

Segun Idowu

14th Suffolk

State Representative

Endorsement Questionnaire

Office Sought: State Representative

Legislative District: 14th Suffolk

Party: Democratic

Website: <https://www.segunforma.com>

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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
Segun Idowu	3
II. THE ISSUES	4
A. REVENUE AND TAXATION	4
B. JOB GROWTH AND THE ECONOMY	6
C. EDUCATION	9
D. HEALTH CARE	13
E. HOUSING	15
F. RACIAL AND SOCIAL JUSTICE	17
G. GOOD GOVERNMENT/ STRONG DEMOCRACY	21
H. SUSTAINABLE INFRASTRUCTURE AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION	23

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

Segun Idowu

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

Segun Idowu: My passion for serving the community has been heavily influenced by my grandfather, a local civil rights leader and pastor. Whether through serving my school as a member of BSAC, organizing hundreds of students to protest in Georgia, holding government officials accountable with a report card assessment, or successfully pushing for the implementation of body cameras, I have sought to actualize my desire to make my community a better place for everyone. I see political office as the next natural step in my advocacy work, and view the role as another way to make my neighborhood more inclusive and accessible. Between September 2018 and December 2018, I will meet with community leaders in the areas of transportation, entrepreneurship, and housing. In January 2019, I will be ready to file, or sign onto, bills that address disparities and accessibility in each category. With Hyde Park comprising a majority of the district – and a place I have called home for a number of years – I have seen it neglected as the rest of Boston continues to benefit from its burgeoning economy. My desire is to see the 14th Suffolk participate in the boom, but to develop healthy approaches that allow it to develop without displacing those residents who helped build it up.

2. What prepares you to serve in this capacity?

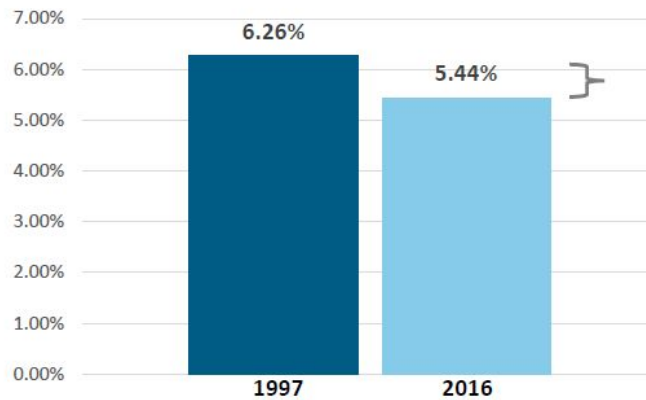
Segun Idowu: I believe my background in community organizing (helping to successfully implement a permanent citywide body camera program), my experience in government (constituent services coordinator for Councilor Charles Yancey), my serving in an institution dedicated to educating visitors on the ways we shape government (EMK Institute management), and my learning from my elders and history prepare me to serve my community in this new way.

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.

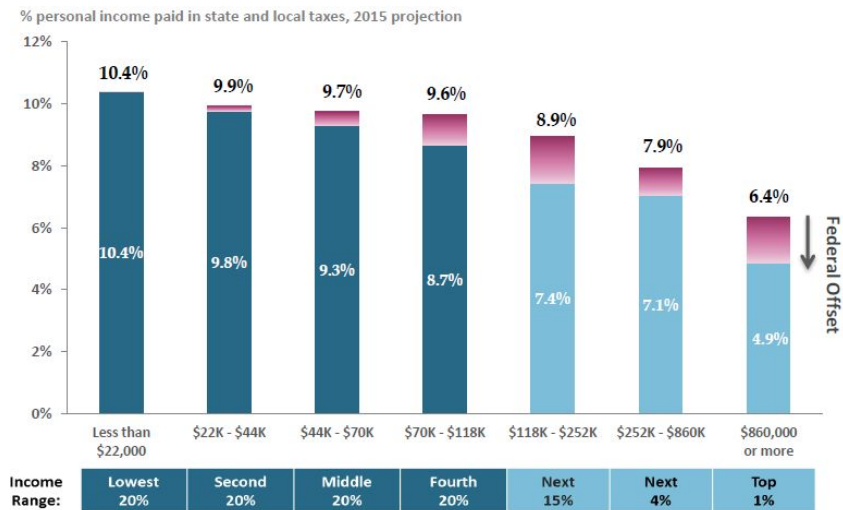
Declining revenues have meant drastic cuts, limiting our ability to invest in our communities and future economic stability.

