which they will benefit. In return the student would be required to commit to a minimum number of years to that company. This is based on the ROTC model which works so well for the military. And I would also guarantee free tuition for any student who wanted a degree which would benefit the larger community. For example, anyone pursuing a teacher's degree, nursing or first responder's degrees. Peace Corp and AmeriCorp commitments would also be covered. In addition, I recognize that not all young people want to go to college. Technical training for these students would also be covered so that they have the skills to enter the labor force and find the well-paying jobs needed. I believe that a no cost higher education is the pathway to freedom for all young Americans. By being able to achieve this without being enslaved to crushing debt allows them to pursue their American Dream.

### **E. Affordable, Decent Housing**

1. What role do you believe the federal government should play in guaranteeing affordable, decent housing for all?

The federal government should take more interest in making quality housing more available and affordable for everyone. They need to provide taxes, subsidies and regulations that promote efficiency and equity of housing for all. Also, redlining and other outdated racist practices need to be addressed and remedied.

2. **National Housing Trust Fund.** The National Housing Trust Fund was created in 2008 as part of the Housing and Economic Recovery Act to complement existing federal funding sources for affordable housing. Would you support legislation to increase funding for the National Housing Trust Fund? **Yes.**
3. **Tenant Rights.** Prior to the passage of the Protecting Tenants at Foreclosure Act (PTFA) in 2009, tenants were often required to move with as little as a few days-notice. However, the PTFA expired in 2014. Would you support legislation to reauthorize such tenant protections? **Yes.**
4. **Foreclosure Prevention.** Would you support legislation to strengthen requirements for and increase oversight of Federal Housing Administration mortgage servicers so that every homebuyer with an FHA mortgage is given a fair chance at avoiding foreclosure? **Yes.**

### **F. A Fair and Efficient Criminal Justice System**

1. What role can Congress help deliver on the promise of "liberty and justice for all"? Congress should exercise its oversight powers on the Executive Branch to curtail the overreach they are attempting to limit the freedoms of Americans.



I feel that every American has a fundamental right to be free from unwarranted government interference in their daily lives. Free from the fear of arbitrary search and seizure or arrest. All Americans have the right to a free and fair trial with competent defense representation. And everyone is guaranteed the freedom and liberty to pursue their American Dream. Our country was founded on these principles, enshrined in the Declaration of Independence and made law by our Constitution. The current Congress is a lapdog for the administration and lacks the courage and commitment to the citizens to say NO. We must elect people who will stand up and defend the Constitution and have the courage to say no to power.

When you are sworn in as a new Member of Congress you take an oath, not to a party, or even a state or district. You take an oath to protect and defend the Constitution against all enemies foreign and Domestic. When I raise my right hand and take that oath I will live it every day I am privileged to serve the people of my district, of Massachusetts and the United States.

2. **Marijuana Legalization.** Do you support removing marijuana from the list of controlled substances, making it legal at the federal level? **Yes.**
3. **Mandatory Minimums.** Do you support the repeal of mandatory minimums for non-violent drug offenses? **Yes.**
4. **Bail Reform.** Do you support the elimination of cash bail, so that no one is held in jail solely for an inability to pay?

Yes. Cash bail is a means to keep the poor and mostly people of color incarcerated without trial for misdemeanor offenses. Mostly for non-violent offenses. It's a racist by-product of a bygone time and should have been eliminated years ago. Unfortunately, many municipalities like the money they get from bail. When in Congress I will support any legislation that ends this system.

5. **Private Prisons.** Would you support legislation to bar the federal government and state and local jurisdictions from contracting with private corporations to run prisons and detention facilities? **Yes.**
6. **Federal Parole System.** The abolition of the federal parole system in 1984 has played a large role in the rise of mass incarceration since the 1980s, as prisoners are now required to serve at least 85 percent of their sentence. Would you support legislation to reinstate the federal parole system? **Yes.**
7. **Price Gouging.** Would you support legislation to prevent companies from engaging in unfair practices and charging prisoners unreasonable fees for banking and telecommunications services? **Yes.**

8. **Solitary Confinement.** Do you support limiting the use of solitary confinement to no more than 15 consecutive days, and eliminating the use of solitary confinement for at-risk populations, including pregnant women, LGBTQ people, those with mental illness, and those under age 21 or over age 65? **Yes.**
9. **Police-Community Relations.** Recently, the US House of Representatives passed a bill to create a *federal* penalty of up to 10 years for assaulting a police officer. Such laws already exist on the books in states, and there is no lack of prosecution (some might even argue that such charges are used as a cudgel against protesters). The ACLU, NAACP, Southern Poverty Law Center, and other civil rights groups criticized this bill for pushing a statistically unproven “war on cops” narrative and threatening to do further damage to police-community relations. Would you oppose such legislation? **Yes.**
10. **Militarization of Police.** Would you support legislation to prohibit the transfer of some of the military weapons from the federal government to state and local law enforcement? **Yes.**
11. **Data Collection.** Would you support legislation to require police departments and states to collect data on all police shootings and deaths that take place while in police custody and make that data public? **Yes.**
12. **Racial Profiling.** Would you support legislation to ban racial profiling by law enforcement? **Yes.**

