

Liz Miranda

5th Suffolk

State Representative

Endorsement Questionnaire

Office Sought: State Representative

Legislative District: 5th Suffolk

Party: Democratic

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Primary: September 4

Election: November 6



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Introduction: Progressive Mass

About

Progressive Massachusetts is a statewide, grassroots organization committed to working toward shared prosperity, racial and social justice, good government and strong democracy, and sustainable infrastructure and environmental protection. It was founded 5 years ago by local organizers from the Patrick and Obama campaigns in order to continue to move forward progressive values and issues in Massachusetts.

Advancing a progressive agenda in Massachusetts requires electing legislators who share--and will fight for--our values, and then holding them accountable.

Membership

One of the benefits of being a dues-paying member of Progressive Massachusetts is that you get to participate in our endorsement votes for key elections, helping to shape the future direction of progressive policymaking in the state. **Not yet a member? Join!** [ProgressiveMass.com/member](https://www.progressivemass.com/member)

How Endorsements Work

Progressive Massachusetts sends candidates this detailed policy questionnaire, revised periodically by the Elections & Endorsements Committee (EEC). The EEC may choose to make a recommendation in a given race, but the ultimate decision lies with you--the members. In each race, you can choose to vote for a **candidate**, vote “**no endorsement**,” or **abstain**. Candidates who receive at least 60% of all ballots submitted in their respective race will be endorsed by Progressive Massachusetts. If no candidate in a race reaches the 60% threshold, we will not endorse. Regardless of whether or not we endorse, all questionnaires will be made available on our website as a public service.

Sources

Each section features a chart or graph that illustrates one facet of the issue under discussion and is not intended to be comprehensive. All images and data are from Massachusetts Budget and Policy Center ([massbudget.org](https://www.massbudget.org)).

I. About the Candidate

Liz Miranda

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

Liz Miranda: I am running for office because I am a lifelong resident who not only loves my community but have also heavily invested in the advancement of my neighbors. I understand, care, and has been active as a resident leader for over 20 years. I am also a woman of color and daughter of immigrants who is underrepresented in local politics and leadership. Representation matters to us. We are not even in the room to speak with and for our communities. There is also a big disconnect with the framing of progressive ideals between progressive leadership and the community where I live. We all care about transportation equity, healthier communities, quality public education and fair wages. Too often progressive issues are talked about like vanity issues by the time it gets to the ears of my community. I can continue to be a bridge builder between the progressive ideals and issues that matter to our community. I can serve and talk about the issues that matter to us in a way that engages my community in working toward the agenda that will make our lives better. I can fight in the State House and on the grassroots level. There are so many complexities of how issues impact our community and we may not understand the depth of the impact because the language is not resilient to our experiences. I can and will bring a different and informed perspective of the challenges of my district to the table.

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

Liz Miranda: There are many things that have prepared me to serve in this role. I have a lifetime of living in the 5th Suffolk district, my experience, and work as a community organizer, coalition builder and youth worker across and beyond the district has prepared me to be a strong advocate for community. As a millennial, I have a fresh voice with a seasoned experience as a community activist & leader since the age of 13. I can say with confidence that many of the community programs I have created or been involved with establishing over a 20 year period have positively impacted a majority of the very district I grew up in and want to represent on the house floor.

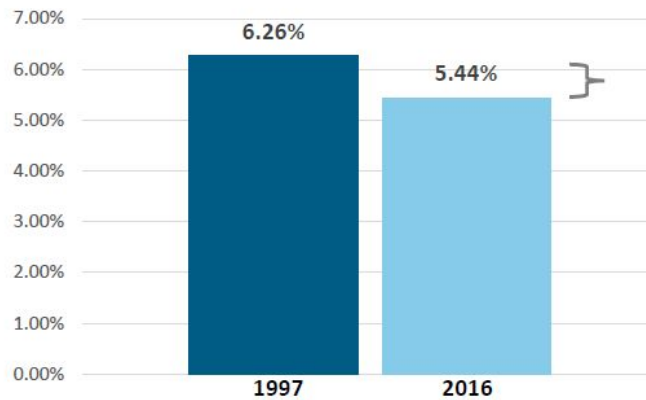
While I have not been previously involved electoral politics, I have been extensively trained both through Mass Alliance and Emerge about campaigning. There are complexities of legislating and running for office that I look forward toward working with others that have made similar transitions from community to the State House so I can further expand my leadership toolbox. I have a long experience of connecting for profit with non profit and government at times to improve the quality of life and lives of those I call my neighbors. I currently serve as an Executive Director in a transitioning neighborhood and have a great deal of management experience in advocating and bringing different people together to create change.

A. REVENUE AND TAXATION

Despite the label of “Taxachusetts,” Massachusetts ranks 22nd among states in terms of state and local taxes as a share of total personal income and below the national average. Between 1977 and 2012, Massachusetts reduced state taxes by more than all but one other state. Because of income tax cuts enacted between 1998 and 2002, Massachusetts is losing over \$3 billion in tax revenue each year. Such cuts to the state income tax have meant increasing reliance on fees, as well as sales, gas, and property taxes, exacerbating the overall regressivity of the system. Regressive taxation strains low- and middle-income families, and reduced revenue collection curtails our ability to invest in vital infrastructure. It also restricts legislators’ ability to pass new and visionary legislation, as there is a continual shortage of funds for existing priorities.

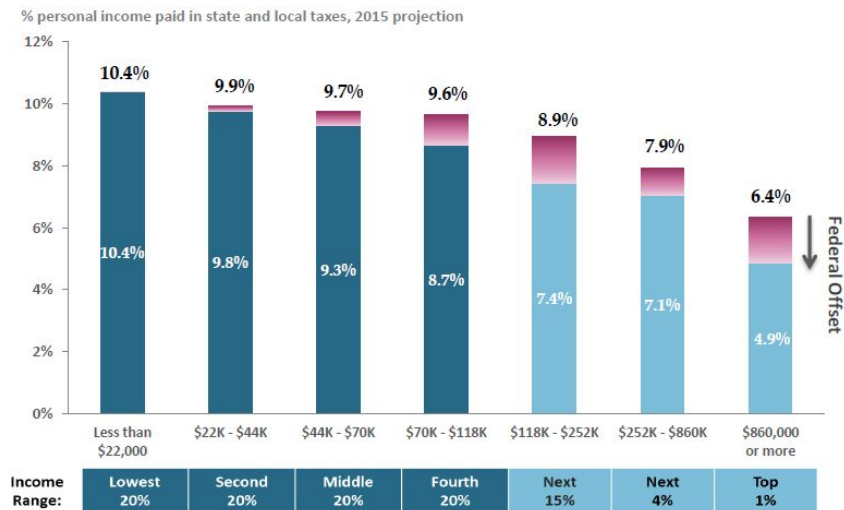
Declining revenues have meant drastic cuts, limiting our ability to invest in our communities and future economic stability.

Massachusetts tax revenue as a share of the state economy



This 13.1% decline in tax revenue has led to deep budget cuts and ongoing budget challenges.

Massachusetts state and local taxes are regressive.



* Percentages shown inside bar are net effective tax levels after factoring in federal offset. Percentages above bars show tax levels before federal offset.

