

Sam Meas

18th Middlesex State Representative

Endorsement Questionnaire

Office Sought: State Representative

Legislative District: 18th Middlesex

Party: Democratic

Website:

Twitter:

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Sam-Meas-for-State-Representative-313829425795536/>



Primary: September 4

Election: November 6

Contents

Primary: September 4	0
Election: November 6	0
Introduction: Progressive Mass	2
About	2
Membership	2
How Endorsements Work	2
Sources	2
I. About the Candidate	3
Sam Meas	3
II. THE ISSUES	4
A. REVENUE AND TAXATION	4
B. JOB GROWTH AND THE ECONOMY	7
C. EDUCATION	11
D. HEALTH CARE	15
E. HOUSING	17
F. RACIAL AND SOCIAL JUSTICE	20
G. GOOD GOVERNMENT/ STRONG DEMOCRACY	24
H. SUSTAINABLE INFRASTRUCTURE AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION	27

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

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).

I. About the Candidate

Sam Meas

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

Sam Meas: I have the qualities, leadership experience and ambition to do a better job than the incumbent. My top three priorities are:

- 1) Constituent Services. Responding to all forms of communication from constituents within 72 hours.
- 2) Education - increase education funding for public, charter and vocational schools
- 3) Increase awareness and create solutions for opioid epidemics and mental health issues

2. What prepares you to serve in this capacity?

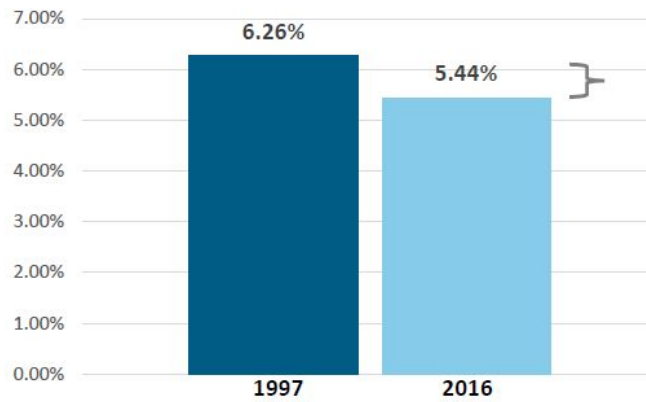
Sam Meas: I have over 20 years of experience in the private sector such as Senior Analyst at General Motors Asset Management, Product Manager at Fidelity, Senior Analyst BlackRock, Senior Performance Measurement Manager at State Street Bank and Financial Analyst Street Research. I was product manager at Fidelity Research where I managed small to large projects ranging sizes from as small as \$200K to as large as \$20M. I delivered the project on time and on budget. I was a catalyst in implementing positive change, utilizing outside-the-box thinking to resolve complex organizational issues, and aligning corporate business and technology needs. I have excellent communication, organizational, strategic planning, problem solving, customer service, decision-making, presentation, critical thinking, motivational, and leadership skills. I earned my BS in Finance from Virginia Tech. My community services over the years include Vice Chairman of North Suffolk Mental Associations, Registrar of Voters for City of Haverhill, Water Commissioner of City Haverhill, Director of the Professional Center for Child Development of Andover and Director of Cambodian Town of Lowell.

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.

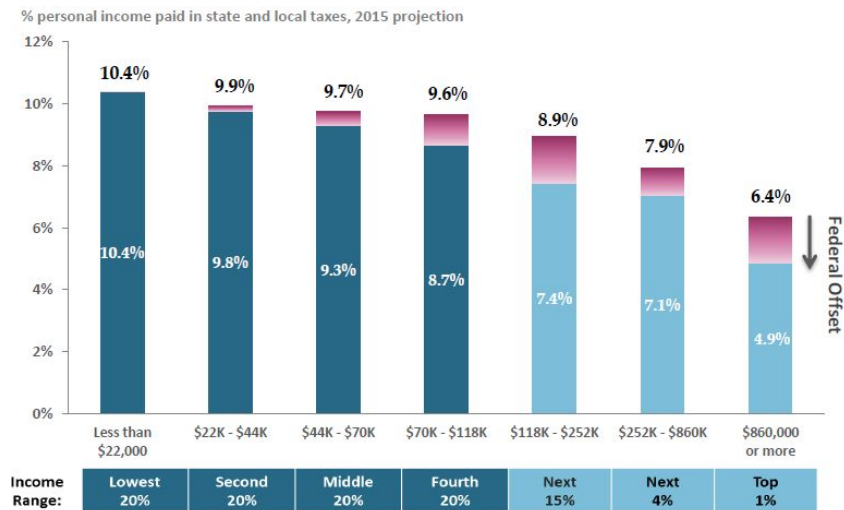
Declining revenues have meant drastic cuts, limiting our ability to invest in our communities and future economic stability.