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?*

Segun Idowu: I was taught that “to whom much is given, much is required.” I have a profound sense of duty to my community because it has poured so much into me. Therefore, I also believe that those whose profits are made from the people have a duty to give back just as much. I believe in a progressive tax system that calls on those who make more to give more and so support the fair share tax amendment currently on the November 2018 ballot.

I would also look at modeling a Portland, OR, law that taxes corporations where the income gap between a CEO and the average worker is extreme. With businesses like Amazon -- where many of its employees qualify for food stamps -- seeking to move to the Commonwealth, we must find ways to ensure that those whom major corporations employ are paid a livable wage, or else are taxed in a way that allows the state to provide adequate services for those workers.

I would also support State Senator Pat Jehlen’s bill, S.1544 “An Act Closing An Unfair Loophole,” which seeks to act where Congress has failed by addressing the carried interest tax loophole.

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.).*
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?*

Segun Idowu: 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?*

Segun Idowu: Yes.

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?*

Segun Idowu: Yes.

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?*

Segun Idowu: Yes.

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

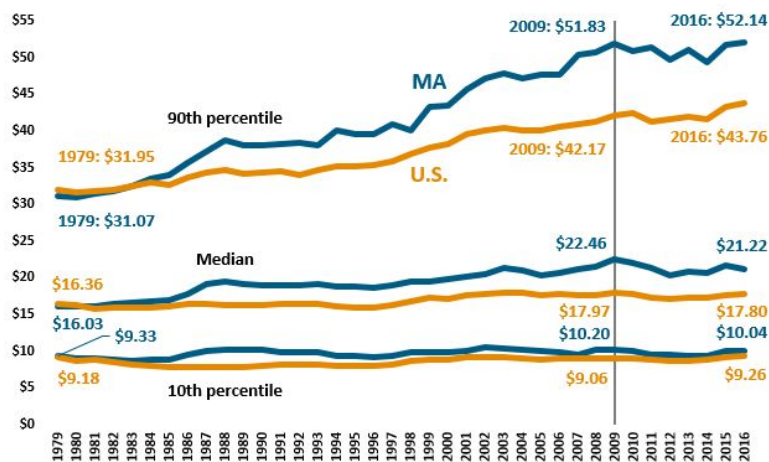
Cumulative Change in U.S. Hourly Wages for Private-Sector Production/Non-Supervisory Workers and Net Productivity, 1948-2015



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?

Segun Idowu: I believe that the Commonwealth ought to grow an economy that works for everyone and puts everyone to work. When we invest in women, people of color, students, and new industries, we are ensuring a strong future. We must lead by example by approving the raising of the minimum wage for the average worker, tipped employees, and young people. The biotech, healthcare, retail, and the green economy are emerging and growing industries, and so we must prepare our students to work in these industries. Income inequality is one of the greatest challenges of this generation. If we focus on preparing our young people for these industries, as well as focus our policies on removing barriers to participate in the broader economy for women, people of color, and other marginalized groups, we can grow an economy that benefits all.

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.).*

Segun Idowu: As the Executive Director for the Black Economic Council of Massachusetts (BECMA), my focus was to create two campaigns that addressed the expansion of opportunities for minority- and women-owned businesses, as well as ensuring the availability of good-paying jobs available to marginalized communities. While at the EMK Institute, I worked with our Office of Businesses Development and Events to expand vendor opportunities to businesses of color. As a Vice President in the NAACP, I worked alongside groups like the Black Economic Justice Institute and the Boston Jobs Coalition to push for greater accessibility and opportunities for people of color to good-paying jobs in the city.

3. **Increasing Wages.**

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

Segun Idowu: Yes.

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

Segun Idowu: Yes.

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

Segun Idowu: Yes.

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

Segun Idowu: Yes.

5. **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?*

Segun Idowu: Yes.

6. **Youth Jobs.** Do you support greater reinvestment in youth employment and vocational training programs?

Segun Idowu: Yes.