Source: Institute for Taxation and Economic Policy.

1. *What principles do you bring to considerations of state revenue and tax reform (individual and corporate)? How should we raise more revenue to adequately fund our communities for the future?*

Liz Miranda: I believe we need to transfer the revenue burden in this state to those who benefit the most from our infrastructure. I believe we should raise more revenue through Millionaire's tax which is a start and closing corporate loopholes. We also need to introduce more accountability measures for incentives we provide through the tax code. My values are aligned are that those who have benefited the most, should invest the most. I also believe we should return the Capital Gains Tax to 8.91% from 5%.

2. *Optional/As Applicable: Please indicate work you personally have done to advance your principles on revenue and taxation (legislation, community work, published writings, etc.).*

Liz Miranda: While I have not worked on Revenue and Taxation formally in my personal or professional history. However, my values are aligned with the belief that those who benefit the most, should pay the most from our infrastructure.

3. *Progressive Taxation. Currently, Progressive Massachusetts is working on a constitutional amendment to increase the income tax on income over \$1 million by 4% (Fair Share Amendment, sometimes referred to as the "Millionaire's Tax"), which will be on the 2018 ballot. Do you support this ballot question?*

Liz Miranda: Yes.

4. *Sales Tax Holiday. It has been demonstrated over and over that the annual sales tax holiday does not serve its intended purpose of increasing sales, but rather just shifts sales to the weekend of the holiday. Would you oppose efforts to extend the sales tax holiday?*

Liz Miranda: Yes. Yes, because its a false positive. It is not impacting my communities buying power or decision making while taking revenue away.

5. *Corporate Tax Breaks & Disclosure. Do you support the state's collecting and publicly disclosing the information about the benefits actually provided by corporations receiving tax credits?*

Liz Miranda: Yes. Yes, we should track that information.

6. *Corporate Tax Breaks & Wages. Do you support requiring any company receiving tax credits from the state to pay a living wage and provide good benefits to all its employees?*

Liz Miranda: Yes. Yes, absolutely. It is the only way we can yield power.

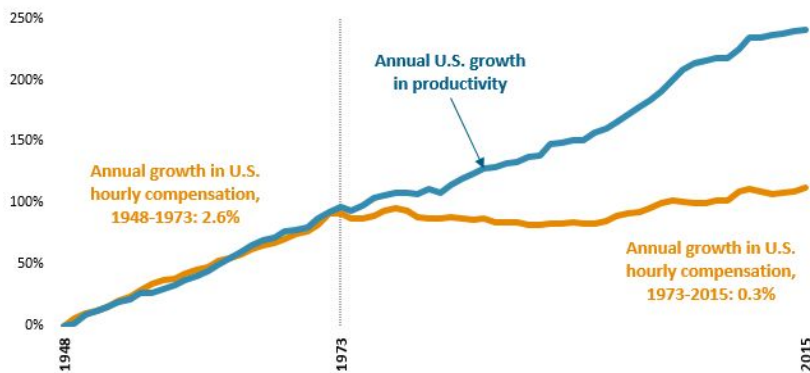
B. JOB GROWTH AND THE ECONOMY

The Massachusetts economy has continued to grow and recover from the Great Recession, but the gains have not been shared equally. According to various measures of income inequality, Massachusetts now ranks as one of the top ten most [unequal states](#). We are one of the most expensive states in the country for [health care](#), [housing](#), and [child care](#), all of which strain wages. Most MA workers do not have access to paid medical leave, and only a small fraction have access to paid family leave--gaps that force people to choose between their (or their family's) health and their job.

Productivity has grown significantly since the 1970s, but it is not being reflected in higher wages.

A Large Gap Has Opened Between Wage and Productivity Growth Since 1973

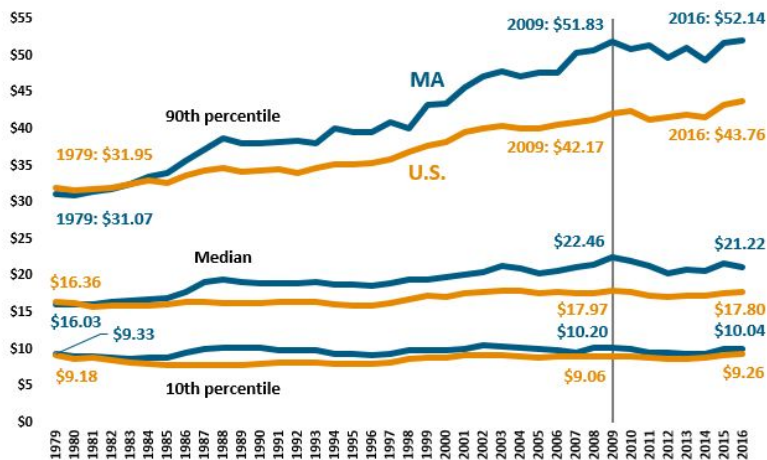
Cumulative Change in U.S. Hourly Wages for Private-Sector Production/Non-Supervisory Workers and Net Productivity, 1948-2015



Source: Economic Policy Institute analysis of unpublished Total Economy Productivity data from Bureau of Labor Statistics' Labor Productivity and Costs program, wage data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics' Current Employment Statistics, Bureau of Labor Statistics' Employment Cost Trends data, and the Bureau of Economic Analysis' National Income and Product Accounts
 Note: Wages are the inflation-adjusted average hourly compensation of private-sector production/nonsupervisory workers.

Wages For Most MA Workers Have Stagnated Since Great Recession

Real Value of Hourly Wage for Selected Wage-Earning Groups in MA and U.S., 1979-2016 (2016\$)



Source: Economic Policy Institute analysis of Current Population Survey data (deflated using CPI-U-RS).

1. Share your personal values and principles on job growth and the economy.

How can we improve the economy and economic security for all people? How do we grow the number of good-paying jobs in the Commonwealth? How do you view wealth and income inequality, and what would you do about it, if anything?

Liz Miranda: Massachusetts is in the top ten of most unequal states in our country. Last year reports came out that Boston was really a city of haves and have nots with African-Americans have \$8 wealth to over \$250,000 worth of wealth for their white counterparts. Boston was deemed the most unequal city in the country.

I believe that job growth is critical to support our local economy. Education and training are components to being able to attract companies that pay well. I believe more should be invested in vocational education and skilled labor training. If we create and support these efforts regionally we can continue to attract companies, support innovation and startups.

2. Optional/As Applicable: *Please indicate work you personally have done to advance your principles on job growth and the economy (legislation, community work, published writings, etc.).*

Liz Miranda: I was the chair of the Human Development Committee for many years of the Boston Empowerment Zone where we led on Job creation, funding for youth jobs, training and development. We invested millions into the distressed communities surrounding the Melnea Cass Boulevard and Mass Ave corridor.

I have supported I Have A Future and their fight to increase the Youth Works line item, as well as increase the number of youth jobs in our state. As a former youth worker, I will continue to work tirelessly as a State Representative to decrease the opportunity divide for young people.