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?*

Sam Meas: We need to maintain and increase revenue sources. How? We need to invest in education which leads to better better-educated and better-skilled workforce who will be higher income earner; which will lead to higher tax revenue for the Commonwealth. We also need to plan ahead taking into considerations of current and future regulations, tax law as well as economic climate. We also need to modify the tax codes on corporate/business by eliminating many tax loopholes. We need to enforce the tax codes. We need to eliminate wastes and frauds in the state budget.

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.).*

Sam Meas: I was appointed to by Mayor James Fiorentini of the City of Haverhill. Part of our job was figure out way to utilize the water from the Merrimack River for the benefits of the residents. Presently, the City of Haverhill does not have any water shortage issue. However, with the projection of population and business growth in the future, the City will additional capacity of water to satisfy the needs. The Commission met, researched, consulted and analyzed, we made a recommendation to the Mayor to initiate the application to with relevant federal and state agencies to draw the water from the Merrimack River. By doing so, in the future, the city of Haverhill will have sufficient water for the needs of residents and business and with excess water to sell to nearby towns while at the same time would save the City approximately \$25 million dollars in future cost by applying and constructing the pumping station now.

As a tax preparer, while preparing their taxes, I educate my clients on how to prepare tax properly and the importance of paying their fair share of taxes – it is an obligation and responsibility of a citizen living in a free and democratic society.

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?*

Sam Meas: Yes. Yes, I do support this ballot question 100% but only if we aggressively enforce the tax codes and get rid of the many exemptions.

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?*

Sam Meas: No. a) the tax holiday is limited to a number of days; b) the dollar amount in which the sales tax exempted is limited; c) business in general, large or small, see an increase in sales revenue during this sales tax holiday; d) the brick and mortar businesses can for short and limited period of time can compete with online retailers; e) An increase in sales revenue for businesses means more corporate income tax will be paid to the Department of Revenue.

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?

Sam Meas: Yes. Yes, I absolutely do. The public has an interests in knowing what those credits are, what are the benefits to the Commonwealth and who are the true beneficiaries of those tax credits.

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?*

Sam Meas: Yes. All workers need a reasonable living wage and good benefits. There is a civic and corporate responsibility.

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

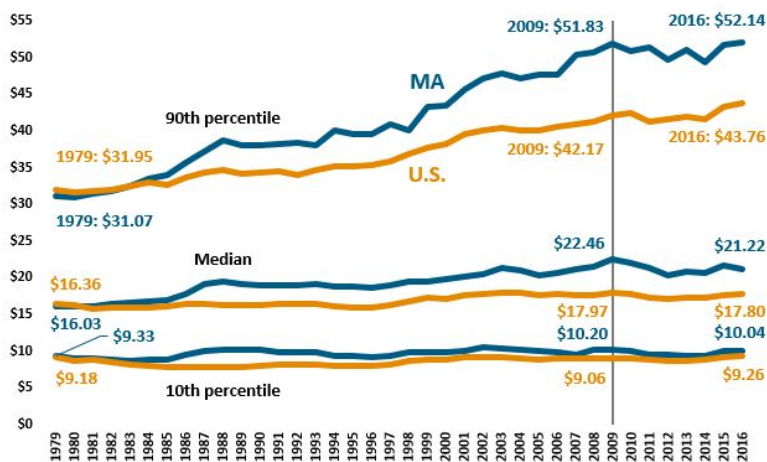
Cumulative Change in U.S. Hourly Wages for Private-Sector Production/Non-Supervisory Workers and Net Productivity, 1948-2015



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?

Sam Meas: Education and simplified regulations are the key to stable economic growth. With an educated and skilled workforce, our economy cannot be competitive. We cannot compete at the local, national and international level. With education, it does not mean that everyone has to have a bachelor's degree. It also means that we also need to have skilled-tradespersons who can work in the construction sector of our economy. Skilled-tradespersons are sorely needed right now. With our crumbling infrastructures, roads, bridges, railways and tunnels, needing complete overhaul, the construction sector will be the highest growth sector in the US economy within the immediate future. So we need to ready skilled-tradespersons to take on these jobs.

Wealth and Income Inequality – there has, is and will be wealth and income inequality. We cannot legislate the inequality. What we can do is to equalize the imbalance as much as possible through education – financial education and other means to help people saves, manage their debts while increasing their assets, financial planning & budgeting, the value of real assets versus renting. We need to incorporate financial education into our educational curriculum.

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.).*

Sam Meas: I was fortunate enough to be part of Cambodian Town of Lowell as the organization early board of directors. As an organization, we helped business to apply for grants and improving their facades (with signs and logos). We organized meetings to with business owners to understanding and apply commercial loans. Request police patrol to increase public safety and foot-traffic.

As a project manager working for a private company, I was able to complete the project (no matter how small or large) on time and on budget. As a result, I was able to save my private company money and reduced unnecessary cost resulting more growth for my employer which in turn providing more job security for many employee.

3. **Increasing Wages.**

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

Sam Meas: Yes. Yes, I do support increasing minimum wage to \$15/hour. However, the increase needs to gradually phase in so as not severely affect and disrupt ongoing business and to allow time for business to prepare.