7. **Privatizing Public Services.** In 2015, the MA Legislature, urged by Governor Baker, voted to waive the so-called Pacheco Law for the MBTA. The Pacheco Law contains strong safeguards to ensure that state services are not privatized when doing so would harm workers and state revenue. Do you support reinstating the Pacheco Law?

Segun Idowu: Yes.

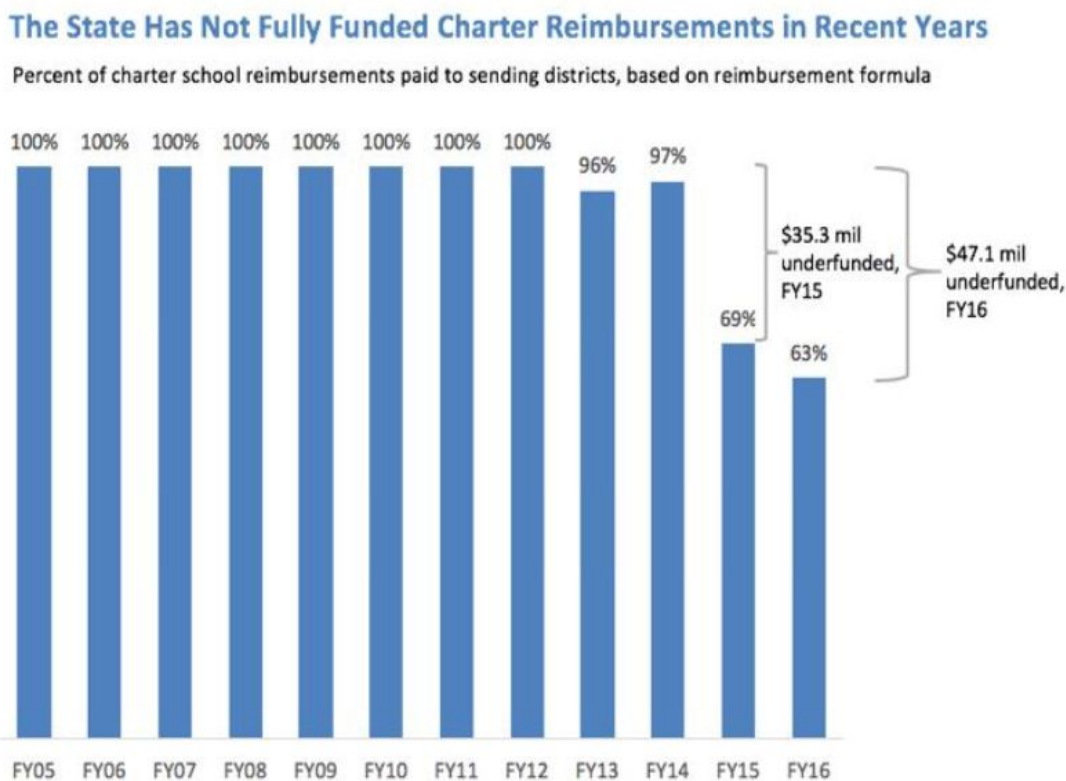
8. **Economic Democracy.** Would you support legislation to foster and develop employee ownership of businesses in Massachusetts and encourage the formation of cooperatives and/or benefit corporations?

Segun Idowu: Yes. In my work with the NAACP Boston branch, I worked to develop a relationship with and support the incredible work of Ujima Boston, which seeks to foster community ownership of local businesses. I would work to build on their model to encourage both community and employee ownership of cooperatives and benefit corporations.

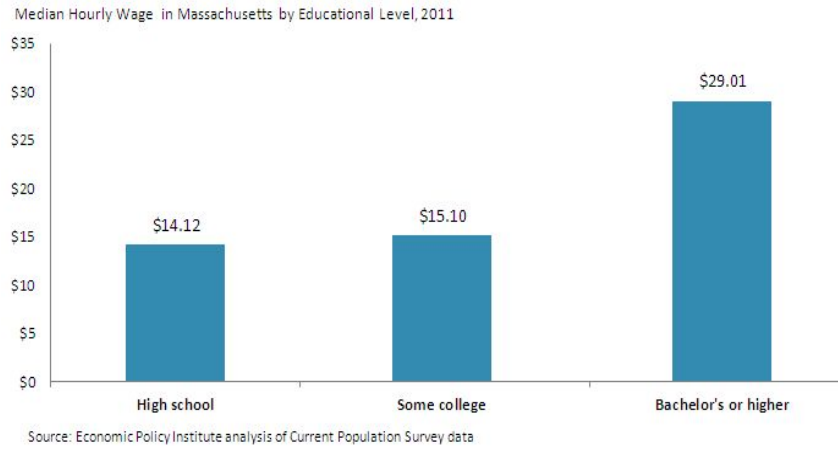
C. EDUCATION

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.