I have always been supportive of workers rights and working families. I have also worked extensively in Community and Economic Development ensuring our business districts are meeting the needs of the community and are fiscally healthy. I currently create STEAM programming within our community to engage our young people in careers of the future, as well as increase their educational pursuits.

3. Increasing Wages.

a. Minimum wage. *Do you support raising the minimum wage to \$15 an hour?*

Liz Miranda: Yes.

b. Tipped Minimum Wage. *And making the tipped minimum wage equal to that of the regular minimum wage?*

Liz Miranda: Yes.

c. Indexing the Minimum Wage. *And indexing the minimum wage to inflation?*

Liz Miranda: Yes.

d. Teen Minimum Wage. *And reject efforts to create a subminimum wage for teen workers?* **Liz Miranda:** Yes.

I'd like to see those wages indexed to inflation. Minimum wage has not kept up and has severely hurt working class families.

4. ***Paid Leave.*** Do you support requiring access to up to 16 weeks of paid family leave and 26 weeks of paid medical leave?

Liz Miranda: Yes.

5. ***Unions -- Part I.*** If workers in Massachusetts make the decision to unionize, would you be willing to publicly support a union-organizing drive and discourage management from fighting their decision?

Liz Miranda: Yes. Yes, I would union organizing. Workers rights are a top priority and should not be discouraged for corporate well being.

6. ***Unions -- Part II.*** Since 2010 election, a number of states have rolled back the collective bargaining rights of public workers as part of a well-funded, nationwide assault on unions led by wealthy, conservative donors. Would you oppose any effort to roll back the collective bargaining rights of state or municipal employees?

Liz Miranda: Yes.

7. ***Wage Theft.*** Do you support legislation to hold businesses responsible for the wage violations of their subcontractors when the work they do is substantially connected to the company's operations?

Liz Miranda: Yes.

8. ***Mandatory Arbitration.*** Would you support legislation to prohibit the use of mandatory arbitration provisions in employment contracts, i.e., requirements that an employee forfeit the right to sue the employer for discrimination, nonpayment of wages or other illegal conduct?

Liz Miranda: Yes.

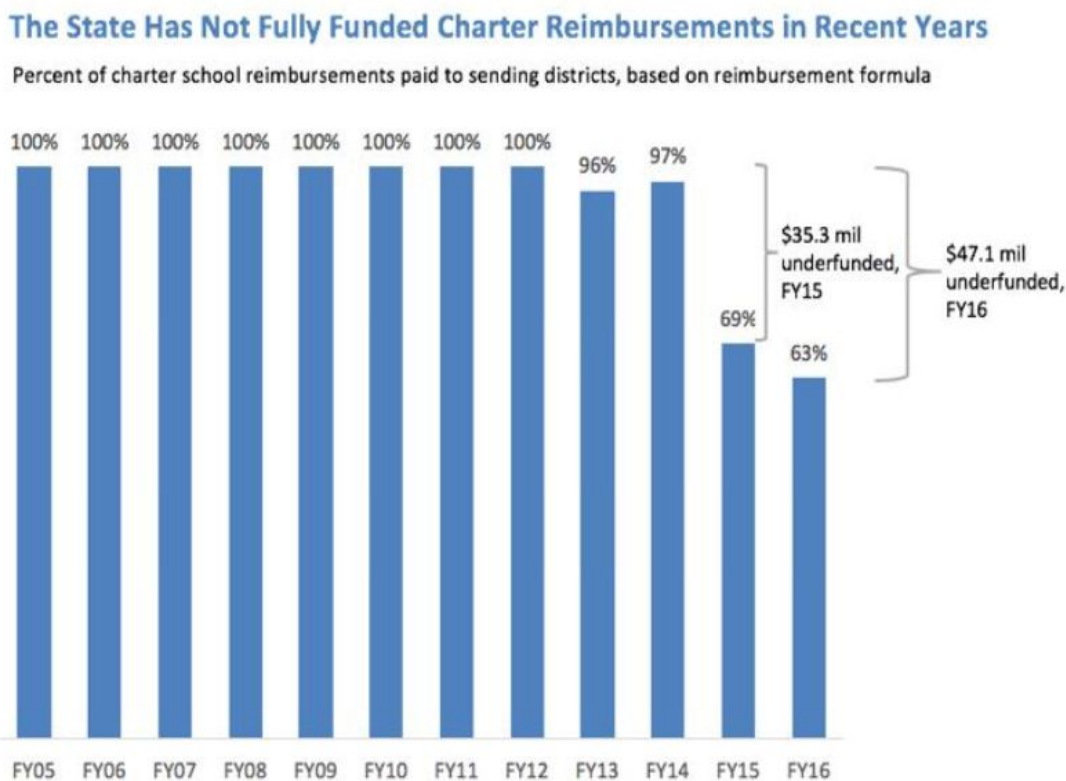
9. ***Economic Democracy.*** Would you support legislation to foster and develop employee ownership of businesses in Massachusetts and encourage the formation of cooperatives and/or benefit corporations?

Liz Miranda: Yes.

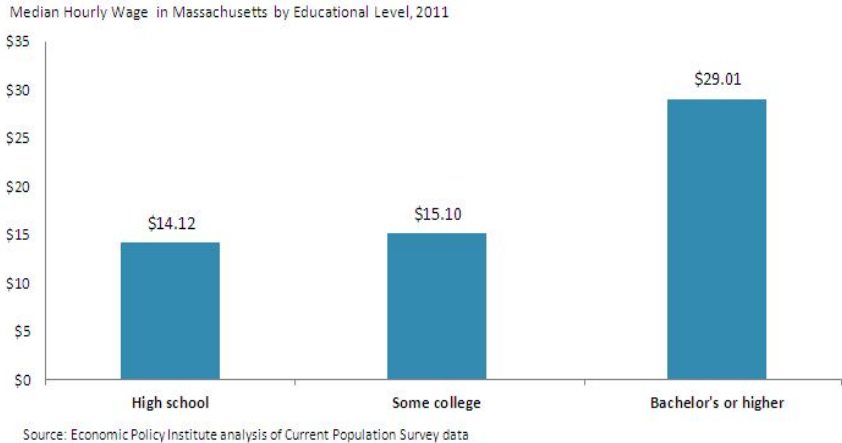
C. EDUCATION

The promise of public education has always been as a gateway to opportunity and mobility for all, regardless of economic circumstances, a cornerstone of the American dream for all residents. The mission of public schools is to serve all students, including English Language Learners and those with special needs. However, powerful corporate interests are working to undermine public schools, teachers, and unions. These groups are investing millions of dollars to promote the expansion of privately run charter schools, which siphon money from our public K-12 districts while largely excluding students with the greatest needs. Various forms of privatization are being proposed and implemented, including charter schools and “turnaround” schemes that put private management groups in charge of struggling public schools. Costly, mandated standardized test results are used to justify these privatization schemes. Finally, the soaring price of higher education over the last several decades has made access to this opportunity increasingly out of reach, at the very moment when higher education makes a greater difference to one’s economic future.

The state hasn’t been living up to its responsibility to fully fund our public schools.