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

Sam Meas: No. I would support making the tipped minimum wage equal to that of the regular minimum wage if and only if there is no tipping required to be paid by the customers. However, if tipping is still required, then I would not support it.

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

Sam Meas: I am neutral on this position as I have not done much research and/or study to

sufficient form an opinion.

d. Teen Minimum Wage. And reject efforts to create a subminimum wage for teen workers?

Sam Meas: Yes. Minimum wage should be applied to all workers regardless of age. Equal work for equal pay.

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

Sam Meas: No. I am not clear on the question – is it in addition to short-term disability leave or is it something entirely different? Is the paid family leave and medical directly personal or direct? Therefore, I am unable to sufficiently form an opinion.

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?

Sam Meas: Yes. Yes, I do support workers rights to unionize. Every worker should have the right to form and/or join a union.

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?

Sam Meas: Yes. Yes, I oppose any effort to roll back the collective bargaining rights of state or municipal employees.

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?

Sam Meas: Yes. Yes, I do. If the business has substantial connection to the subcontractor, that business must be held accountable for the actions of the subcontractor. This protects workers' rights and competitive wages, eliminate loopholes as well as holding subcontractor accountable for workers' safety.

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?

Sam Meas: Yes. Yes, I would support such legislation because often times or not, employee does not have a fair representation in such arbitration process due many factors such as the lack of clear understanding of their rights and obligations and/or punitive damages that employee may be entitled to.

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?

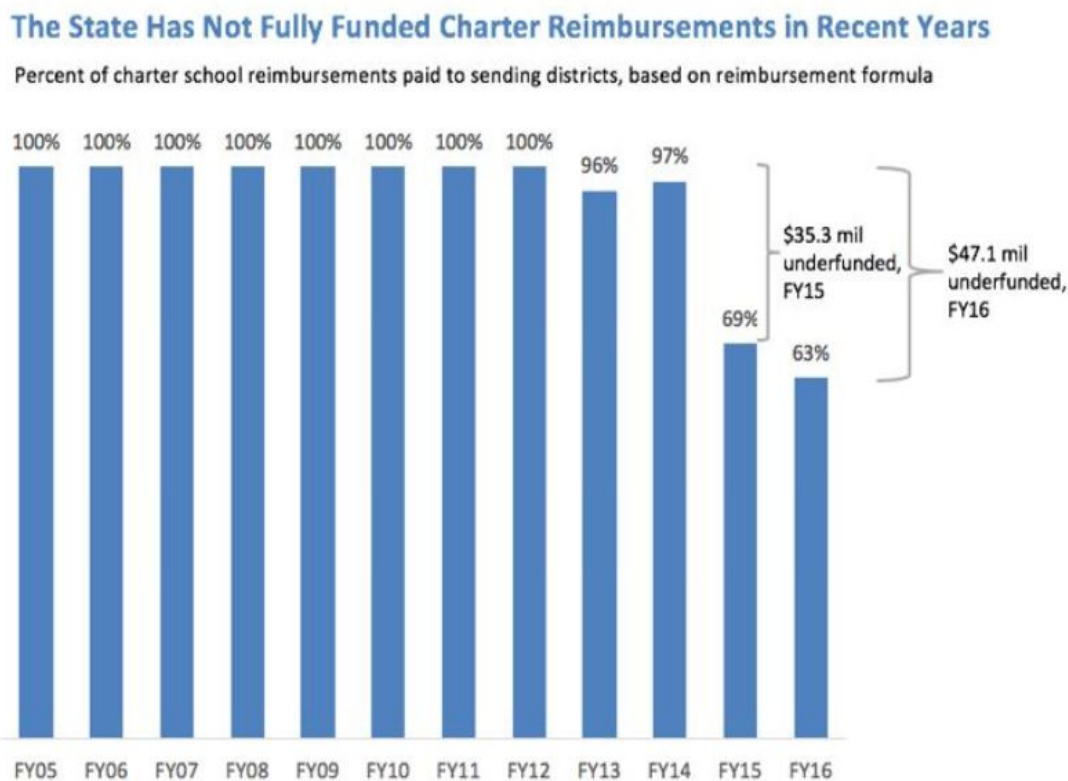
Sam Meas: Yes. Yes, of course. An employee owned business, in my opinion, is the best way to nature

and grow a business because all employee has a stake in the business. Employees are responsible for the success and failure of the business. If the business is successful and profitable, all employees reap the benefit. If the business fails, all employee suffer the consequence.

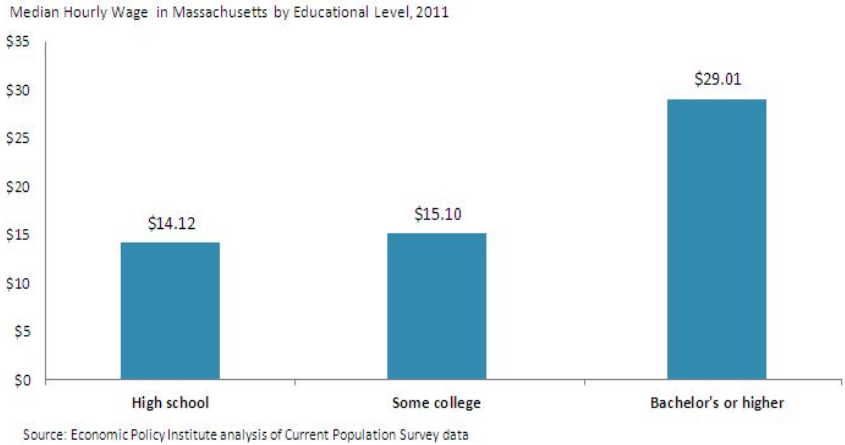
C. EDUCATION

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.

