

Chelsea Kline

**Hampshire, Franklin
& Worcester**

State Senator



Endorsement Questionnaire

Office Sought: State Senator

Legislative District: Hampshire, Franklin & Worcester

Party: Democratic

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Primary: September 4

Election: November 6

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Introduction: Progressive Mass

About

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

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

Membership

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

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

Chelsea Kline

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

Chelsea Kline: I'm running for State Senate to be a strong progressive voice for Western Massachusetts' working families, small businesses, and marginalized communities. I grew up amongst instability and uncertainty. My father left when I was 7, and my brother underwent multiple surgeries. My mother moved us from state to state so my brother could access the highly specialized health care he needed. When I was 19, I became a mother alone. I relied on SNAP benefits to put food on the table, and I worked multiple jobs and stretched every dollar to take care of my daughter.

Eventually, I was able to start taking classes at Greenfield Community College. With the help of mentors and my community, I eventually transferred to Smith College, where I fell in love with reproductive justice and progressive activism. After Smith I attended Harvard Divinity School, and now I am a higher education leader at Bay Path University directing programs that help nontraditional female students, many of whom struggle with the same challenges I did. My little girl, now 21, is a proud public school graduate determined to shape the world. My two young boys are learning that strong communities take care of vulnerable people. I have organized progressive activists in the Pioneer Valley, strengthened programs that train women to run for office, and used my voice on the Hampshire/ Franklin Commission on the Status of Women and Girls to advocate for inclusion and intersectional organizing.

I share this story because I believe our experiences inform our advocacy and activism, and because it matters who represents us in the Legislature. When I fight for priorities like education equity, single payer health care, environmental justice, and strengthening our fraying social safety net, I will do so with my personal experiences and challenges, and with my compassion and conviction. I fundamentally believe that state government has the power to lift up all marginalized communities, to provide every child with a great education, to actualize our belief that high-quality health care is a human right, and to break down systems of oppression. But to achieve these monumental goals, we need to have authentic advocates whose lived experiences are impossible to ignore. We need advocates willing to call for higher taxes on the wealthy. And we need legislators who know what it is to struggle.

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

Chelsea Kline: As a higher education leader responsible for several major program offerings at a university, I understand the challenges and opportunities of making positive change in a complex and bureaucratic organization. I have direct experience working with multiple stakeholders and colleagues with divergent interests, and ensuring that needed changes are enacted effectively and fairly with our key constituency – students – closest in mind.

I have more than twenty years' experience in activism on issues like reproductive justice and environmental advocacy. I began my foray into social justice and activism work shortly after giving birth to my daughter 21 years ago. Those early experiences volunteering for the National Network of

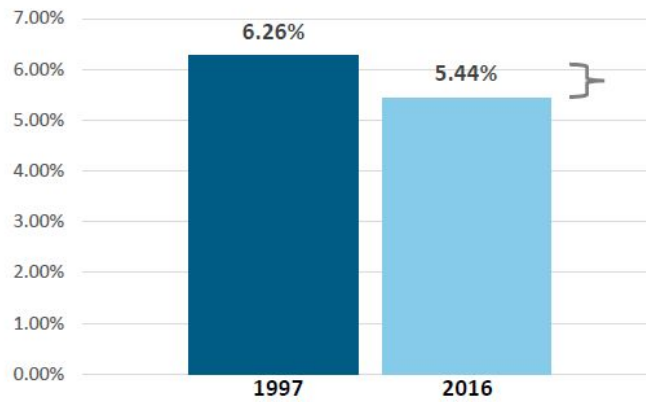
Abortion Funds, the Sierra Club, Greenpeace USA, the Civil Liberties and Public Policy (CLPP) program, and other groups cemented my passion for justice work, and it has been a part of me ever since.

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.

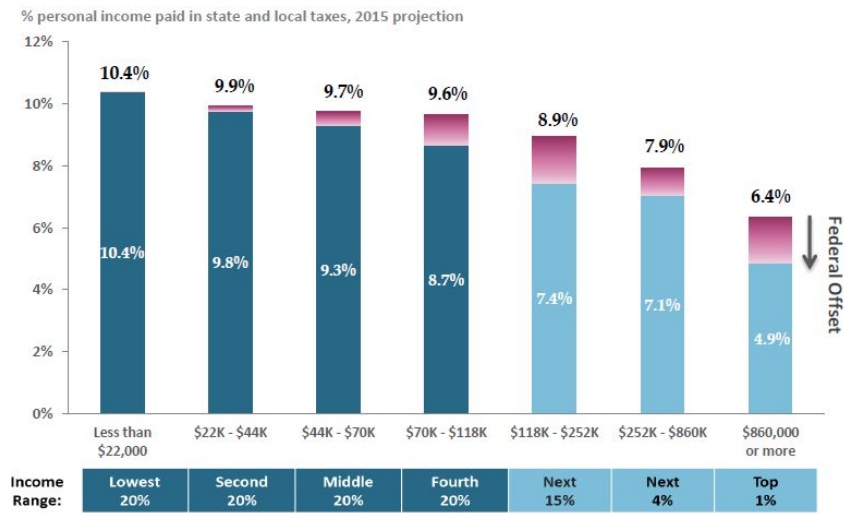
Declining revenues have meant drastic cuts, limiting our ability to invest in our communities and future economic stability.