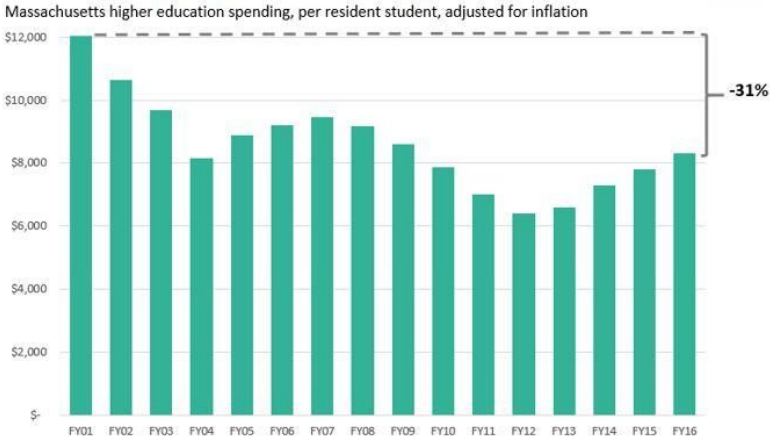


Higher educational attainment leads to higher wages.



Massachusetts has been disinvesting from higher education and shifting the cost burden onto students.

Per Student, Higher Ed. Cut by 31 Percent Since FY 2001



1. *Please share your personal values and principles regarding public education. What value does public education have in improving our economy as well as in addressing matters of economic justice? How can we close persistent achievement gaps? What measures should the Commonwealth take on these issues?*

Liz Miranda: I believe that education, and knowledge, is true empowerment. I am a graduate of Boston Public Schools and believe that every child deserves access high quality education from cradle to career. Research has shown that access to higher quality education as early as Pre-K can fundamentally impact a person's life and their success outcomes. Schools should be hubs in our communities helps trains our workforce ideally it would be creating leaders for emerging fields ensuring young people have the skills they have engaged members of our communities.

I support the continued funding and increased scope of services for state-run, locally-led public educational programs. Because I believe in lifelong learning, I support continuing adult educational programs, particularly for bilingual English as a Second Language and other (ELL) programs, as well as vocational education programs.

Whether it is childhood education or adult education, the needs are similar:

- I would focus on equitably and adequately funding public educational programs
- Broaden access to high-quality after - school, evening and weekend programs
- Focus on helping the district and state adopt effective public school practices, which includes recognizing the importance of recruiting, developing, and incentivizing high-quality diverse teacher and instructor workforces

2. *Optional/As Applicable: Please indicate work you personally have done to advance your principles on public education?*

Liz Miranda: I have invested heavily and helped create out of school time opportunities for young people in a number of youth programs in the Dorchester/Roxbury community.

3. *Universal Pre-K. Would you support creating universal, free Pre-K, accessible to any resident of Massachusetts, integrated into the public school system?*

Liz Miranda: Yes.

4. *Standardized Testing. Do you oppose the use of high-stakes testing for such things as student promotion, high school graduation, teacher evaluation, and the evaluation of schools and districts?*

Liz Miranda: Yes. It has completely transformed our public education system in negative ways, and it has not correlated to positive gains in career or college success. For zero benefit it creates inequity in public school system.

5. *Equitable Funding. Do you support changing the Chapter 70 Education formula, including the Foundation Budget, to incorporate proper state funding for ELL students, Special Education students, transportation costs, charter school reimbursements to sending schools, and class size reduction?*

Liz Miranda: Yes.

6. **Charter Schools.** Last November, Massachusetts voters overwhelmingly rejected a ballot initiative to lift the cap on charter schools given the millions of dollars it would have siphoned away from public schools.

a. Would you support **keeping the cap on charter schools**?

Liz Miranda: Yes.

b. Would you support legislation to bring **greater accountability and transparency to charter schools**, such as by requiring them to adhere to the same disclosure and disciplinary standards as public school districts?

Liz Miranda: Yes. I would support fair legislation.

7. **Sex Education.** Do you support requiring public schools that teach sexual health education to provide age-appropriate, medically accurate information that is inclusive of all sexual orientations and gender identities that hat includes the effective use of contraception?

Liz Miranda: Yes.

8. **Higher Education Access.** Would you support legislation to grant in-state tuition and financial aid to undocumented students?

Liz Miranda: Yes.

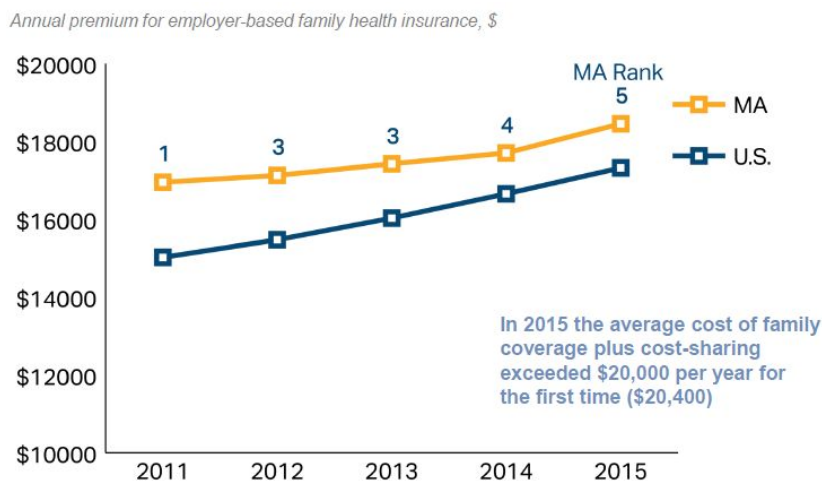
9. **Tuition-Free Higher Education.** Would you support making tuition free at public colleges and universities?

Liz Miranda: Yes.

D. HEALTH CARE

Massachusetts has led the way in providing near universal health insurance coverage, with 97% of the state having health insurance. We provided the blueprint for the national Affordable Care Act, with an insurance-based reform passed by the Democratic Legislature and signed by Republican Governor Romney. While the reforms of President Obama's Affordable Care Act are under assault by Republicans (who control the Executive and both legislative chambers), Massachusetts could lead in more progressive health care reforms. Even without the Republican dismantling of national reforms, there is still work to do right here in Massachusetts. MA's Democratic Legislature passed, and the Republican governor signed, the ACCESS bill in 2017--protecting the right to no-fee contraception, which is (federally) under threat: Where our federal advances are being rolled back, Massachusetts could--and should--push progressively forward. Significant disparities in health insurance coverage and health care access continue to exist along income, racial, and education lines. Premiums continue to rise, and medical debt remains a persistent problem. We still spend an oversized portion of public and private money on health care, but without necessarily achieving better health outcomes.

MA has among the highest health insurance premiums in the country.



Source: Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, Medical Expenditure Panel Survey, Insurance Component

1. *Please share your personal values and principles regarding health care insurance, delivery, and outcomes.*

Liz Miranda: "There are significant racial and health disparities within my district. I believe in the need for culturally competent and bilingual staff to ensure health delivery is local, health insurance support is well understood, and people can connect culturally with the medical staff and services being provided. "

2. *Optional/As Applicable: Please indicate work you personally have done to advance your principles on*

health care (legislation, community work, published writings, etc.).

