

Jamie Eldridge

**Middlesex &
Worcester**

State Senate



Endorsement Questionnaire

Office Sought: State Senator

Legislative District: Middlesex & Worcester

Party: Democratic

Website: <http://www.jamieeldridge.com/>

Twitter: [@JamieEldridgeMA](https://twitter.com/JamieEldridgeMA)

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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

Jamie Eldridge

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

Jamie Eldridge: I am running for office to continue to fight for progressive change that will make a difference in the lives of the people of the Middlesex and Worcester district, to dramatically increase state investments in public education, transportation, environmental protection, combating climate change, and ending poverty, and to expand civil rights for people of color, immigrants, the LGBTQ community, people with disabilities, and economically-disadvantaged families and individuals. My top three priorities if elected:

1. Make health a right (pass single-payer healthcare legislation)
2. Pass the Foundation Budget Review Commission recommendations for K-12 public education
3. Pass the Safe Communities Act

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

Jamie Eldridge: I have served as State Senator of the Middlesex and Worcester district for the past 10 years, where I am proud to have led the fight on a wide variety of issues, filing every session at least 80 bills, on campaign finance reform, government transparency, public education, environmental protection, climate change, protecting immigrants, zoning reform, municipal governance, ethics reform, and public higher education. In other words, I haven't just cosponsored legislation, but I've filed new and bold legislation, to best serve my constituents.

In addition, I'm a strong believer that legislation will not pass, unless there is a broad progressive coalition in support of a bill, complemented by a strong grassroots movement. I currently serve as the Senate chair of 3 caucuses, including the MBTA Caucus, Green Economy Caucus, and Harm Reduction Drug Law Reform Caucus. I work hard to reach out to colleagues, to develop support for legislation that I have filed, cosponsored, or is important to the district that I represent.

Finally, I take pride in staying closely connected with grassroots organizations that are advocating for bold change. I attend many of these group meetings, conferences, rallies and forums, to be more successful in passing key legislation.

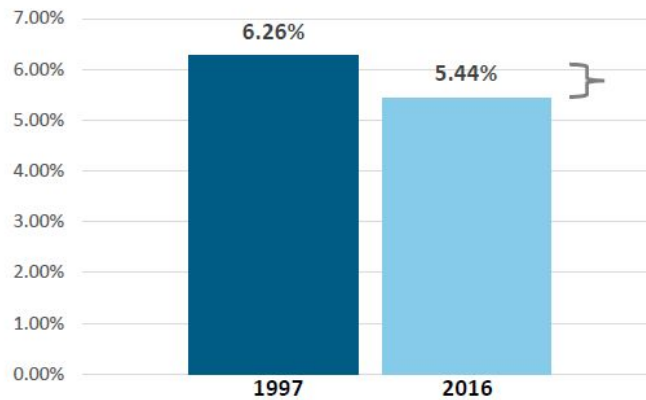
I believe all of this work makes me a better State Senator, who is more in tune with constituents, more responsive, and advocating for the strongest possible legislation.

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.

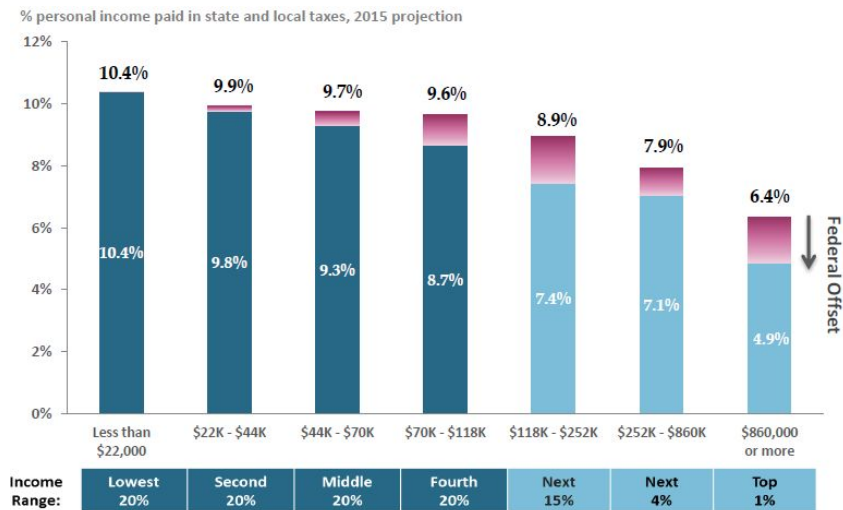
Declining revenues have meant drastic cuts, limiting our ability to invest in our communities and future economic stability.