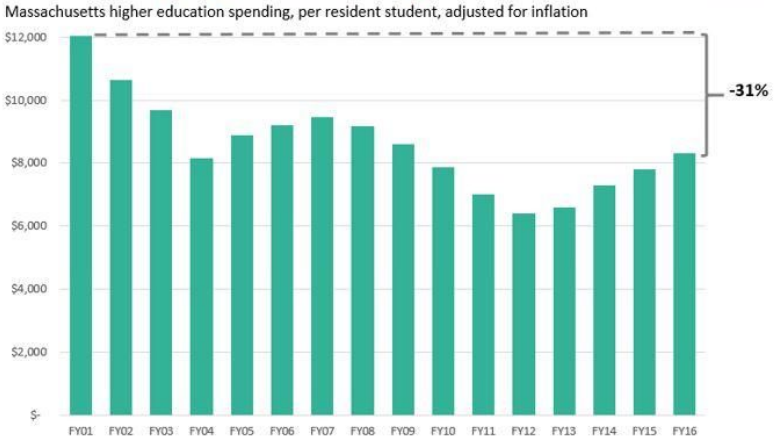


Higher educational attainment leads to higher wages.



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?*

Sam Meas: I am product of great public education. I attended and graduated from Virginia Tech with a BS in Finance. Without a good education, I would have been able to participate in the American dream – good-paying job and traveling all over the country. Education is the driving force for a strong and steady economy. We need to encourage and promote both matriculations in colleges and universities as well as trade schools. One does not need to go to have a BS to earn an excellent and comfortable living; so by being a skilled tradesperson can generate a good wage for many people in our economy. We also need to also invest in adult education where people who semi-employed or unemployed or just want to have new skills can go to evening or weekend school to obtain a certificate for said skill/trade.

Charter schools give parents and students alternative choice to traditional public school. Charter schools create competition – and competition is good for the parents, students and taxpayers.

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

Sam Meas: As a board of director for the Professional Center for Child Development, I lobbied legislature for funding to support the center which provides education and support for developmentally challenged infants and children. I organized fundraising and membership drive annually.

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

Sam Meas: Yes. Yes, I do support creating universal, free Pre-K, accessible to any resident of Massachusetts, integrated into the public school system because I believe that early childhood is critical to the emotional, psychological and cognitive development of young children. My association with the Professional Center for Child Development is the testament of my firm belief.

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?*

Sam Meas: Yes. Standardized testing can be one of the tools but it cannot be the ONLY tool to be used for measurement. So in general, I opposed the use of high-stake standardized testing.

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?*

Sam Meas: Yes. Yes, I do support the change in Chapter 70 Education formula. As is, it is inherently such a burden to cities and towns to make up for the deficit in the lack of state reimbursement for charter school, transportation costs.

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**?*

Sam Meas: Yes. Yes, I do support the cap on Charter schools so long as the state education funding does not fully reimburse cities and towns.

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?*

Sam Meas: I am not sufficiently informed to make a statement in support of or against this question.

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?

Sam Meas: Yes. I support sexual health education requirement as long as they are age-appropriate. Age-appropriate should be ninth grade and above.

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

Sam Meas: Yes. Yes, as long as these undocumented students and their parents are residents of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

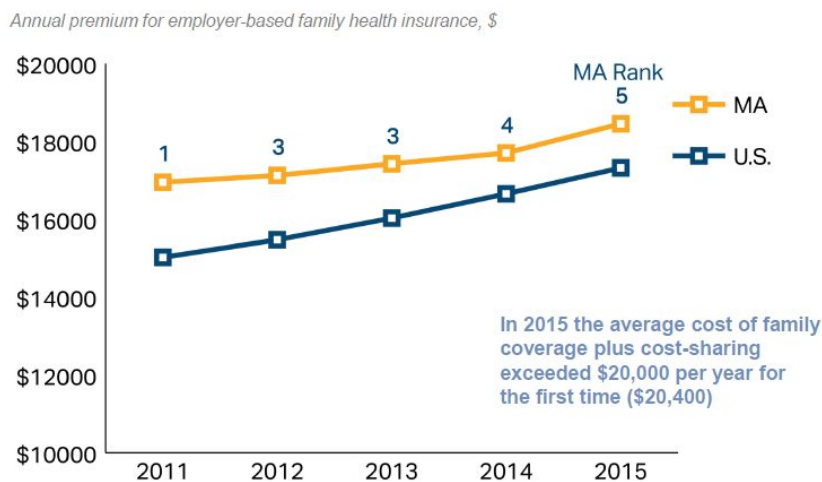
9. **Tuition-Free Higher Education.** *Would you support making tuition free at public colleges and universities?*

Sam Meas: No. A flat-out free-tuition is something I cannot support as it will lead to abuse and fraud. However, if it is tied to performance base, I would gladly entertain the proposition.