3. **Single Payer.** *Would you support legislation to enact a single payer health care system in Massachusetts?*

Liz Miranda: Yes. I believe the closer we get to single payer and lower costs for all the better our healthcare system will be.

4. **Reproductive Rights.** *Would you support legislation to guarantee women access to abortion care without dangerous delay, isolation, and obstruction?*

Liz Miranda: Yes. Any legislation that seeks to usurp or delay the power and rights for women will be opposed. I will support the expansion of women's reproductive rights through legislation and funding.

5. **Dental Care.** *Do you support the authorization of dental therapists in Massachusetts, similar to a nurse practitioner or physician assistant, in order to expand access to dental care?*

Liz Miranda: Yes. Increasing access to better health is a priority for the residents of the 5th Suffolk.

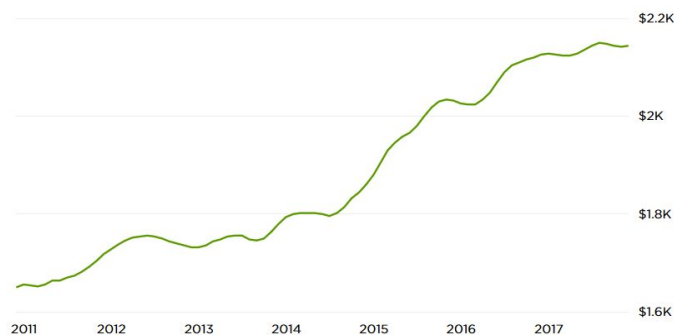
6. **Prescription Drug Pricing.** *Would you support a drug transparency law, like the one recently passed in California, that requires pharmaceutical companies to publicly justify steep price increases?*

Liz Miranda: Yes.

E. HOUSING

Massachusetts has a lot to offer, but that does little if people can't afford to live here. Although Massachusetts ranked #1 last year in the [US News & World Report's state ranking](#), we were #45 in cost of living and #44 in housing affordability. A worker earning minimum wage in Massachusetts would have to work [80 hours a week](#) to afford a modest one bedroom rental home at market rate (and almost 100 hours a week in Metro Boston). Over the last ten years, the need for affordable housing has increased, while funds for affordable housing have decreased at both federal and state levels. The Commonwealth is at risk of losing [14,231 subsidized units](#) by December 31, 2019, as subsidies expire and owners convert properties into market-rate condominiums. Half of families in Greater Boston alone pay over 30% of their income in housing and utilities costs—and over 25% of households pay more than half their income to housing. There is a waiting list of up to ten years for a rental voucher. This is unsustainable. It has led to expanding economic inequality, increased homelessness, and damage to our economy, as talented workers often leave the state for less expensive regions.

Median rents have gone up by more than 30% since 2011.



(source: [zillow.com](#))

1. Please share your personal values and principles regarding affordable housing.

How would you ensure that there is suitable housing for all who need it, within reasonable distance of job opportunities? How would you address the need to link housing, jobs, and transportation? How would you tackle homelessness?

Liz Miranda: "Our housing issues are leading to increased inequality, a rise in homelessness and a loss in residents who cannot afford to live in the neighborhoods they love. Most of the people I know are paying half of their income on rent, or are afraid of losing their housing subsidies. I do not afford to purchase a home in the neighborhood I was born and raised due to gentrification and speculation. I believe housing is a right and without housing there is no stability in one's life.

The affordability crisis is eroding our families and communities. I believe in development without displacement and residents can work together to build vibrant and affordable communities.

I hope to work with leaders to protect the current housing stock and expiring uses. I would like to find funds that help subsidize truly affordable housing. Transit oriented development should continue to be the trend alongside consistent investment in expanding rail infrastructure."

2. **Optional/As Applicable:** Please indicate work you personally have done to advance your principles on housing (legislation, community work, published writings, etc.).

Liz Miranda: "I have not formally worked on housing legislation, but I have been a vocal community resident around issues of affordable and stable housing, homelessness, coalition building in gentrified communities and increasing home ownership.

As a life long resident of the Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative (DSNI) Triangle, I worked alongside hundreds of residents to building affordable housing on once vacant land, through developing a land trust. In my current work as an Executive Director of the Hawthorne Youth and Community Center, I focus much of my community building work on building the capacity of elder citizens, young people and those remaining marginalized residents of the already transitioned neighborhood of Fort Hill/Highland Park in Roxbury."

3. **Funding.** Do you support increasing funding for

a. *The creation of new units of affordable housing, especially low-income units?*

Liz Miranda: Yes.

b. *The Massachusetts Rental Voucher Program?*

Liz Miranda: Yes.

c. *Matching funds for the Community Preservation Act (via fees from the Registry of Deeds)?*

Liz Miranda: Yes.

4. **Housing Preservation.** Currently, certain property owners who guarantee affordable rents have been incentivized by subsidized mortgages via the 13A program. However, many of the contracts under 13A are set to expire in 2019. Do you support giving cities and towns the authority to require such apartments to remain affordable?

Liz Miranda: Yes. Yes, it is critical for our city to survive at it is that we renew these expiring uses and incentives.

5. **Foreclosure Prevention.** Do you support a requirement that banks mediate in good faith with homeowners to seek alternatives before beginning foreclosure proceedings?

Liz Miranda: Yes. Yes. And although "good faith" is hard to measure, I think it is important that we protect the investment and wealth of residents.

6. **Tenant Protections.** Would you support legislation, such as the Jim Brooks Stabilization Act, that requires landlords to provide a reason when seeking to evict a tenant, like failure to pay rent, damaging property, or breaking a lease; informs tenants of their rights under state law; and increases data collection on eviction?

Liz Miranda: Yes. Yes. I believe that it is fair and goes a long way in stabilizing community

7. **Zoning Reform.** *Would you support legislation to upgrade Massachusetts’s zoning laws to encourage more affordable housing and transit-oriented, walkable development and to promote inclusionary zoning practices?*

Liz Miranda: Yes. I would consider supporting that type of legislation.

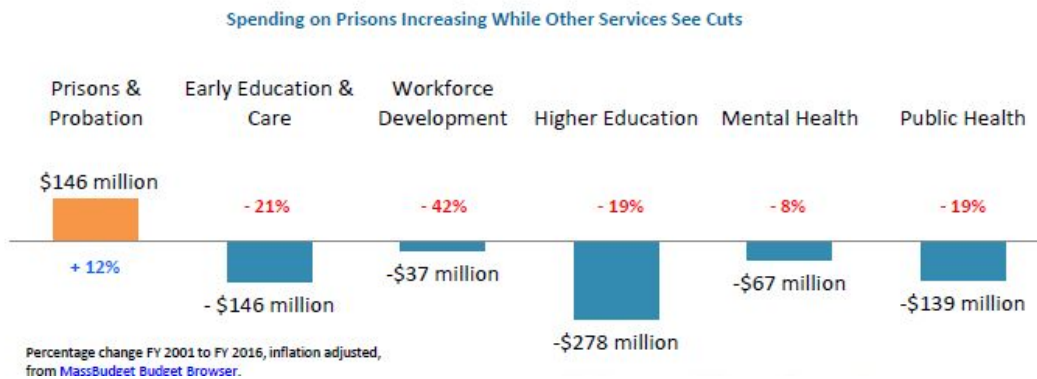
8. **Combating Speculation.** *Would you support legislation to allow cities and towns to impose a graduated tax on private real estate transactions over \$2.5 million, with the money allocated to affordable housing trust funds?*

Liz Miranda: Yes.