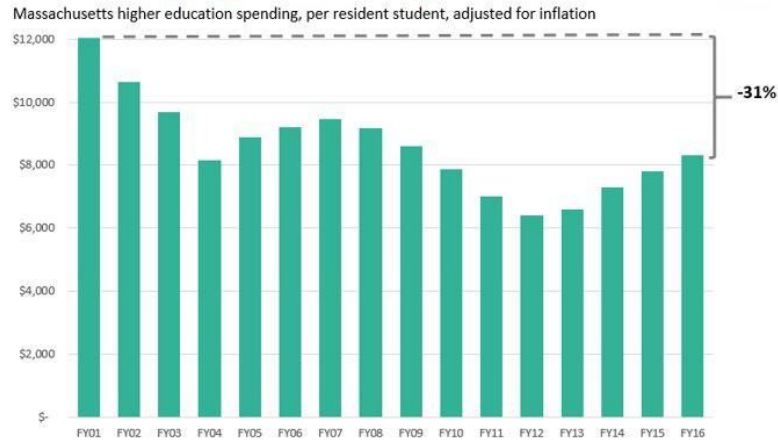


Higher educational attainment leads to higher wages.



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



Note: FY 2007 total is adjusted downwards to account for the fact that significant funding during this year was for capital investments that supported activity during other fiscal years.

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?*

Segun Idowu: I am the proud product of the Boston Public Schools. I supported keeping the cap on charter schools and believe we ought to look at ways to hold them more accountable. I am for fully funding public schools at the local and state level. I believe we ought to seriously tackle the Chapter 70 funding formula and fully reimburse towns and cities as the law states. I also believe we ought to address the amount of standardized testing we inundate students with. I graduated from Boston Latin Academy with a low GPA and few college prospects. A program at Umass Dartmouth gave me the opportunity to focus and boost my GPA. I believe this same opportunity should be available to all who need it. I also believe we should not burden the future leaders of industry and society with everlasting debt, and so support the notion that the Commonwealth should provide free public college to all who qualify.

It is critically important that we fully fund programs that focus on underserved populations like those who are English Language Learners or those with special needs if we want to close these gaps. At the same time, I recognize that education-specific reforms are not the only ways we must address ongoing racial and economic achievement gaps. Circumstances outside of a school building have an equal, if not greater, impact on these gaps. We must end student homelessness and hunger. We must ensure access to affordable, quality healthcare. And we need to provide good-paying jobs with benefits to parents, and have jobs available for students upon graduation. We know that it takes a village to raise a child. We should match this understanding with our investment in nurturing the whole family to ensure we close these gaps and set up all of our children, and thus Massachusetts, for success.

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

Segun Idowu: While a member of my high school's student government, and during my service on the Boston Student Advisory Council, I worked to hold my school, and the school system respectively, accountable. As a former board member and regular participant of the Greater Boston Morehouse College Alumni Association, I work every year to mentor young boys of color at our annual leadership conference, and work thereafter to help with college preparation or college applications. As manager of the NAACP Boston report card, I worked to hold Boston's school system accountable and provide reasonable solutions to persistent problems.

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

Segun Idowu: 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?*

Segun Idowu: Yes.

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?

Segun Idowu: 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**?

Segun Idowu: 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?

Segun Idowu: Yes.

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

Segun Idowu: Yes.