### **G. A Humane Immigration System**

1. What does “comprehensive immigration reform” mean to you?

This is one of the main reasons that I am running- to give American immigrants a voice in Congress. Beyond our borders, the world is experiencing a major refugee crisis with millions displaced due to war. We need to address this crisis so that every country assumes its responsibility to meet this humanitarian challenge. Every immigrant that has been in the U.S. and hasn't done anything wrong, has a fair shot and a clear path to citizenship. Congress needs to pass a legislation solution to protect our Dreamers; they shouldn't live in fear or be used as bargaining chip for a wall. Our nation is in a position to lead. Instead of turning our back on asylum seekers and tearing families apart, we need to properly address this complex issue in a compassionate and humane manner.

2. **Border Militarization.** A border wall, as proposed by Trump, would be an economic, environmental, and humanitarian disaster. Would you categorically oppose any legislation that includes funding for such a border wall? **Yes.**

3. **DREAM Act.** Would you support the DREAM Act, which would allow certain US-raised immigrant youth to earn lawful permanent residence and American citizenship? **Yes.**
4. **Path to Citizenship.** Would you support legislation that creates a path for undocumented immigrants to gain US citizenship? **Yes.**
5. **Keeping Families Together.** Would you support legislation to repeal the three-year, ten-year, and permanent bars of reentry for undocumented immigrants? **Yes.**
6. **Protecting Immigrant Families.** Over the past few years, ICE has adopted policies that are particularly harmful to children: the practice of detaining women and children when they cross the border despite legal obligations to place families with children in the least restrictive setting possible (family detention), and the practice of separating parents and children (family separation). Would you support legislation to end both of these practices? **Yes.**
7. **ICE Bed Quota.** Would you support legislation to end ICE's daily bed quota, which requires the detainment of 34,000 immigrants? **Yes, it's crazy and arbitrary.**
8. **ICE Detention Centers.** The Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) Office of the Inspector General (OIG) have consistently found that ICE detention facilities undermine the rights of the individuals being held, as sexual abuse, medical negligence, and insufficient access to counsel remain rampant. (A) Would you support legislation to impose a moratorium on the construction of new ones? **Yes.** (B) Would you support a review of private detention centers and the termination of contracts with repeat human rights violation offenders? **Yes.**
9. **ICE.** ICE (U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement), is a fairly new federal agency, birthed in the post 9/11/2001 restructuring of the Department of Homeland Security. Since its start, ICE has operated under a harmful and erroneous paradigm: that undocumented immigrants *ipso facto* pose a fundamental security threat. Over time, ICE has operated in an increasingly unconstitutional matter, embracing practices that, according to judges, "shock the conscience" and have received condemnation from the United Nations. Would you support the elimination of the current agency in favor of a more humane alternative?

Yes, I would, but I believe that ICE is not the problem, it's just a symptom. Our current inhumane laws and current administration policies are what allows ICE to act in this manner. I will support enacting humane immigration policies with rigorous safeguards to prevent abuse. I will also support enacting laws that prohibit the Executive branch from banning anyone entering this country based on ethnicity, religion or country of origin.

## **H. A Diverse and Welcoming Society**

1. What do you believe are the most important factors in building an inclusive community, and what role can Congress play in advancing them?

The most important factors to building an inclusive community are welcoming and recognizing differences. It's vital to create an environment where people feel safe to achieve their American dream without fear of harassment, abuse or discrimination.

Congress can play a major role in creating and advancing laws to ensure that everyone is treated equally and fairly. The law should also be enforced fairly, not when it fit or doesn't fit the individuals or based on the amount of power or money a person has.

2. **LGBTQ Rights.** Over the past several years, we have seen numerous states try to deny trans individuals the right to exist in public spaces as well as conservative lawsuits seeking to legalize discrimination against LGBTQ individuals. Would you support legislation to add sexual orientation and gender identity to the Civil Rights Act of 1964? **Yes.**
3. **Sexual Harassment.** Would you support legislation to end the use of forced arbitration clauses in sexual harassment cases? **yes**
4. **Indigenous Rights.** Would you support legislation to ensure that tribal cultures and sacred places are federally protected? **yes**
5. **Gun Safety.** A welcoming society is one in which people feel safe. Would you support the reinstatement of the federal assault weapons ban? **Yes.**

## **I. Good Government and Strong Democracy**

1. What does democracy mean to you?

Democracy means that everyone has a voice and has the freedom to achieve their American Dream regardless of their race, color, religion or sexual orientation.