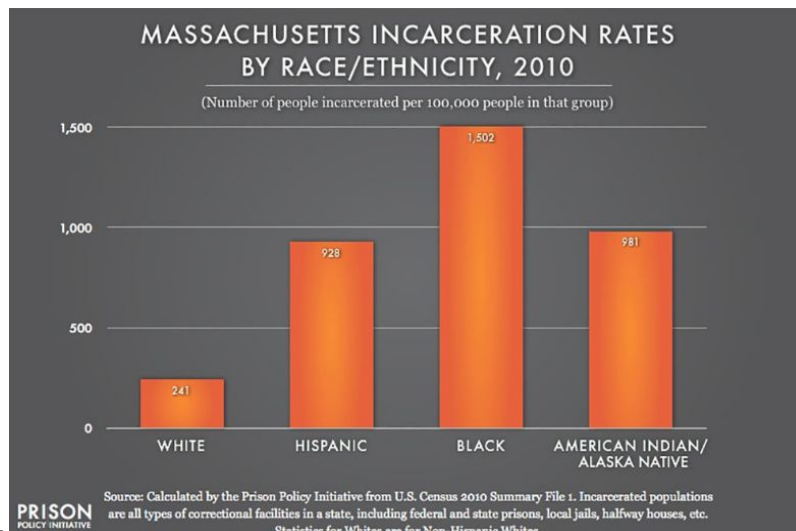
F. RACIAL AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

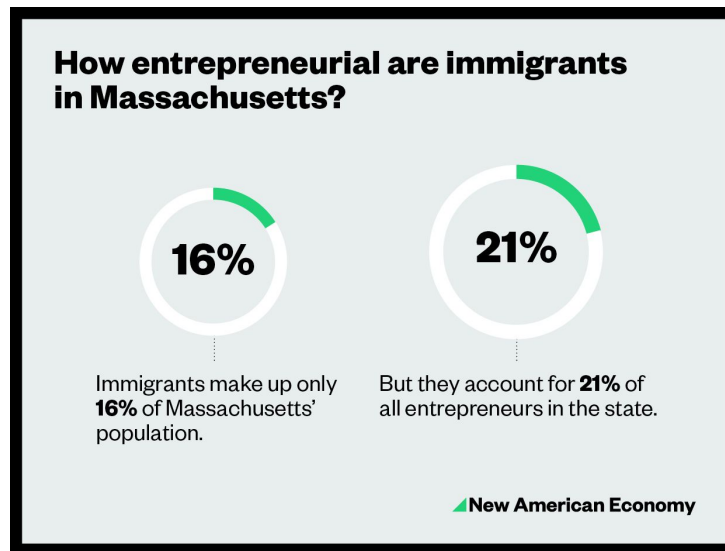
Massachusetts must continue to strive to be a state that welcomes and embraces all of its residents and combats prejudice and discrimination of all kinds. The social and economic costs of mass incarceration and the policies that created it, in particular, have put our aspirations of “justice for all” into crisis. We support a judicial system that does not disproportionately target communities of color and the poor, that does not criminalize public health issues such as addiction, that reorients away from ineffective and costly ‘tough on crime’ policies. A comprehensive approach to reform must be taken in all aspects of the criminal justice system.

Spending on prisons has increased while other services have been cut.



Significant racial disparities exist in incarceration in Massachusetts





1. *Please share your personal values and principles regarding Racial and Social Justice.*

Liz Miranda: My personal values are grounded in the belief that our collective race and social justice efforts are built on the understanding that undoing poverty means undoing racism and other oppressions. We have a race and wealth disparity problem in our city and state. We have poverty. Many of the issues in our communities are directly connected to poverty and our compounding disparities.

Many residents in our district face challenges that are a direct result of institutional racism: barriers to housing and employment, an unjust educational system and the criminal justice system. I will continue to work with the community, in the community and the State House to create a community where we all can be safe, healthy and that is sustainable.

In order to achieve the racial and social justice for the communities of the 5th Suffolk District that I will serve; my principles are grounded in a deep understanding that the root cause of poverty are in tandem with people's lived experiences.

2. *Please indicate work you personally have done to combat racism, Islamophobia, xenophobia, homophobia, transphobia, and other attempts to marginalize disadvantaged groups.*

Liz Miranda: My life's work has been through the lens of living through the negative impacts of actually being a member of many historically disadvantaged groups in my community and city. I am a first generation Cape Verdean American born and raised in the Dudley Triangle. As the daughter of a teen immigrant mother from the Cape Verde Islands, I have spent my entire life in the district I seek to represent-- once the poorest, most disinvested neighborhood in our city. My coalition work to bring youth serving agencies who work on criminal justice issues, supporting the LGBTQ youth communities and student organizing efforts against phobias and isms. I believe stronger youth workers, can better support young people in our city.

3. *Trans Accommodations. In 2016, Massachusetts passed legislation to prevent discrimination against transgender individuals in public accommodations. Conservatives are seeking to repeal the bill on the*

2018 ballot. Will you advocate for the protection of this legislation?

Liz Miranda: Yes.

4. **LGBTQ Youth.** *Our neighboring states of Connecticut, Rhode Island, and Vermont ban the use of harmful conversion therapy practices for minors. Do you support banning the use of conversion therapy in Massachusetts?*

Liz Miranda: Yes.

5. **Mandatory Minimums.** *The landmark criminal justice reform bill passed earlier this year eliminated or reduced a number of mandatory minimums for drug-related offenses; however, it left in place, or expanded, those related to opioids. The opioid crisis in Massachusetts is severe, but it will not be solved by doubling down on criminalization. Do you support eliminating mandatory minimums for opioid drug offenses?*

Liz Miranda: Yes.

6. **Juvenile Justice -- Part I.** *Ample research shows that teenage offenders served by a juvenile system are much less likely to re-offend and more likely to successfully transition to adulthood. Teenagers in a juvenile system have access to greater educational and counseling services, and they're much less likely to face sexual assault than at an adult facility. Do you support raising the age of criminal majority from 18 to 21?*

Liz Miranda: Yes.

7. **Juvenile Justice -- Part II.** *Under Massachusetts law, if a high school senior and a high school sophomore have sex – with mutual consent — the senior could be punished by incarceration and then forced to register as a sex offender. In recent years, states have been passing so-called "Romeo and Juliet" laws out of a recognition that such cases only get prosecuted when a parent disapproves of their child's relationship. Do you support the elimination of the charge of statutory rape for consensual sex between youths who are close in age (See H.3065 for reference)?*

Liz Miranda: 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?*

Liz Miranda: Yes. I have had personal experience with siblings, neighbors and young people who have been deeply disturbed and impacted by Solitary confinement. If it was up to me I would abolish solitary confinement

9. **Police Accountability.** *Do you support the establishment of an independent review board for police shootings in the Commonwealth?*

Liz Miranda: Yes. Yes, probably best led by county DAs..