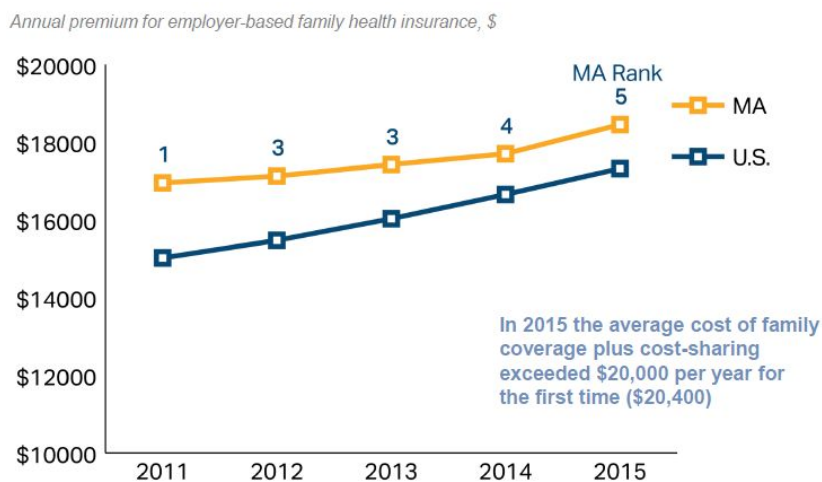
8. **Tuition-Free Higher Education.** Would you support making tuition free at public colleges and universities?

Segun Idowu: 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.*

Segun Idowu: I believe that access to affordable healthcare is a human right. Period. That baseline principle leads me to support the idea that the Commonwealth must move toward a single payer healthcare system and the notion that we must improve conditions of a nurse's workload so that both nurses and patients remain safe. After watching my ailing grandfather rely heavily on a home healthcare worker in his final years, increasing access to, and improving the quality of, senior healthcare and home healthcare are very important to me. As our aging population grows considerably, it is critically important that we find ways to contain the cost of healthcare while providing the type of

quality service that the hard work of our seniors deserve.

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

Segun Idowu: As a Vice President of the NAACP Boston branch and the chair of the Political Action Committee, I worked with our Health Committee to engage our legislators on unlawful, yet continued, practice of shackling incarcerated pregnant women while they attend their health appointments, while in labor, or post-delivery. We discussed ways to enforce the existing law forbidding the practice and are in talks regarding ways for the branch itself to hold Departments of Correction accountable for continuing the unlawful practice.

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

Segun Idowu: Yes.

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

Segun Idowu: Yes.

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?*

Segun Idowu: Yes.

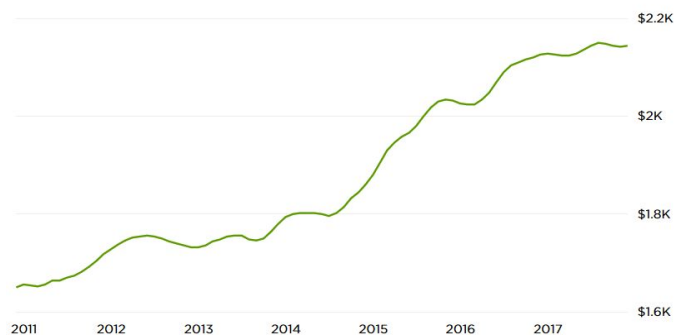
6. **Prescription Drug Pricing.** *Would you support a drug transparency law, like the one recently passed in California, that requires pharmaceutical companies to publicly justify steep price increases?*

Segun Idowu: 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?

Segun Idowu: Access to affordable housing is a civil right. It is incredibly important to me that the people who help build and sustain communities -- the lifeblood of any city -- be given every opportunity to remain in their homes, particularly our senior and immigrant populations who continue to be taken advantage of. I believe that you should be able to live in the same city or town in which you work if you want to. I believe that we must work together to find ways to develop our neighborhoods without displacing people. We have to tackle these issues using multiple approaches. It is not enough to build more housing stock or place families in existing housing, though more stock is needed. Whether it is homelessness, poverty, or the threat of eviction, we must look to provide good-paying jobs, affordable housing, debt-free education, healthy food options, and adequate public transportation to ensure that each family, veteran, or senior is able to stay in their home and lead a more productive life.

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

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

Segun Idowu: My first role with the NAACP Boston chapter was as co-chair of the Housing Committee. We focused on supporting the original language of the “Jim Brooks Stabilization Act,” built relationships with community groups like Right to the City, City Life/Vida Urbana, and Reclaim Roxbury; and held several workshops related to building credit, understanding the process of purchasing a home, helping seniors with end-of-life preparation like wills, and also bringing seniors and millennials together to help young people purchase homes from our elders to help with home upkeep and create opportunities for home ownership.