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?*

Chelsea Kline: Our country and our state do not have a level playing field in policymaking, especially when it comes to revenue and budget. In Massachusetts, we have one of the most regressive tax systems in the country, and are in the middle of the pack in terms of tax rates overall. I believe that the wealthy need to pay their fair share, and although that needs to begin with the Fair Share Amendment, I believe it should go beyond it as well.

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.).*

Chelsea Kline: If I am fortunate enough to win my primary, I plan to shift my campaign resources to driving up turnout in my progressive district to support several statewide priorities, including the Fair Share Amendment.

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?*

Chelsea Kline: 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?*

Chelsea Kline: 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?*

Chelsea Kline: Yes. Yes, absolutely. I am also concerned that, while Beacon Hill grants hundreds of millions of dollars in tax breaks to Fortune 500 companies like Amazon and G.E., small local businesses – especially in Western Massachusetts and other regions with less concentrations of wealth – struggle to get by. The state should reduce its tax breaks to international corporations that do not need them, and instead support local businesses, invest in public transportation and free higher education, and invest in transportation and infrastructure so all communities can benefit equally from Massachusetts' economic successes.

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?*

Chelsea Kline: Yes. Additionally, any company receiving tax credits from the state should be held accountable for environmental damages caused by their business. Major companies that have damaged Massachusetts communities are still getting tax benefits from the state while the communities continue to suffer.

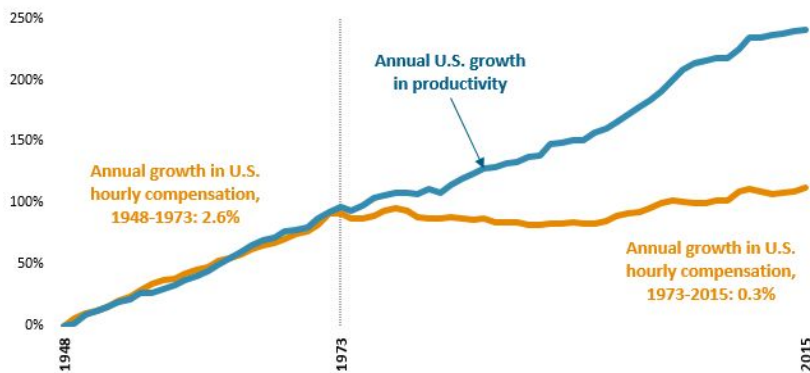
B. JOB GROWTH AND THE ECONOMY

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

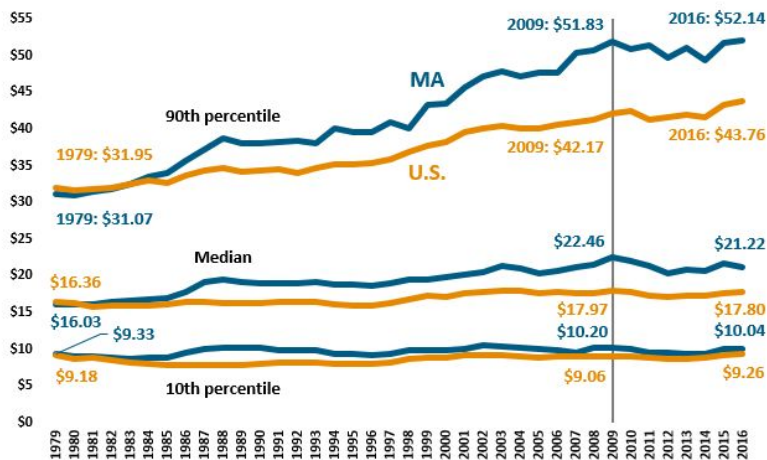
Cumulative Change in U.S. Hourly Wages for Private-Sector Production/Non-Supervisory Workers and Net Productivity, 1948-2015



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?

Chelsea Kline: Wealth and income inequality is one of the biggest challenges of our time. There is no silver bullet to this problem, but a concerted effort to pass policies protecting working families and requiring the wealthy to pay more will help to level the playing field. In a country and state with such incredible wealth, the levels of inequality, the tuition costs of public higher education, the inequities in access to health care, good-paying jobs, and transportation – this is all unacceptable and changeable. We just need the political courage to stand up and do it.