2. **Diversity in Leadership.** How can the Democratic Party better work to improve a pipeline of young and diverse candidates for elected office and party leadership?

The Democrat Party needs to truly practice what they preach. They claim they seek diversity and new fresh voices, but when such people run for office, the party structures don't have the political will to support them. Instead, they go along with what has been established. Better recruitment is needed to find those who can truly represent people in each district, instead of those with ties to special interests and big corporations.

3. **Ethics.** What do you see as the role of Congress vis-a-vis the Trump presidency with regard to ethics enforcement? Congress must exercise its powers to make sure that not only the President, but all members of the Executive Branch behave and perform their

duties in an ethical manner that is above reproach. Congress needs to hold more hearings on not only the Russia/Election issue, but breaches of the emoluments clause and executive order overreach.

4. **Voting Access.** Would you support legislation to...
  - a. Require states to provide same day registration? **yes**
  - b. Require states to offer automatic voter registration through the Registry of Motor Vehicles and other agencies as appropriate? **yes**
  - c. Make Election Day a federal holiday? **Yes! It works in so many other countries.**
  - d. Prohibit states from adopting discriminatory laws that require select photo identification in order to vote? **Yes.**
5. **Voting Rights Act.** Would you support restoring the “pre-clearance” formula under the Voting Rights Act, which extended protections to minority voters in states and counties with histories of discrimination, as well as further expanding the law? **Yes.**
6. **Prisoner’s Rights.** Would you support legislation to prohibit states from taking away the franchise from anyone because of a criminal offense? **Yes.**
7. **Citizens United.** Would you support a constitutional amendment to overturn the Citizens United decision and allow limits on corporate political spending? **Yes!**

## **J. Sustainable Infrastructure & Environmental Protection**

1. The current administration in Washington has overturned, or is seeking to overturn, a number of Obama-era environmental regulations, setting the US up for years of just playing catch up. What are your top priorities on environmental protection?

Climate change is real, and there are real solutions. For example, it was just demonstrated that legislation put in place to reduce acid rain, a big issue in the 1980s and 1990s, had huge benefits, measured in trees in Vermont. We must rejoin the Paris Climate Agreement. We cannot sell off the national parklands for mining; it’s unconscionable and a denial of our children’s rightful inheritance. When elected I will support making the Obama era regulations established law.

2. **100% Clean Energy.** Would you support legislation to put the US on a pathway to replacing fossil fuels with 100 percent clean energy generation and use by 2035, with support for transitioning workers? **Yes.**
3. **Carbon Pricing.** Would you support putting a price on carbon emissions and investing the revenue in clean energy and green infrastructure? If so, how should such a pricing scheme operate?

**Yes.** The price must be high enough and applied across the board to make a meaningful difference. Right now, despite more and more countries and US states, including Mass.,

enacting these rules the IEA projects that energy related greenhouse gas emissions will continue to rise thru 2040 see email on this.

4. **Keep It in the Ground -- Part I.** Would you support legislation to prohibit new leases for coal, oil, and gas on all federal lands and waters? **Yes.**
5. **Keep it in the Ground -- Part II.** Would you oppose any legislation that authorizes, or expedites the permitting or approval of, new fossil fuel pipelines? **Yes.**
6. **Clean Water.** Would you support legislation the to require natural gas drillers to disclose the chemicals that go into the ground during the hydraulic fracturing (“fracking”) process and to close the so-called “Halliburton loophole,” which prevents the EPA from conducting rigorous oversight? **Yes.**
7. **Environmental Justice.** Would you support legislation to codify environmental justice into law; require federal agencies to address environmental justice through agency actions and permitting decisions; and strengthen legal protections against environmental injustice for communities of color, low-income communities, and indigenous communities? **Yes.**
8. **Fuel Efficiency.** Would you support legislation to increase fuel economy standards to 65 miles per gallon by 2025? **Yes.**
9. **Public Transportation.** Would you support greater investment in public transportation? **Yes.**
10. **Science and Policy.** Would you oppose any effort to restrict the ability of federal policymakers from incorporating peer-reviewed science in the decision-making process around new environmental regulations? **Yes.**

#### **K. US in the World.**

1. **Foreign Policy.** What are the principles and priorities you would bring to discussions of US foreign policy? I am a child of war and trauma, and that should always be the last resort. If need be, we will defend our country, but we need to work with our allies and others to build peace and promote freedom not just in our country, but in others as well.
2. **Trade.** Will you oppose any trade deal that allows corporations to sue governments in private tribunals, that fails to include binding requirements to implement both the Paris climate agreement and adopt living wages, or that otherwise fails to support a clean environment, healthy communities, and good union jobs? **Yes.**