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.*

Sam Meas: Like everything else, healthcare, healthcare delivery and the outcomes could use some room for improvement. I am so proud that MA is the first in the nation in providing affordable care to all of its residents. It is the model for the nation. But so long as the pricing pressure, soaring at a very high rate, continues its upward trend, many people who are insured now will not be insured. Overall, healthcare is a national issue and should be resolved at the national level. I also believe that the insurance premium, drug prices and deductible would decrease or increase at a decreasing rate if the health insurance companies, doctors, clinics and hospital are required to post their prices and be

available online and health insurance companies are allowed to compete across state lines to competitively bid for their business.

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

Sam Meas: I was privileged to have served as board of directors and vice chairman of the North Suffolk Mental Health Association for eight years. Having served under the capacity, I worked with our executive director, board members and healthcare as well as social workers from across section of the organization. We fund-raised. We lobbied. We educated and mentor so many patients and clients with an array of services that the organization offers. Given the current the budgetary climate and healthcare cost, providing and maintaining same level of services is an extraordinary challenge. But through the hard work and dedication of the staff, officers and fellow board members, we are able to provide the maintain level of services to our patients and independent living clients years after years.

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

Sam Meas: No. I support completion whereby many insurance companies are allowed to offer and bid for services of their customers with across the board of minimum level of coverage for all regardless of prior conditions.

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

Sam Meas: Yes. I would oppose any oppose legislation to roll back, access to abortion care without dangerous delay, isolation, and obstruction. I support women's reproductive rights.

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?*

Sam Meas: Yes. Yes, I support the authorization of dental therapists in Massachusetts, similar to a nurse practitioner or physician assistant, in order to expand access to dental care so that many more people can receive dental care treatment and making the dental visit more affordable.

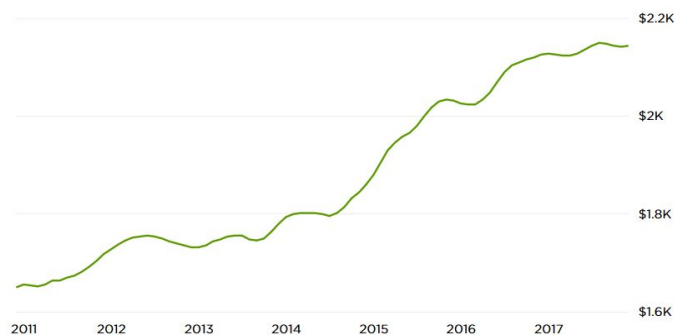
6. **Prescription Drug Pricing.** *Would you support a drug transparency law, like the one recently passed in California, that requires pharmaceutical companies to publicly justify steep price increases?*

Sam Meas: Yes. Yes, I support a drug transparency law, like the one recently passed in California that requires pharmaceutical companies to publicly justify steep price increases because by doing so, the drug company would to have to justify their price – cost and mark-up.

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?

Sam Meas: Affordable housing is a basic human rights. How else one can raise a family, maintaining a stable job and providing for the family if one does not have a shelter? The gentrification of cities like Lynn, Revere, Lowell and East Boston is a matter of grave concerns to us all. To provide affordable housing to all, we need the cooperation and a partnership of private, government and individuals. While encourage new housing development a certain number of affordable units needs to be maintained.

Homelessness is, has been and will continue to be a challenge. What we can do a society is to identify the reasons why people are homeless, treat their conditions and transition them to transitional living and permanent home and jobs. To get and maintain job, we need to provide training appropriate to their level of education and background.

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

housing (legislation, community work, published writings, etc.).

Sam Meas: My association with the North Suffolk Mental Association (NSMA) is a testament of the type of work and community involvement I had. NSMA in addition to provide mental care, counseling and treatment, it also provides assisted independent living to those with many different kind of disabilities.

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

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

Sam Meas: Yes. Yes, I do support the creation of new units of affordable housing, especially low-income units with time limit and financial contribution from tenants so as 1) to encourage tenants to move out after certain amount of time and 2) to free up existing units for others

b. The Massachusetts Rental Voucher Program?

Sam Meas: Yes. Yes, I do support MA rental voucher program provided there is a contribution from the recipient.

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

Sam Meas: Yes. Yes, I do support matching funds for the Community Preservation Act so long as the entire fees go the Community Preservation account.

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?*

Sam Meas: Yes. Yes, because it should be up to each city and town to decide what is best for them.

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

Sam Meas: Yes. Yes, I do support such a requirement because of most of times the consumers are not very educated to fully understand the documents as they are very complex with so many legalistic jargons.

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?*

Sam Meas: Yes. I would support such legislation to help tenants. However, it is my understanding that such laws are already existed on the book. Is this not the case?