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.).*

Chelsea Kline: I have marched in demonstrations and organized activists to lobby for economic justice.

3. Increasing Wages.

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

Chelsea Kline: Yes.

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

Chelsea Kline: Yes.

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

Chelsea Kline: Yes.

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

Chelsea Kline: 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?*

Chelsea Kline: Yes.

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

Chelsea Kline: Yes. Interfering with union organizing is illegal, and morally unacceptable.

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?*

Chelsea Kline: Yes. This has happened in Massachusetts, too, particularly with school employees in

districts with lower standardized test scores. I oppose these roll backs of bargaining rights and would work to restore them.

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?*

Chelsea Kline: Yes.

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

Chelsea Kline: Yes. These provisions make it much harder for workers to protect their rights, and stack the deck against them.

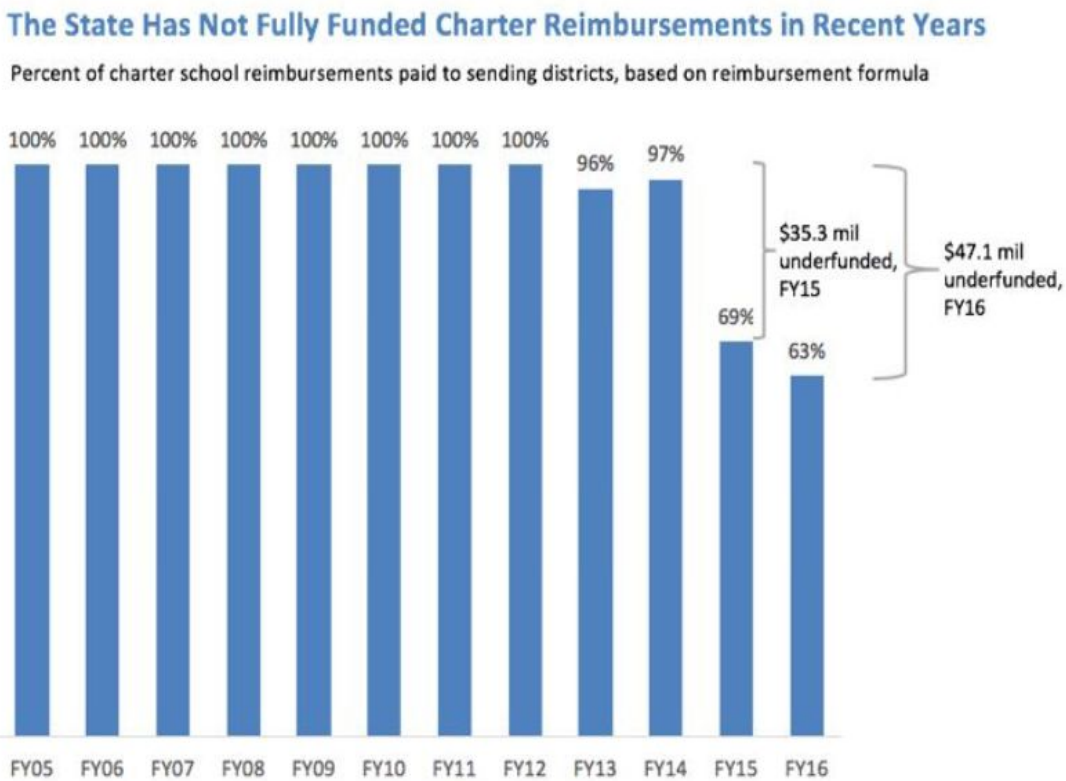
9. **Economic Democracy.** *Would you support legislation to foster and develop employee ownership of businesses in Massachusetts and encourage the formation of cooperatives and/or benefit corporations?*

Chelsea Kline: Yes. Especially in Western Massachusetts, with so many small businesses, workers having the ability to take ownership of a business when a business owner decides to retire can help workers accumulate wealth and keep the business open.

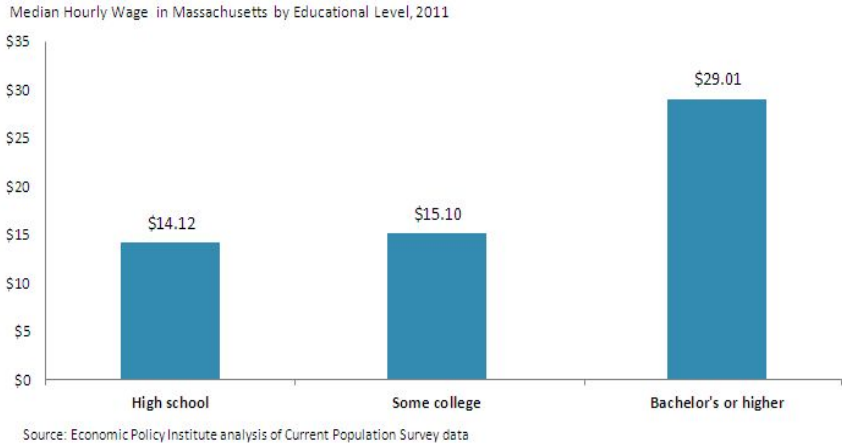
C. EDUCATION

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.