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?*

Jamie Eldridge: I bring the principles of tax fairness, what are the taxes needed to make the needed investments in our communities, and taking careful attention to what is the percent of a person's or family's income that goes toward taxes, and not merely the monetary amount of taxes.

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.).*

Jamie Eldridge: I have filed legislation to require clear clawback standards for tax breaks provided to communities, and filed a constitutional amendment to allow for a progressive tax system in Massachusetts.

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?*

Jamie Eldridge: Yes. I voted for this constitutional amendment, last session and this session.

4. *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?*

Jamie Eldridge: Yes.

5. *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?*

Jamie Eldridge: Yes. I filed a similar amendment to the economic development bill this session.

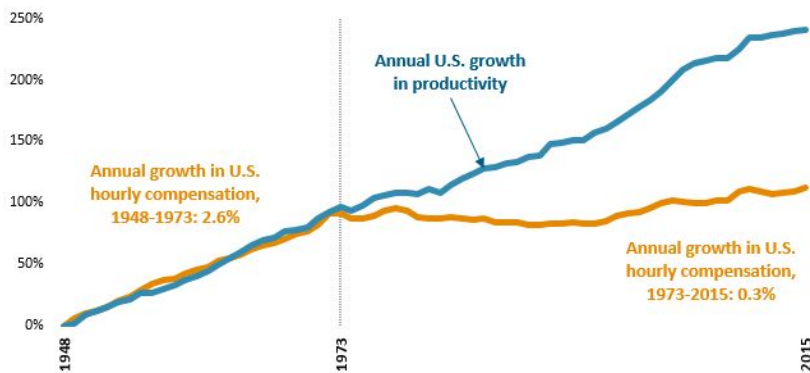
B. JOB GROWTH AND THE ECONOMY

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

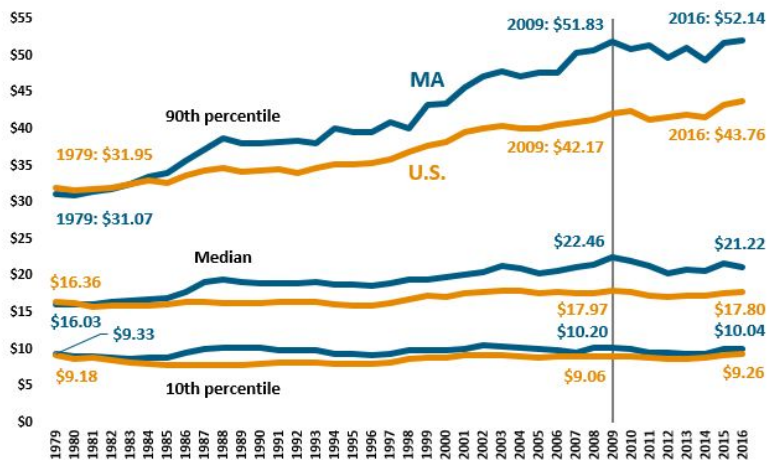
Cumulative Change in U.S. Hourly Wages for Private-Sector Production/Non-Supervisory Workers and Net Productivity, 1948-2015



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?

Jamie Eldridge: I believe that we need to raise the minimum so that it is a living wage, which is why I voted to the minimum wage to \$15/hour this legislative session. I think it is critical to recognize the role of government in making key investments in public education, affordable housing, social services, environmental protection, and clean energy, that help create jobs, and grow the economy. That is why I support raising the revenue necessary to increase these investments.

In terms of sectors that have the greatest potential, I would focus on clean energy, public schools, healthcare, and manufacturing.

I see wealth and income inequality as being major obstacles to job growth, and a sustainable economy, as it puts raw economic power, and political influence, in the hands of the wealthy elite, which makes it harder to create an economy that works for everyone.

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.).

3. Fair Wages. Do you support eliminating the subminimum wage for tipped workers in support of one fair wage?

Jamie Eldridge: Yes. I voted to increase the subminimum wage for tipped workers this legislative session, but it did not eliminate the subminimum wage.

4. Paid Vacation Time The US is the only advanced economy that does not guarantee workers paid vacation time. Would you support legislation to require that employers provide at least 10 days of paid vacation time per year?

Jamie Eldridge: 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?

Jamie Eldridge: Yes. I supported union organizing for workers at the UMass-Marlborough Hospital, which was successful.

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?

Jamie Eldridge: Yes.

7. Unions -- Part III. In the 2018 Janus ruling, the US Supreme Court banned unions from collecting "fair share fees," i.e., fees that workers whose workplaces are they choose not to join the union. Would you support legislation authorizing unions to charge non-members for the specific costs incurred for

representing a non-member in a grievance or arbitration case?