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?

Sam Meas: Yes. Yes, absolutely I would support upgrading zoning laws to encourage more affordable housing and transit-oriented, walkable development and to promote inclusionary zoning practices. It is also environmental friendly and economically efficient in design and practice.

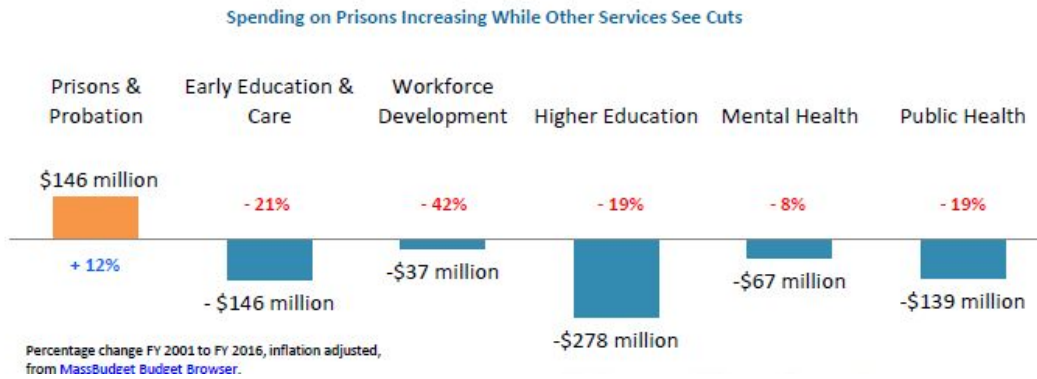
8. ***Combating Speculation.*** *Would you support legislation to allow cities and towns to impose a graduated tax on private real estate transactions over \$2.5 million, with the money allocated to affordable housing trust funds?*

Sam Meas: Yes. No, I will not support such legislation as I believe that it is counterproductive. Many large real estate transactions are done by many real estate companies whose stocks and bonds are owned by pension funds of public and private employees, teachers, police officers and unions. Such legislation would stymie the growth of pension funds that retired people are receiving. A few ordinary people would have such money to transact in such large real estate transactions.

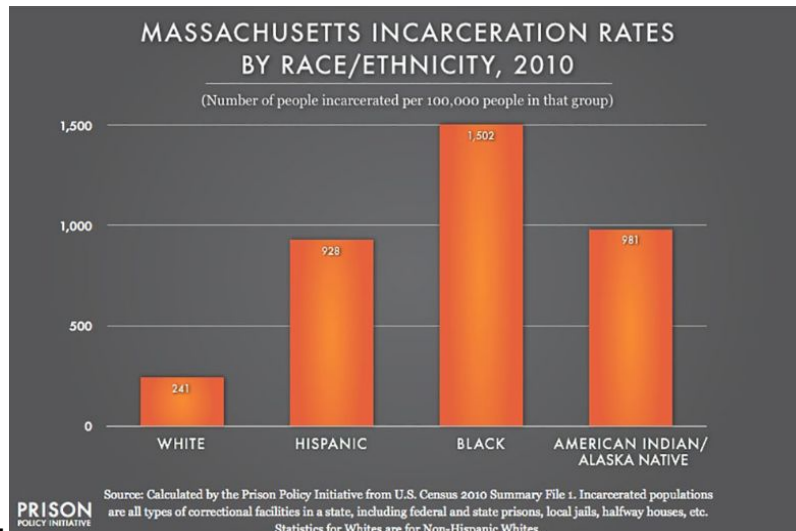
F. RACIAL AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

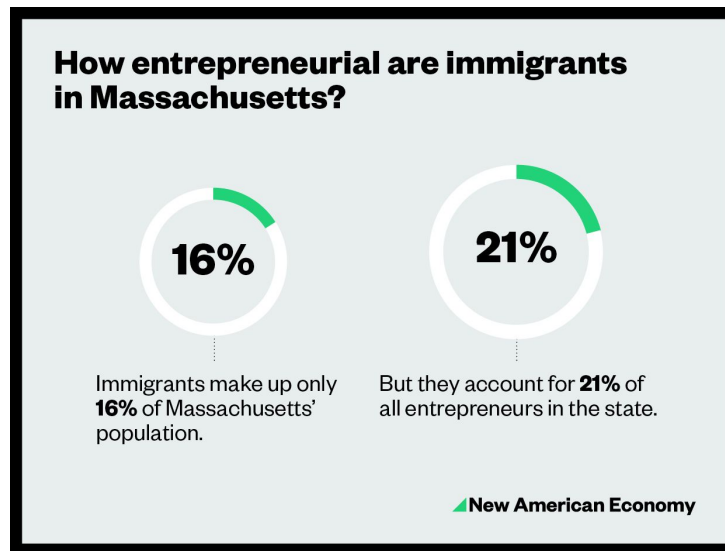
Massachusetts must continue to strive to be a state that welcomes and embraces all of its residents and combats prejudice and discrimination of all kinds. The social and economic costs of mass incarceration and the policies that created it, in particular, have put our aspirations of “justice for all” 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.*

Sam Meas: As a war refugee coming to America at such a young age in November 1986, I personally have had numerous overt and covert encounters with racism. I am acutely aware that racism will be not going to go away as it is a matter of human nature. However, that does not mean that we stop working to promote racial integration and harmony among all races. American is multiethnic and multiracial society, we have come along and we have strived very hard to engage and educate each other about the acceptance, tolerance and appreciation of different culture, religion and custom. As Cambodian American, I promoted Khmer culture, tradition, language and custom through an organization called Khmer Cultural Council through our weekly local cable TV program.