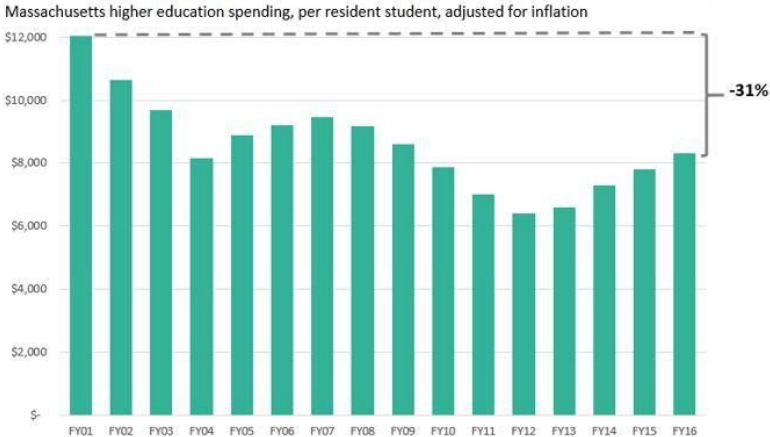


Higher educational attainment leads to higher wages.



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?*

Chelsea Kline: Public schools are the foundation of a more equitable, more engaged, and more compassionate society. That's why we need to end high-stakes testing, focus on the whole child, empower educators, invest in our public schools, and support every child, regardless of their background or ability. I oppose expansions on charter schools, and believe existing charter schools need new funding mechanisms, and must be held to the same standards as public schools.

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

Chelsea Kline: As an educator working with nontraditional adult female college students, I see how often schools at every level are becoming the supports of so many students held back by poverty, violence, and other forms of oppression. As a higher education leader, I've implemented progressive policies in the programs under my purview, so that we support students in need as best as we are able. It breaks my heart to see my students homeless, or worried about deportation, or unable to afford child care. I am proud to mentor many of these students, and to share my story of struggle as a young mom on food stamps who never thought she would make it through college. I feel I have a personal responsibility, as someone who has experienced many of these hardships, to mentor and support these women.

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

Chelsea Kline: Yes. Yes! I support fully funding universal pre-K and full-day kindergarten, so that every child can access early education opportunities that reduce learning gaps between students from poor families and students from wealthy families. In Massachusetts, full-day kindergarten costs some families as much as \$4,100 per child. This is ridiculous and indicative of our level of investment in public education.

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?*

Chelsea Kline: Yes. Yes! Standardized tests are a better measure of a student's parents' wealth than anything else, and the emphasis on standardized testing – especially in high-stakes decisions like whether or not to allow a student to graduate – has taken power away from teachers trying to support every student.

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?*

Chelsea Kline: Yes. Yes! We have funded our public schools at austerity levels for far too long, and a funding formula written decades ago cannot adequately measure the cost of a free and adequate public education.

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**?*

Chelsea Kline: Yes. Yes! And I support reducing the higher cap for the school districts with the lowest test scores. The MCAS is not the end-all-be-all measure of a school district, and taking more money from these public schools is way to help them.

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?*

Chelsea Kline: Yes.

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?

Chelsea Kline: Yes.

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

Chelsea Kline: Yes. Yes, because it's the right thing to do, and because these students bring so much to our communities.

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

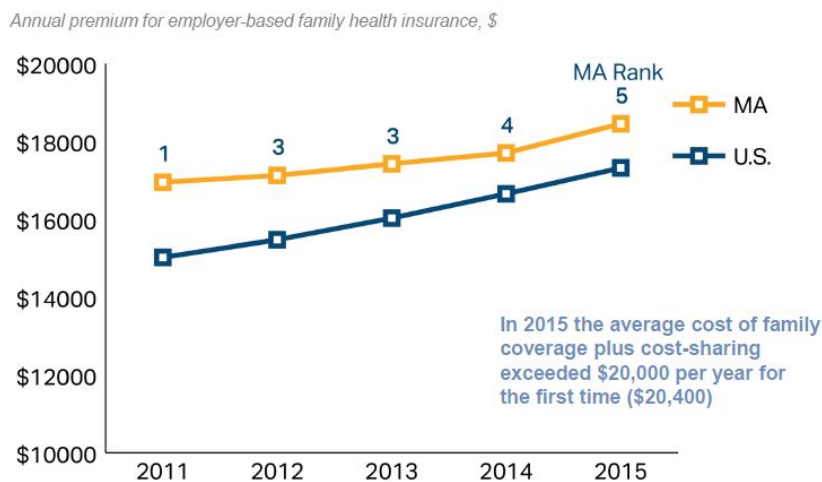
Chelsea Kline: Yes. I was only able to succeed myself because of the lower cost of Greenfield Community College more than a decade ago. The state invests far less money in our public colleges and universities than it did then, and the costs are borne by the students. I worry that someone who is in the situation today that I was then would not be able to make it.