3. **Funding.** *Do you support increasing funding for affordable housing production (especially low-income housing units) and the Massachusetts Rental Voucher Program?*

Segun Idowu: 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?*

Segun Idowu: Yes.

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

Segun Idowu: Yes.

6. **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?*

Segun Idowu: Yes.

7. **Combating Speculation.** *Do you support imposing a graduated tax on private real estate transactions over \$2.5 million, with the money allocated to affordable housing trust funds?*

Segun Idowu: Yes.

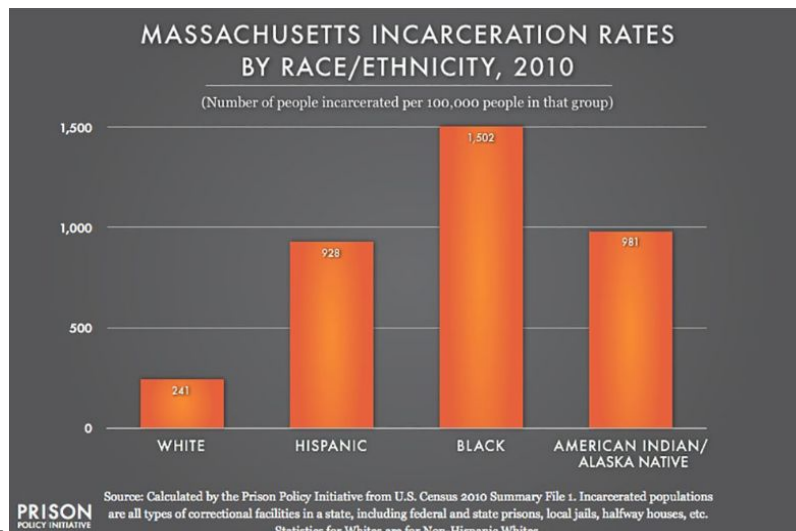
F. RACIAL AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

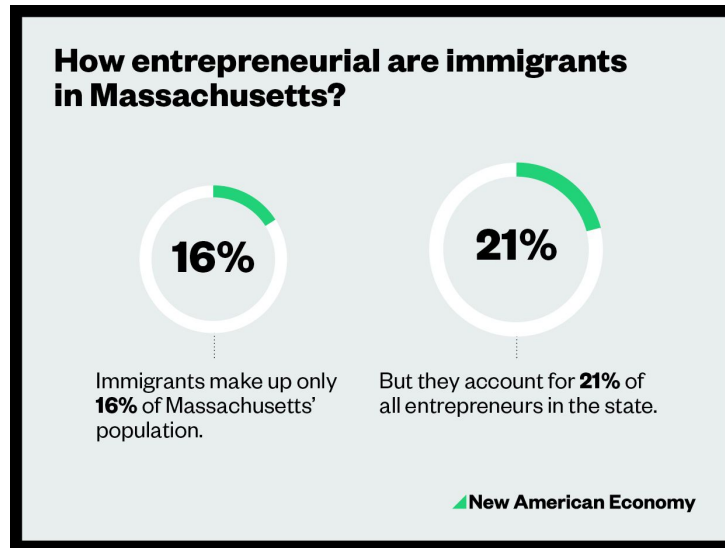
Massachusetts must continue to strive to be a state that welcomes and embraces all of its residents and combats prejudice and discrimination of all kinds. The social and economic costs of mass incarceration and the policies that created it, in particular, have put our aspirations of “justice for all”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

Segun Idowu: The world I want to see exist is one where people of any and all backgrounds, ethnicities, religions, orientations, economic status, genders, are identities are treated with respect, dignity, compassion, and worth. However, the world we currently inhabit has fallen short in all instances to reach this ideal. I believe every society is obligated to correct the injustices of the past and work toward a more just and peaceful future, and that each of us plays a role in helping said society to achieve this. To that end, we must build on the recent criminal justice reform victory by eliminating remaining mandatory minimums and reinvesting our savings to providing the formerly incarcerated with access to housing and a good-paying job. We must also work to not repeat mistakes of the past by treating unfairly those who seek refuge or greater economic opportunity for their families and instead to provide unobtrusive pathways to citizenship and avenues to participating in our economy.