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

Sam Meas: I organized meeting and petition to renaming the Roberto Clemente Park to Pailin park by bring the Cambodian American and Latino group to meet and discuss on the proposed renaming of the park. Are we perfect? No, but we are making tremendous stride forward and healing together. My work and effort bridged the gap of any misunderstanding between the Latino and Cambodia group. I brought about engagement, discussion, understanding, friendship and trust.

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?*

Sam Meas: Yes. Yes, I will advocate for the protection of this legislation because I believe that we all should be treated with the same dignity, respect and equally...most of all, it is a basic fundamental human right issue.

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?*

Sam Meas: I am not sufficiently informed on the topic and therefore I cannot affirmatively make a statement on this question.

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?*

Sam Meas: Yes. Yes, I support eliminating mandatory minimums for opioid drug offenses for drug users; but not dealers.

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?*

Sam Meas: No. When one is 18 yrs of age, one is adult and is capable of making adult decision as well as knowing right from wrong.

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)?*

Sam Meas: No. A four years gap is huge in such relatively young age. A sophomore can easily be manipulated, coerced or pressured into having sex while she/he is emotionally and psychologically not ready. A four gap between an 18 and 22 years is a different matter as the maturity level would have reached.

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?*

Sam Meas: Yes. It is the humane thing to do.

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

Sam Meas: Yes.

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?

Sam Meas: Yes. Yes, I do support at minimum, a requirement that local elected officials vote on any such transfer before it can take place. We don't necessary want our community police force to be militarized and be perceived a threatening force rather than being a protect and server force. We want our police force to be approachable; not feared.

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?*

Sam Meas: Yes. Yes, I would 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 with an exception we must support our law enforcement officers at all level – Fed, state and local – to capture and deport hardcore criminals. We must protect and keep our community, family, daughters and sons safe from such hardened criminals.

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?*

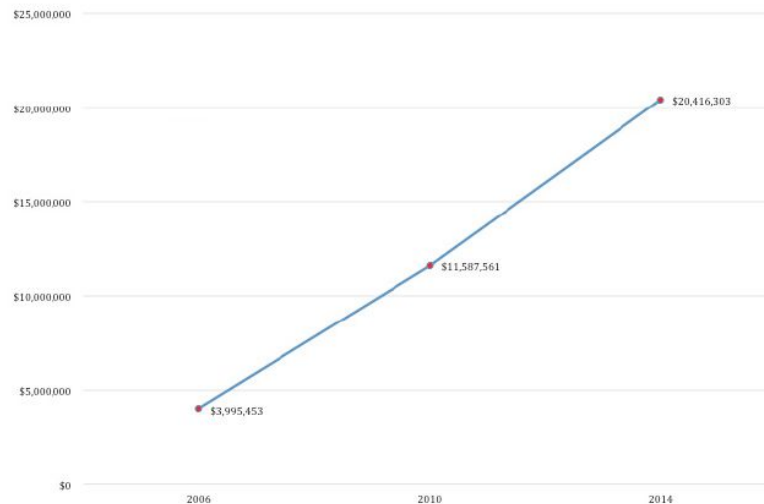
Sam Meas: Yes. Yes, so that the driver can been trained licensed and insured like all other drivers.

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.*

Sam Meas: A good government at all level should be reflective of the citizens that it represents. It must a diversity of race, gender and age. Access to participating in a democratic progress such as registration and voting should not be hindered by linguistic barriers or literacy. Given that a growing number of our population are of foreign origin and in some communities many are not very literate, on the ballot, in addition to name and position of candidate, there should be a color photo of the candidate to help voter identify and vote for their candidate of choice.

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

Sam Meas: I have been a key advocate in the civil right lawsuit against the City of Lowell. The Lowell current election system is disenfranchising minorities and while concentrating the base of power to one neighborhood. The composition of the city's council and school committee does not reflect the population of the city where nearly more 50% are minorities and non-whites. I am advocating for a mixture of district and at-large election process whereby there is a representative from each neighborhood and ultimately to increase minority representation on the city council and school committee.

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?*

Sam Meas: Yes. I would entertain the proposal. However, I would want to take time to research and study the merits of each selection process.

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?*

Sam Meas: Yes. I would support ending such exemption because the public has the right to know. It is about open and transparent government.

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

Sam Meas: Yes. Yes, provided that there is a mechanism by which to measure the level of support of the candidate so as to minimize waste and fraud of public resources if said candidate has no support and/or serious about running.