Jamie Eldridge: Yes.

- 8. *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?*

Jamie Eldridge: Yes. I voted for this bill in the State Senate this session.

- 9. *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?*

Jamie Eldridge: Yes.

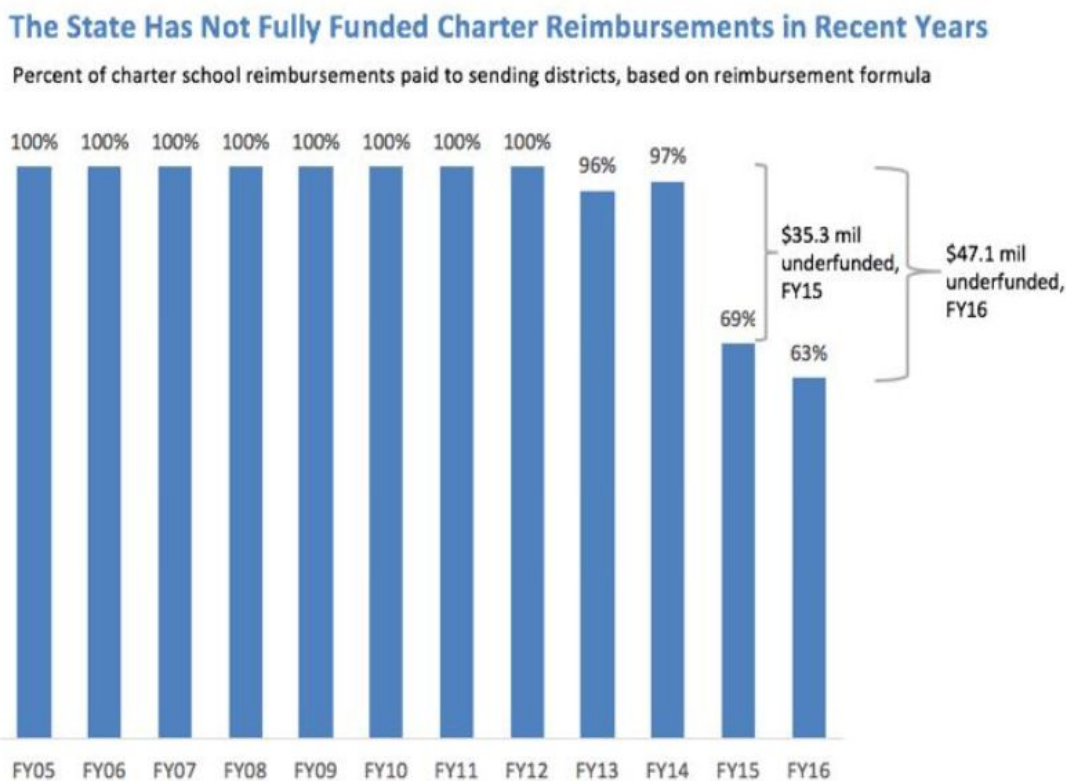
- 10. *Economic Democracy.*** *Would you support legislation to foster and develop employee ownership of businesses in Massachusetts and encourage the formation of cooperatives and/or benefit corporations?*

Jamie Eldridge: Yes.