10. **Militarization of Police.** Under the federal 1033 program, the US Department of Defense can transfer excess military equipment to local police departments. Such equipment makes police forces look like occupying armies and exacerbates the impact of overpolicing in communities of color. Meanwhile, communities are often left in the dark about the equipment that local police departments are acquiring. Would you support, at minimum, a requirement that local elected officials vote on any such transfer before it can take place?

Liz Miranda: Yes.

11. **Safe Communities Act.** Do you support the Safe Communities Act, which prohibits the use of state resources for mass deportations or deportation raids, limits local and state police collaboration with federal immigration agents, and prohibits state support for a Muslim registry?

Liz Miranda: Yes.

12. **Safe Driving Act.** Would you support the Safe Driving Act, which would remove immigration status as a barrier to applying for a license or learner's permit?

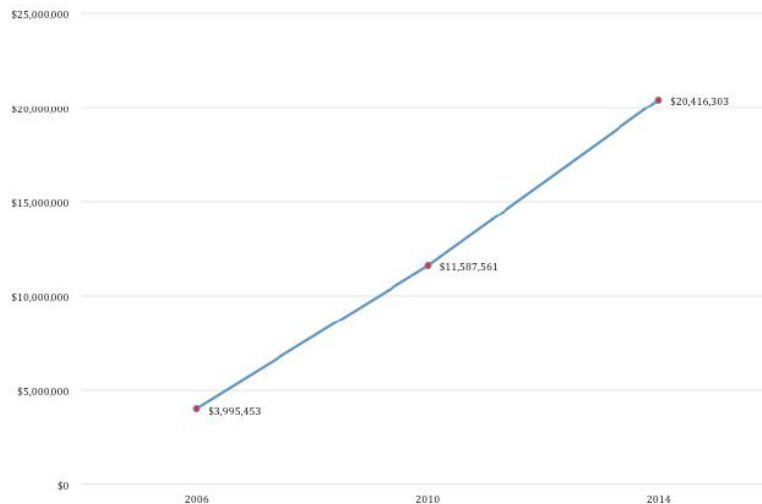
Liz Miranda: Yes.

G. GOOD GOVERNMENT/ STRONG DEMOCRACY

The influence of big money in politics is detrimental to democracy. Independent expenditures in MA elections have grown by a factor of five over the past decade. A centralized power structure on Beacon Hill, is undemocratic, and makes it easier for lobbyists to target the top and undermine the system. A strong democracy requires an engaged electorate, but voter turnout in midterm elections, and especially local elections, remains low. Myths about voter fraud are peddled in order to justify voter suppression. The Election Modernization Act of 2014 helped eliminate Massachusetts’s embarrassing status as one of the ten worst states in terms of voting rights, but there is still much work to be done.

Independent expenditures in MA elections have risen rapidly. (Source: [Common Cause](#))

Figure 1: MA Independent Expenditure Totals



1. *Please share your personal values and principles regarding Good Government and Strong Democracy.*

Liz Miranda: A good government supports people. I believe it acts as a safety net, a facilitator for critical services, it uses data, commonsense and the strength of people to improve the life of others. A strong democracy is the process that provides the opportunity for residents to choose representation based on their shared beliefs, visions and most importantly work.

2. *Please indicate work you personally have done to promote transparency, campaign finance reform, legislative rules reform, and access to voting.*

Liz Miranda: Most of my work as a resident and civic leader in my city has been focused on ensuring that residents are registered to vote, vote, are informed about the issues and feel empowered to help

lead the change in their communities. I am incredibly active in community based civic associations in Roxbury and N. Dorchester. I am also a founding board member of Union Capital Boston that works to increase the social capital and rewards the activism of some of our most vulnerable residents. I have not formally worked in campaign finance reform or transparency; but the work on the ground level to ensure we are active within our own democracy.

3. **Power and the Legislature.** *If elected, would you support efforts to dilute the amount of power held by leadership in your respective branch of government? For example, would you support a rule change allowing committees to appoint their own chair, instead of leadership?*

Liz Miranda: Yes.

4. **Transparency.** *Massachusetts is one of only two states where the Governor's Office, the Legislature, and the Judiciary claim full exemption from the public records laws. Do you support ending that exemption?*

Liz Miranda: Yes.

5. **Public campaign financing.** *Would you support legislation to create a robust public financing system for state elections?*

Liz Miranda: Yes.

6. **Candidate Diversity.** *The cost of child care can prove prohibitive to working mothers or fathers seeking to run for office. Would you support legislation to explicitly allow working parents running for office to use campaign funds to pay for childcare while the candidate is "performing work or attending events directly related to the candidate's campaign"?*

Liz Miranda: Yes.

7. **Voting.** *Which of the following policies to increase voter participation do you support?*

a. *Election day voter registration*

Liz Miranda: Yes.

b. *Automatic voter registration*

Liz Miranda: Yes.

c. *Expansion of early voting to "off-year" elections*

Liz Miranda: Yes.

d. *No-fault absentee voting*

Liz Miranda: Yes.

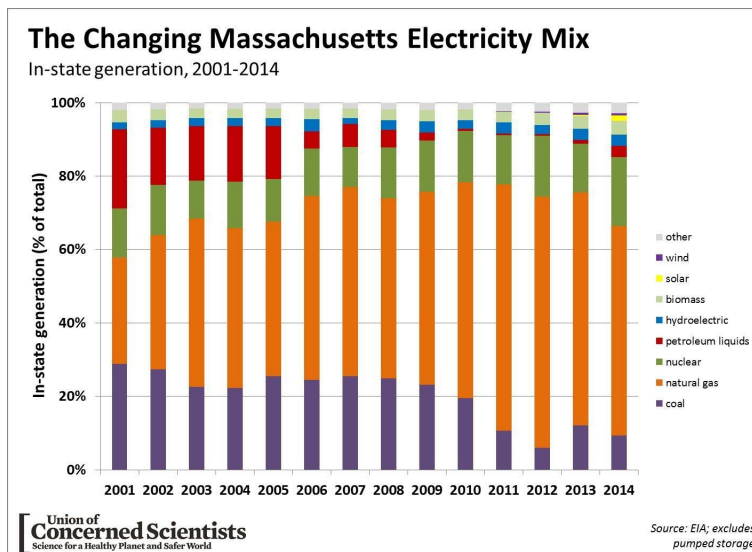
H. SUSTAINABLE INFRASTRUCTURE AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Massachusetts will be hit particularly hard by climate change. In order to avoid catastrophic climate change, global carbon emissions need to be reduced by 70% by 2050 and brought to 0 by 2080. In 2016, the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court ruled that the state has failed to meet its legal obligation to set and enforce annual limits on greenhouse gas emissions as outlined in the 2008 Global Warming Solutions Act. Setting and reaching these goals will require the decarbonization of our state economy and a transition away from fossil fuels toward clean, renewable sources of energy. In light of congressional gridlock at the federal level, state government must take a role in incentivizing reduced carbon usage and assisting in coordination between agencies and moving forward local government understanding of looming climate threats.