I also support the Student Loan Borrowers' Bill of Rights.

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.*

Chelsea Kline: Access to high-quality health care is a human right, and we should be pursuing policies and system change that actualize this value. Single-payer health care is the surest way to accomplish the three pillars of health care policy: quality, affordability, and accessibility. It's a big shift, but one that makes sense for our personal and community health, for economic justice, and for our values.

Many of the challenges we face in health care have an outsized impact on my district. Community

hospitals are reimbursed less than larger institutions and serve more vulnerable populations. Fair hospital pricing will help sustain community hospitals and slow the increasing consolidation of health care in Massachusetts. Other problems that disproportionately hit Western Mass could be resolved by policies that reduce costs and improve outcomes like telemedicine, changes to scopes of practice for various types of providers, and increased investments in mental/ behavioral health beds.

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

Chelsea Kline: I have volunteered in health care settings for more than twenty years, most of which was focused on underserved communities. I have assembled clean needle kits to help reduce the spread of HIV/AIDS, promoted and coordinated breast cancer screenings in low-income communities, and have mentored pregnant teenagers after my own experience as a teen mother. I also came into politics in part due to my advocacy for reproductive justice. As a student at Smith College, I joined the Reproductive Rights Activist Service Corps and interned for the National Network of Abortion Funds.

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

Chelsea Kline: Yes.

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

Chelsea Kline: 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?*

Chelsea Kline: Yes. This change would not only reduce costs on the health care system, but would also increase access to dental care in marginalized and underrepresented communities.

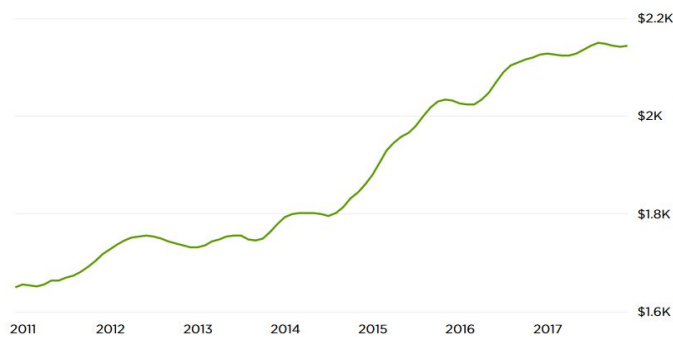
6. *Prescription Drug Pricing. Would you support a drug transparency law, like the one recently passed in California, that requires pharmaceutical companies to publicly justify steep price increases?*

Chelsea Kline: Yes. Prescription drug pricing is one of many reasons why I support single-payer health care, as the bulk bargaining power that Massachusetts as a whole could command to reduce drug costs would be an incredible boost to health outcomes and our economy.

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?

Chelsea Kline: Without safe and secure housing, it's nearly impossible for individuals and families to stay healthy, go to school, or stay employed. Homelessness and housing insecurity is a moral issue that should not be tolerated in one of the wealthiest states in the wealthiest country in the world. To eliminate it, we should promote transit-oriented development (which requires investing in the PVTAs and other regional transit agencies that are suffering), build more affordable housing, and adopt inclusionary zoning policies. We also need to invest in programs that prevent and reduce homelessness like elder homeless prevention and supports, RAFT, MRVP, and similar programs. Although these programs may not end homelessness on their own, they can greatly reduce it, and help keep people in their homes when they are at-risk of becoming homeless.

To fully end homelessness, we need longer term structural change. We need to build more homes, especially in the Greater Boston area, and we need to invest in Western Massachusetts' regional economic and transportation opportunities. We also need to address some of the biggest causes of

homelessness: health care, mental health challenges, violence, and jobs. It's impossible to have this conversation, too, without talking about racism, homophobia, violence against women, and other forms of oppression that contribute to this problem.

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

Chelsea Kline: I have volunteered in homeless shelters and for Food Not Bombs, helping serve food and share conversation with people who are experiencing homelessness. More recently my ten-year-old son has joined me in volunteering during Thanksgiving Dinner.