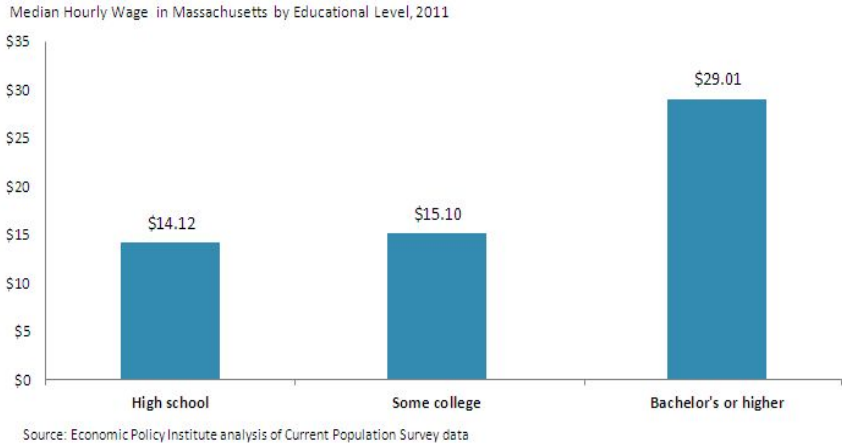
C. EDUCATION

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

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

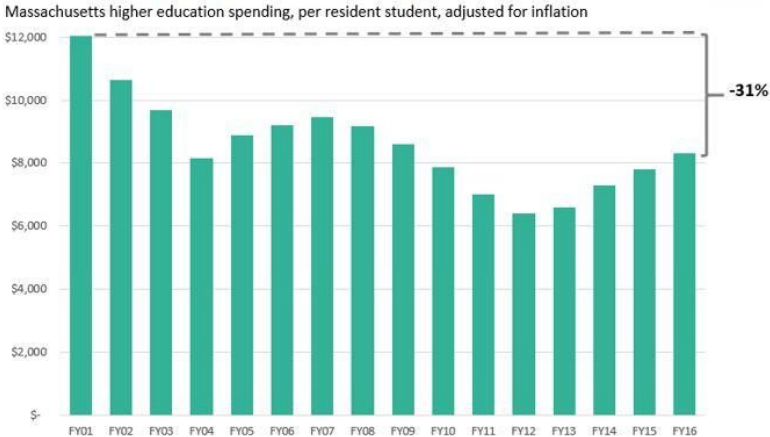


Higher educational attainment leads to higher wages.



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

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



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

Jamie Eldridge: I believe that every child deserves access to a great public education, regardless of their economic circumstance, or the community they grow up in. This should extend to public higher education, which is why I filed a version of a free college bill this session. I believe that standardized testing has negatively affected learning in the classroom, which is why I support placing a moratorium on the MCAS. I worked very hard this session to pass the Foundation Budget Review Commission recommendations, because I see how significantly the public schools in the district that I represent are underfunded.

2. ***Optional/As Applicable:*** Please indicate work you personally have done to advance your principles on public education?
3. ***Universal Pre-K.*** Would you support creating universal, free Pre-K, accessible to any resident of Massachusetts, integrated into the public school system?

Jamie Eldridge: Yes.

4. ***Standardized Testing.*** Do you support a three-year moratorium on the high-stakes uses of standardized testing, as proposed by S.308? (High-stakes" uses include high school graduation, teacher evaluation, and assigning ratings to schools.)

Jamie Eldridge: Yes. I cosponsored this bill, this session.

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?

Jamie Eldridge: Yes. I voted for this bill, this session.

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?***

Jamie Eldridge: 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?***

Jamie Eldridge: 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?

Jamie Eldridge: Yes. I voted for this bill, this session.

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

Jamie Eldridge: Yes. I have always cosponsored this bill.

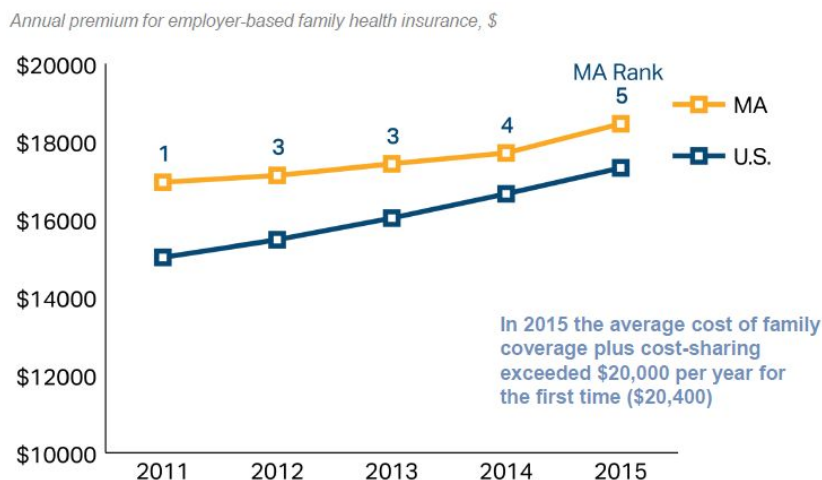
9. *Tuition-Free Higher Education.* *Would you support making tuition free at public colleges and universities?*

Jamie Eldridge: Yes. I have filed a version of this legislation, this session.

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.*

Jamie Eldridge: I believe healthcare should be a right, but it is not yet a right in Massachusetts. That is why I have filed An Act Establishing Medicare for All for the past 3 sessions. I do not believe that health insurance companies help improve access to healthcare, but rather they are an obstacle. There is a massive disparity in how poor people, especially in communities of color, are provided healthcare. The privatized healthcare system that Massachusetts has helps create these health disparities.

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

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

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

Jamie Eldridge: Yes. I have been the lead Senate sponsor of An Act Establishing Medicare for All for the past 3 sessions.

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

Jamie Eldridge: 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?*

Jamie Eldridge: Yes.