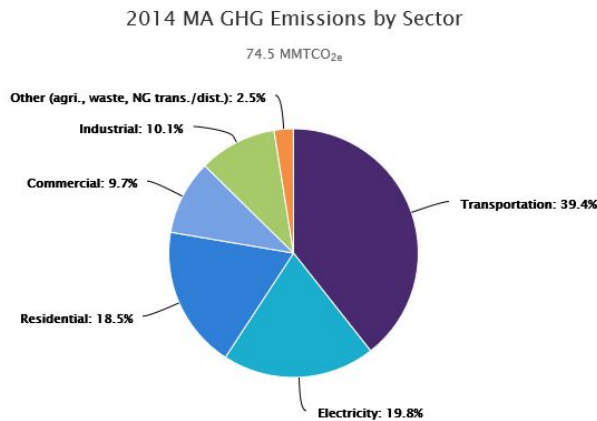
Equity issues loom large, as low-income communities and communities of color are often the most vulnerable to natural disasters and bear the brunt of pollution. In 2014, Governor Deval Patrick signed an executive order directing all state agencies to devote resources to protect the health, safety, and environment for the most vulnerable residents. However, this nominal commitment to “Environmental Justice” has been more rhetorical than real.

Public transit must play a role in decarbonizing our transportation system, as well as advancing complementary goals of equity and inclusion. However, Massachusetts politicians have lost their understanding of public transit as a public good that benefits all residents and businesses in Massachusetts, not just those who use it in their daily lives. The greatest evidence of this is their neglect of the MBTA: its debt has grown to nearly \$5.5 billion, with over \$7 billion in deferred maintenance costs. Regional Transit Authorities that serve communities, including Gateway Cities across the state, face enormous capital needs as well.

Despite recent progress, Massachusetts is still overwhelmingly dependent on fossil fuels.



Transportation is currently the largest contributor to greenhouse gas emissions in MA.



(Source: <http://www.mass.gov>)

1. Please share your personal values and principles regarding Sustainable Infrastructure and Environmental Protection.

Liz Miranda: My personal values and principles regarding Sustainable Infrastructure and Environmental Protection are directly connected to growing up and living in a polluted community my entire life. I do believe that inner-city communities of Roxbury and Dorchester deserve better, faster and cleaner transportation system. We need to reduce bus and car transportation where possible and introduce light-rail and increased bike use.

Therefore we need to invest an infrastructure that supports those changes and further equity in transportation. In order to bring down our costs of living, we can invest more in Solar Power and Education in our community. I believe in Environmental Justice and Protection for everyone. Currently, our low-income district carries much of the burden of environmental pollution. We must first address the racial and wealth disparities that have turned our community into cesspools of pollution. I would also work to align the progressive agenda with current environmental issues plaguing our district, so we can engage more residents in fighting for a healthier ,safer and stronger community.

2. Please indicate work you personally have done to protect the environment and expand access to public transportation.

Liz Miranda: I have been a lifelong active resident in the 5th Suffolk District. I have been active in the Sustainable and Economic Development Committee of Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative since its inception. I have also been engaged in the Dudley Grows coalition to increase capacity in our community to be more environmentally friendly and increase spaces where we can grow and sell healthy food in our current food desert.

Growing up and living in the 5th Suffolk District specifically in the Dudley Street Neighborhood corridor, I have lived through first hand long-term environmental injustice throughout my life from illegal dumping, illegal trash transfer stations, tons of vacant green space and pollution from heavy bus usage. My first job was as a 13 year old on the DEAL Group, Dudley Environmental Action Leaders where we worked on bus stops and increasing trash receptacles in our community where there was heavy littering.

I have led efforts from organizing dozens of youth-led clean ups, programming in countless of parks

and open spaces to increase their value within our community. I am currently an Executive Director of an organization focused on environmental and food justice, where we manage two large open spaces and engage young people in disrupting the local food system.

I am personally dedicated to increasing Transportation Equity and furthering Environmentally positive ideals that include waste reduction, solar energy and improving public transit. However, I do believe there is a serious disconnect between progressive Environmental beliefs, agendas and the real life experience of growing and living in polluted urban spaces. Throughout my time as a youth worker I have also worked closely with REEP (Roxbury Environmental Empowerment Project) , the Tru Initiative(T Riders Union) and other initiatives of Alternatives of Community and Environment. I hope to be the bridge between many communities to ensure that we are fighting in the state house, what is necessary on the ground level to save lives and our environment.

3. **Waste Reduction.** *Would you support a statewide ban on single-use shopping bags and a requirement that alternatives be more sustainable?*

Liz Miranda: Yes.

4. **Solar energy.** *Do you support increasing equitable access to solar power by removing caps on solar generation and restoring compensation for low-income and community solar?*

Liz Miranda: Yes.

5. **Renewable Energy.** *Do you support a target of at least 50% clean energy by 2030 for Massachusetts, as adopted in California and New York? (Hawaii is committed to 100% renewables by 2045). To accomplish this, would you support an increase in the Renewable Energy Production Standard (the green energy mandate on utilities) by at least 3% each year?*

Liz Miranda: Yes.

6. **Environmental Justice.** *Successive and bipartisan gubernatorial administrations have made verbal commitments to environmental justice (EJ) and Governor Deval Patrick issued an Executive Order on Environmental Justice in 2014 which has not been implemented.*

a. Would you support implementation of the 2014 EO?

Liz Miranda: Yes.

b. and support efforts to codify environmental justice into law?

Liz Miranda: Yes. Yes, I support this depending on fee and who ends up paying.

7. **Gas pipelines.** *Do you oppose the expansion of gas pipelines in the state?*

Liz Miranda: Yes.

8. **Carbon pricing.**

a. *Do you support putting a fee on carbon emissions?*

Liz Miranda: Yes.

b. *Do you support using some of the revenue from such a fee to invest in **green infrastructure**?*

Liz Miranda: Yes.

9. **Public Utilities.** *Would you support legislation to allow municipalities to purchase their electric distribution utility (the poles and wires that transmit power) and operate a municipal or cooperative electric utility?*

Liz Miranda: Yes.

10. **Public Transit.** *Do you support finding progressive revenue sources to fund the maintenance, expansion, and improvement of the MBTA and the RTAs?*

Liz Miranda: Yes.

11. **Regional Transportation Funding.** *Would you support legislation to allow municipalities to place a question on the ballot to raise revenue for local and regional transportation projects?*

Liz Miranda: Yes.

III. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Limit answer to 150 words or fewer.

Use this space to add any other issues important to your vision for Massachusetts or any other matter you think progressive voters should know about your candidacy.

Liz Miranda: At the core of my candidacy is a deep desire to work toward ending racial and wealth disparities that plague the 5th Suffolk District. I will be a legislator that joins the Progressive Caucus and will be supportive of an ever evolving progressive agenda. I will be a champion for shared progressive beliefs and will use the same machinery that I am using to get elected, to keep my district informed and engaged.

I am the daughter of a teen immigrant mother from the Cape Verde Islands, raised in the district seek to represent. I have known hope and transformation,as much as I have known trials and tragedy.I am this community. I understand why a quality education housing, immigration, criminal justice reform and out of school time matters. I am product of this community. This is my life and life's work to eradicate racial and social injustice.