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

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

Chelsea Kline: Yes.

b. The Massachusetts Rental Voucher Program?

Chelsea Kline: Yes.

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

Chelsea Kline: 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?

Chelsea Kline: Yes.

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

Chelsea Kline: Yes.

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?

Chelsea Kline: Yes.

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?

Chelsea Kline: Yes.

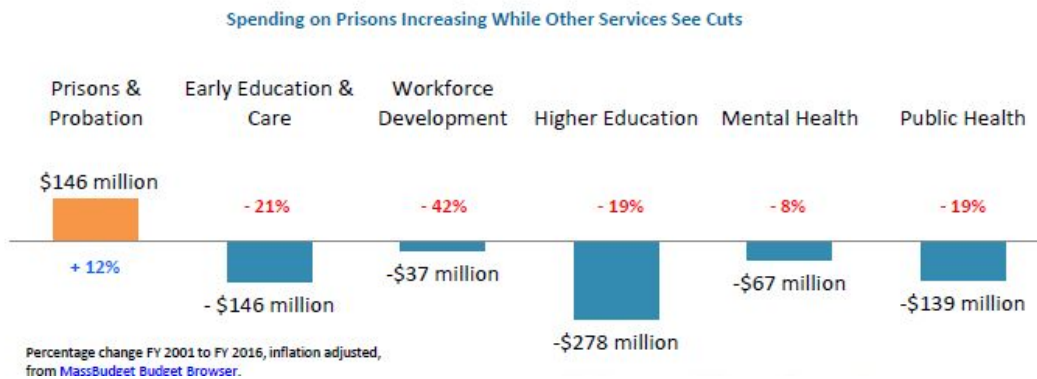
8. **Combating Speculation.** *Would you support legislation to allow cities and towns to impose a graduated tax on private real estate transactions over \$2.5 million, with the money allocated to affordable housing trust funds?*

Chelsea Kline: Yes.

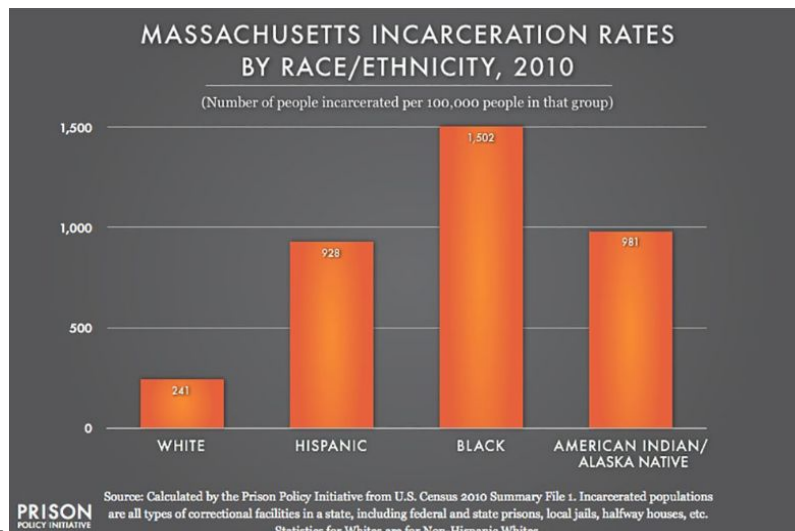
F. RACIAL AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

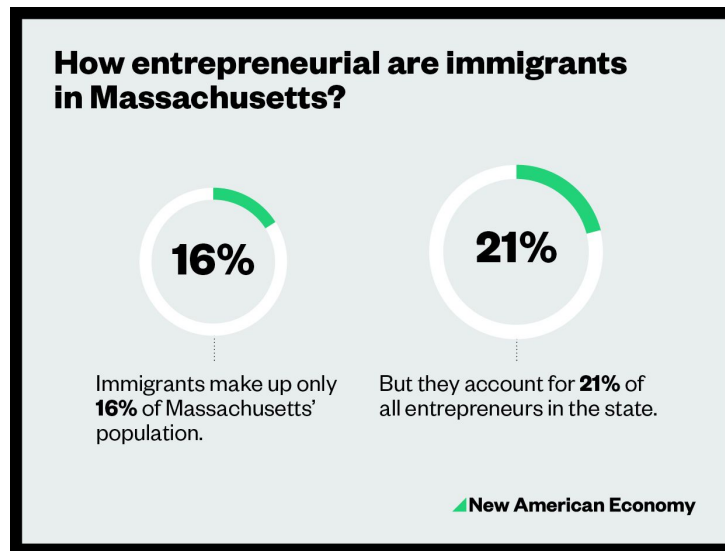
Massachusetts must continue to strive to be a state that welcomes and embraces all of its residents and combats prejudice and discrimination of all kinds. The social and economic costs of mass incarceration and the policies that created it, in particular, have put our aspirations of “justice for all”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

Chelsea Kline: Systems of oppression create privilege for people with more economic, social, and political capital. Those of us who benefit from these systems of oppression have an obligation to fight to dismantle them. I believe that poverty is caused in large part by deliberate government policy like red lining and institutional racism. We need to actively and deliberately work to reduce these ugly societal ills.