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"?*

Sam Meas: Yes. Yes, I would support such 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" so as to allow more people to be interested, engage and run for office so that they can serve their community.

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

a. *Election day voter registration*

Sam Meas: No. Potential for so much fraud.

b. *Automatic voter registration*

Sam Meas: No. It is a civic duty to register to vote. If one cannot be bothered to register to vote, one should not vote.

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

Sam Meas: Yes. Should be expanded to all elections; not just off-year elections.

d. *No-fault absentee voting*

Sam Meas: Yes. This would increase voter participation. People work, travel, vacation or happen to be sick on voting day.

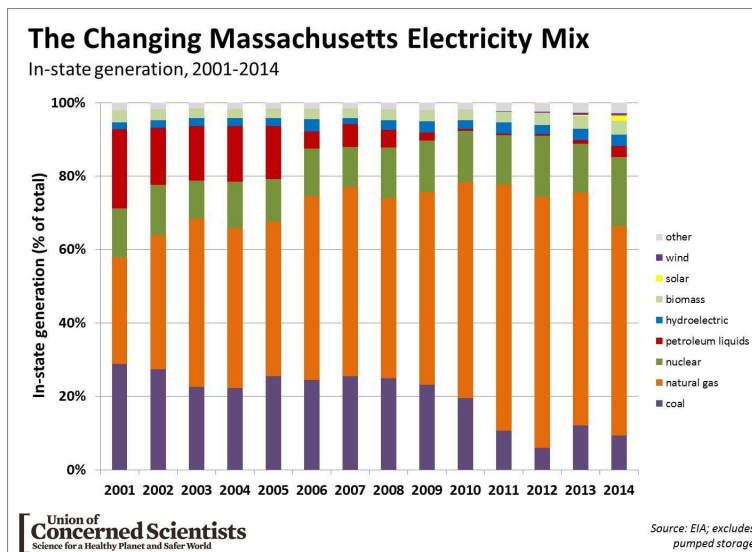
H. SUSTAINABLE INFRASTRUCTURE AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

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.

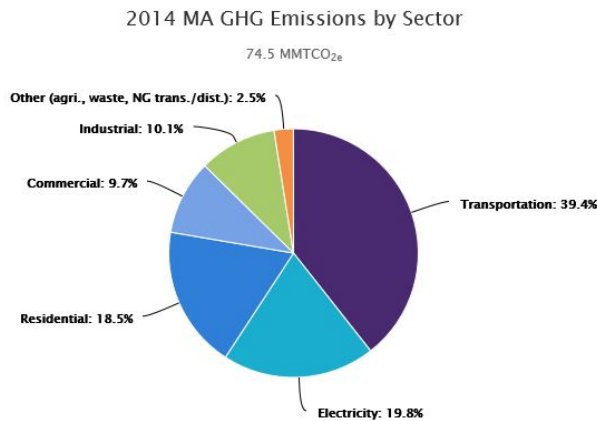
Equity issues loom large, as low-income communities and communities of color are often the most vulnerable to natural disasters and bear the brunt of pollution. In 2014, Governor Deval Patrick signed an executive order directing all state agencies to devote resources to protect the health, safety, and 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.*

Sam Meas: Each and everyone of us should be doing our part to minimize our carbon footprint. To achieve that goal, we need to educate the public to reduce, reuse and recycle. Sustainable Infrastructure and Environmental Protection should be part of our educational curriculum to teach students about the importance and needs for conservation, the benefits of public transportation and the impact human activities on the environment.

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

Sam Meas: I am presently working for Ambit Energy as a Consultant. I educate my potential clients about different sources of energy, power generation as well as the benefit solar power. I refer many of my clients to a solar power agents to sign up solar panels for their home.

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

Sam Meas: Yes. Yes, I would most definitely you support a statewide ban on single-use shopping bags and a requirement that alternatives be more sustainable.

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?*

Sam Meas: Yes. By removing the cap, it encourages more people to participate in the solar power program.

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?*

Sam Meas: I am not sufficiently informed to make declarative statement in support of or against. However, I do support any effort to increase renewable energy.

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?*

Sam Meas: Yes.

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

Sam Meas: Yes.

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

Sam Meas: Yes. We need to focus the resources on repairing leaks and maintaining existing pipeline to ensure that the maximum capacity is reached.

8. **Carbon pricing.**

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

Sam Meas: I am not sufficiently informed to make declarative statement in support of or against at this time.

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

Sam Meas: It sounds like a reasonable proposition. Need more details.

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?*

Sam Meas: Yes. Yes, absolutely. If private enterprises are allowed to do it, why can municipalities? An increase in competition will provide better rates and better service to the customers.

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

Sam Meas: No. I am not sure what is “progressive revenue sources” are to sufficiently make an informed statement. But certainly the MTBA and the RTAs are in need of improvement and/or overhauled.

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?*

Sam Meas: Yes. I think it is more equitable to financing regional transportation – those who use/need public transportation the most should be willing to foot a larger chunk of the bill.