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

Segun Idowu: I believe all of us must play a role in dismantling systems of oppression, though believe further that those who benefit from its continued use must play a larger, more meaningful role in those efforts. As an African-American with direct ties to American slavery and the son of an African immigrant, I know first-hand the effects of these systems on my community. I know, too, that my community is not the only one that suffers because of these systems. While in college, I was a board member of the MLK Chapel Assistant Program, which was founded to help train aspiring Christian pastors. We worked to root out homophobic and sexist theologies and shape young minds to preach progressive, uplifting messages and promote inclusive programs. My work with the NAACP and my leadership in the successful body camera movement were some ways I combatted structural racism.

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?*

Segun Idowu: 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?*

Segun Idowu: 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?*

Segun Idowu: 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 19?*

Segun Idowu: 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)?*

Segun Idowu: Yes.

8. **Reducing Recidivism.** *Do you support increasing investment in education and job training programs for the formerly incarcerated?*

Segun Idowu: Yes.

9. **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?*

Segun Idowu: Yes.

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

Segun Idowu: Yes.

11. **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?

Segun Idowu: Yes. The NAACP report card contained the recommendation that the city refuse to participate period, so beyond saying electeds should vote on every transfer, I would try to forbid it overall.

12. **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?*

Segun Idowu: Yes.

13. **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?*

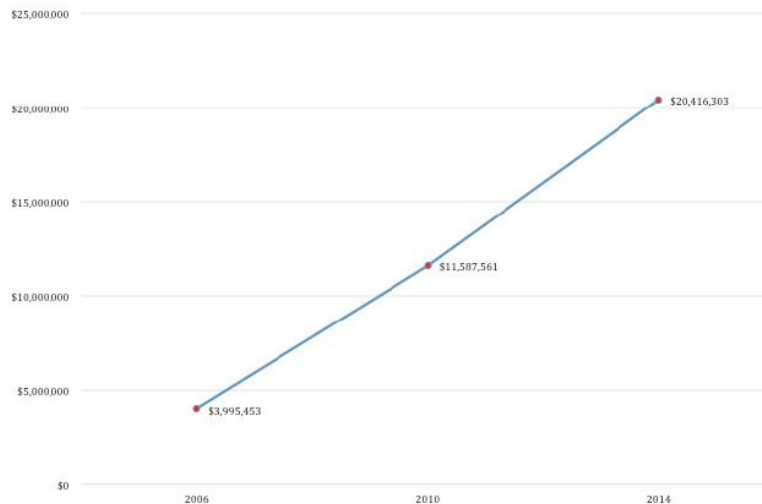
Segun Idowu: Yes.

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.

Segun Idowu: Our democracy is only as healthy as its weakest participant. A society cannot be fully recognized as a “democracy” so long as there are those within it that cannot take part in it. A good government recognizes this and strives to aid all who do not have equitable access or opportunity to fully participate.

As an African-American with direct ties to the Civil Rights Movement and non-violent direct action, the son of an immigrant, and a student of history, I know that at times our nation has not always lived up to our shared principles of a government and society that respects the dignity of all people and a political system that includes all voices and perspectives. I believe that a government, at all levels, ought to make itself available to all of the people, all of the time. And, I believe that in order to achieve this, all must

actively engage with their government on a daily basis, in between election cycles, in order to keep it honest and push it to become what it ought to be.

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

Segun Idowu: I have spent much of my short life working to hold government and institutions more accountable, and to invite more people to participate in the democratic process. As a young high school student, I was elected to serve in student government, and also served on the Boston Student Advisory Council (BSAC). While a student at Morehouse College, I served as a member of the Student Government Association (SGA), organized student advocacy marches, and registered students to vote. When I returned to Boston, I led the successful movement to equip our police officers with body cameras in order to promote transparency and accountability. As a Vice President for the NAACP Boston, I organized voter education forums and managed the Report Card assessment project of the current mayoral administration, an additional effort to promote transparency and accountability in local government.

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?*

Segun Idowu: Yes.

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

Segun Idowu: Yes.

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

a. *Election day voter registration*

Segun Idowu: Yes.

b. *Automatic voter registration*

Segun Idowu: Yes.