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

Chelsea Kline: In my work in higher education, I led several curriculum redesign initiatives that identified and disrupted many problematic narratives around colonization and empire that distort much of American history.

I grew up seeing ableism everywhere I went with my brother, who uses a wheelchair. Advocating for equal access and reversing the stigma that comes with many disabilities has always been a cause close to my heart.

As a queer Jewish woman, I have stood in solidarity in protests and marches with immigrant communities against Trump's Muslim travel ban. I have committed myself to be actively anti-racist, proudly feminist, and as inclusive as I can be. I try to teach my children these same values, and am excited to see young people change the world.

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?*

Chelsea Kline: Yes. If I am successful in my primary, I plan to focus my campaign on boosting turnout in my district for statewide priorities like the Trans Anti-Discrimination law.

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?

Chelsea Kline: Yes. It's shameful we still have not done so.

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?*

Chelsea Kline: Yes.

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

Chelsea Kline: Yes.

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

Chelsea Kline: Yes.

8. **Solitary Confinement.** *Do you support limiting the use of solitary confinement to no more than 15 consecutive days, and eliminating the use of solitary confinement for at-risk populations, including pregnant women, LGBTQ people, those with mental illness, and those under age 21 or over age 65?*

Chelsea Kline: Yes.

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

Chelsea Kline: 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?

Chelsea Kline: Yes.

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

Chelsea Kline: Yes.

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

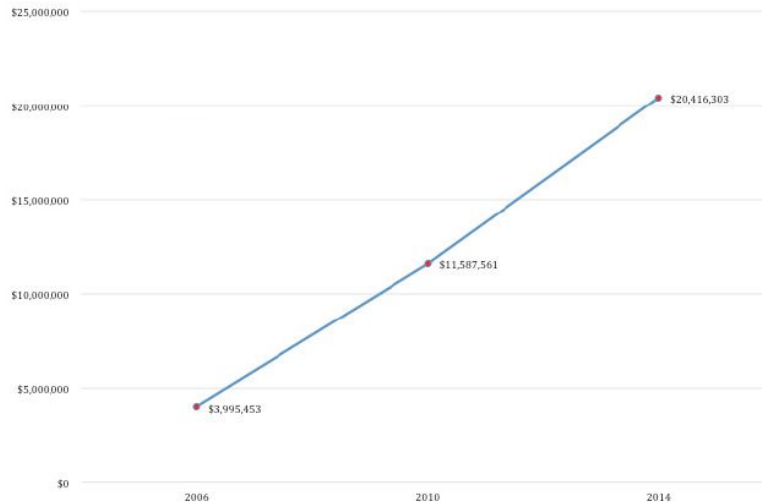
Chelsea Kline: Yes.

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.*

Chelsea Kline: If we want voters to trust their government, our government needs to prove that it is trustworthy. When so much of Beacon Hill politics is done behind closed doors, I believe we need leaders who will stand with conviction to defend our values despite political and institutional pressures.

Too often, our government makes rules about information sharing that are designed to shield it from the public. I believe we need to build information sharing systems that do the opposite, and that make it easier to expose potential campaign finance issues and entanglements. We’ve seen in the Baker Administration several instances of moneyed interests contributing to Governor Baker’s campaign immediately before or after favorable decisions on their projects. We should make it easier to identify

these relationships so the public can understand who the government is working for, and we should work to end corporate influence in our elections.

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

Chelsea Kline: Yes. Yes, depending on the specifics of the rule. For example, if the committee membership is still determined solely by leadership, such a change might not go far enough.

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?*

Chelsea Kline: Yes.

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

Chelsea Kline: Yes.

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

Chelsea Kline: Yes. As a mom of three, I personally know this challenge – and I know I am more fortunate than many people in my situation as well. I believe the current prohibition is a barrier to more women running for office.

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

- a. *Election day voter registration*

Chelsea Kline: Yes.

- b. *Automatic voter registration*

Chelsea Kline: Yes.

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

Chelsea Kline: Yes.

- d. *No-fault absentee voting*

Chelsea Kline: Yes.

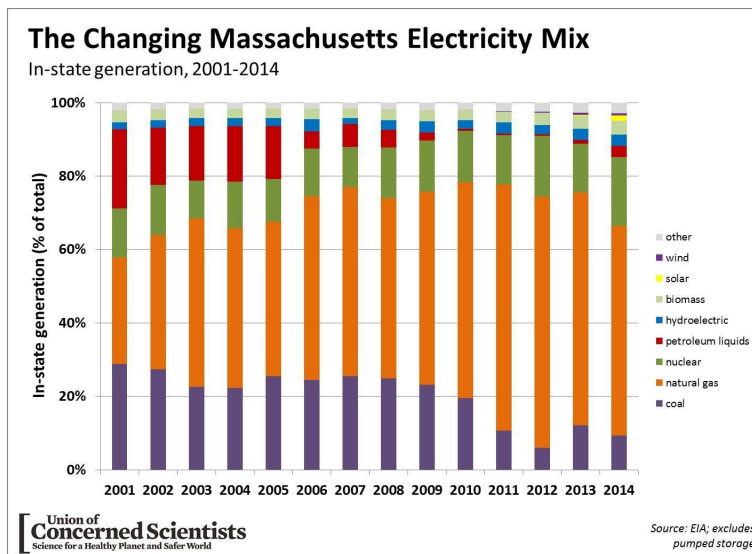
H. SUSTAINABLE INFRASTRUCTURE AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

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.

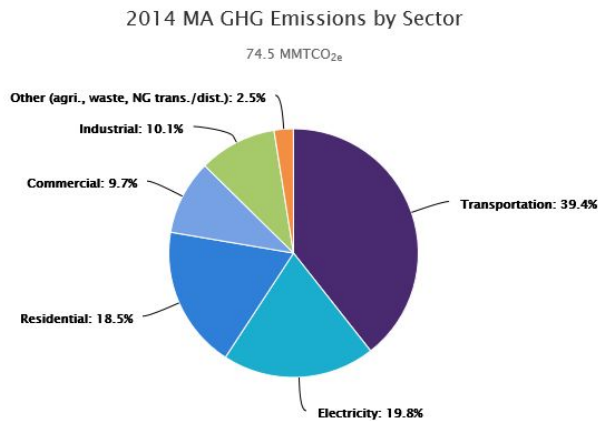
Equity issues loom large, as low-income communities and communities of color are often the most vulnerable to natural disasters and bear the brunt of pollution. In 2014, Governor Deval Patrick signed an executive order directing all state agencies to devote resources to protect the health, safety, and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

Chelsea Kline: Without protecting our planet or living sustainably, we cannot guarantee our future. The environmental crises of this era are largely caused by years of corporate greed exacerbating climate change. As tax cuts and corporate tax breaks have grown in Massachusetts over the last few decades, our environmental agencies have been cut time and time again. I support the Green Budget, and I support investments in our transportation infrastructure so we can reduce the number of vehicles on the road.

I'm especially concerned about clean air and clean water in Massachusetts. In a state that relies so much on our aquifers, there seems to be very little consideration for the sustainability of a major source of drinkable water when it comes to development. I would advocate for environmental impact studies – and accountability – for projects that could pollute aquifers.

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

Chelsea Kline: As a student at Smith College, I volunteered with Sierra Club and Greenpeace. More recently, I founded an organization called the Badass Activists of the Pioneer Valley. Our organization mobilizes members of our community in organizing and advocacy work at the local, state, and federal level. Some of our work has focused on environmental issues, including a campaign against new pipelines. Additionally, I have made investing in the PVTA a focus of my campaign on the doors and in my campaign literature.

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

Chelsea Kline: 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?*

Chelsea Kline: Yes. And I support legislative action to remove the “demand charge” recently instated by Charlie Baker’s DPU.

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?

Chelsea Kline: 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?

Chelsea Kline: Yes.

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

Chelsea Kline: Yes.

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

Chelsea Kline: Yes.

8. **Carbon pricing.**

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

Chelsea Kline: Yes.

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

Chelsea Kline: Yes.

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

Chelsea Kline: Yes.

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

Chelsea Kline: Yes.

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

Chelsea Kline: Yes. Yes, absolutely. Although I think relying on municipal sources of revenue for regional transportation priorities is unsustainable in the long run, because the state should be investing in our public transportation system. Allowing municipalities the option of supplementing these programs will help sustain them in the meantime.

III. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Limit answer to 150 words or fewer.

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

Chelsea Kline: I am proud to be a part of this movement, and to have volunteered in activism and service work for more than twenty years. My professional, political, and personal experiences make me highly qualified to be the next state senator from this district, and I believe my background will add much-needed perspective to decision-making on Beacon Hill. I am grateful to have earned the endorsement of Mass Alliance, and eager to earn the endorsement of Progressive Mass as well. Thank you for your consideration.