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

Segun Idowu: Yes.

d. *No-fault absentee voting*

Segun Idowu: Yes.

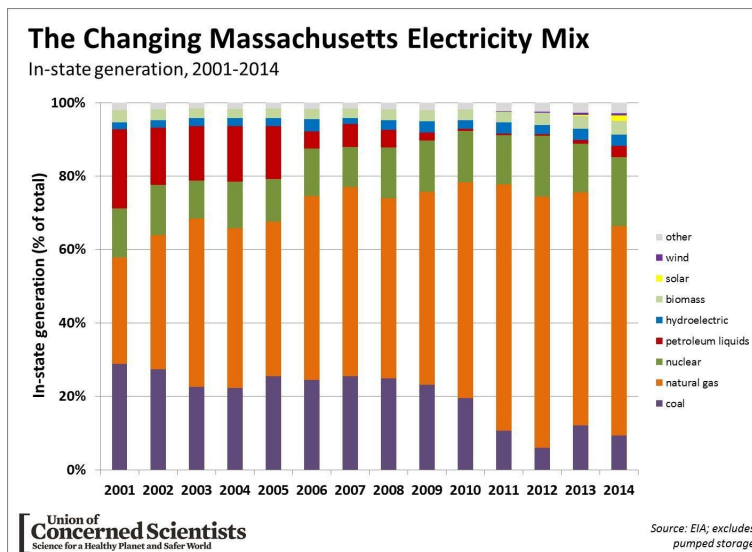
H. SUSTAINABLE INFRASTRUCTURE AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

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.

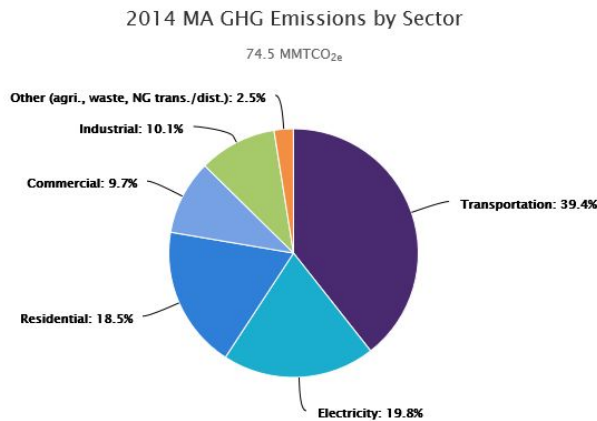
Equity issues loom large, as low-income communities and communities of color are often the most vulnerable to natural disasters and bear the brunt of pollution. In 2014, Governor Deval Patrick signed an executive order directing all state agencies to devote resources to protect the health, safety, and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

Segun Idowu: I believe that Climate Change is the issue of our times. This is one issue where Massachusetts can lead, not just the nation, but the world. This is not an issue where incremental approaches will do. Proactive, wholesale changes are necessary to help curb the damaging effects we are having on our environment. We must invest in the green economy and divest from fossil fuels. We need to invest more in solar and other alternative forms of energy. We must oppose any measures to extend the extraction of fossil fuels, especially if this extension runs through dense communities.

In order to grow the economy, residents need access to affordable and nearby transportation. High fares for public transportation are a regressive tax. We should invest in trains and buses that are fuel efficient and that do not harm the environment or contribute to poor health conditions when idle.

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

Segun Idowu: As an aide to Councilor Charles Yancey, I worked with Rep. Holmes to make bus routes in the Mattapan area more efficient, as well as provide more bus shelters for elderly commuters who requested them. I also worked to promote the availability of the Fairmount Line to residents in the district. In my capacity as a member of the NAACP Boston branch, I supported the initial proposal to introduce light rail down Blue Hill Avenue. I have worked to reduce my carbon footprint, taking public transportation when possible, driving a fuel efficient vehicle, reducing food waste, recycling and purchasing recycled material, and finding ways to use less energy.

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

Segun Idowu: 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?*

Segun Idowu: 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?

Segun Idowu: 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?

Segun Idowu: Yes.

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

Segun Idowu: Yes.

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

Segun Idowu: Yes.

8. **Carbon pricing.**

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

Segun Idowu: Yes.

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

Segun Idowu: Yes.

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

Segun Idowu: Yes.

10. **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?

Segun Idowu: Yes.