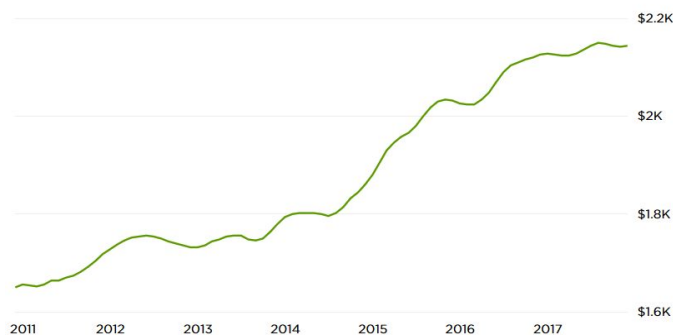
- 6. *Prescription Drug Pricing.*** *Would you support a drug transparency law, like the one recently passed in California, that requires pharmaceutical companies to publicly justify steep price increases?*

Jamie Eldridge: 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?

Jamie Eldridge: I believe that safe, quality housing is increasingly out of reach for a majority of Massachusetts residents. In addition, too often housing is built in the state with little or no planning, especially related to public transportation. Better planning, both at the state and community levels, is critical. To eliminate homelessness, I believe there needs to be greater investment in affordable housing with support services, and the public housing authorities must receive a significant increase in funding, to build more housing for families or individuals who are at risk of becoming homeless.

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

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

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

Jamie Eldridge: Yes.

b. *The Massachusetts Rental Voucher Program?*

Jamie Eldridge: Yes.

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

Jamie Eldridge: 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?*

Jamie Eldridge: Yes.

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

Jamie Eldridge: 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?*

Jamie Eldridge: 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?*

Jamie Eldridge: Yes.

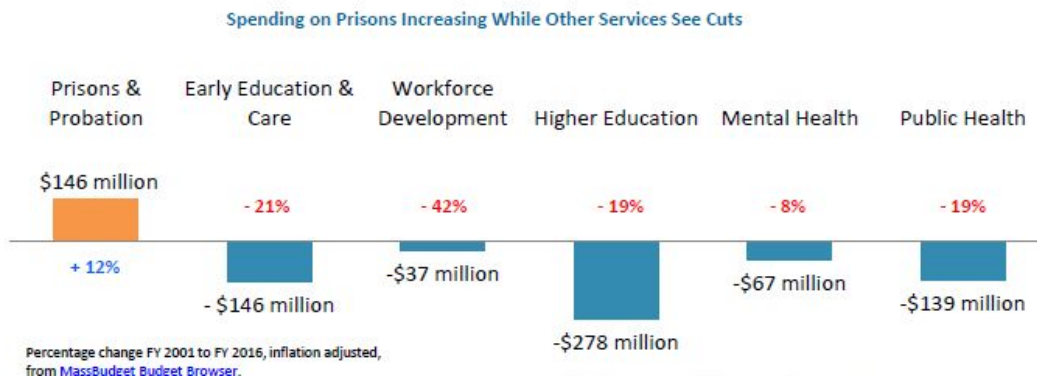
8. **Combating Speculation.** *Would you support legislation to allow cities and towns to impose a graduated tax on private real estate transactions over \$2.5 million, with the money allocated to affordable housing trust funds?*

Jamie Eldridge: Yes.

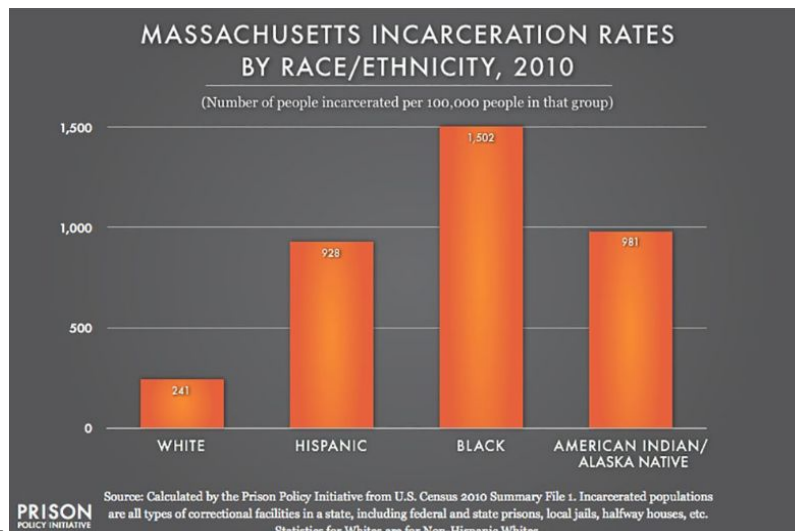
F. RACIAL AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

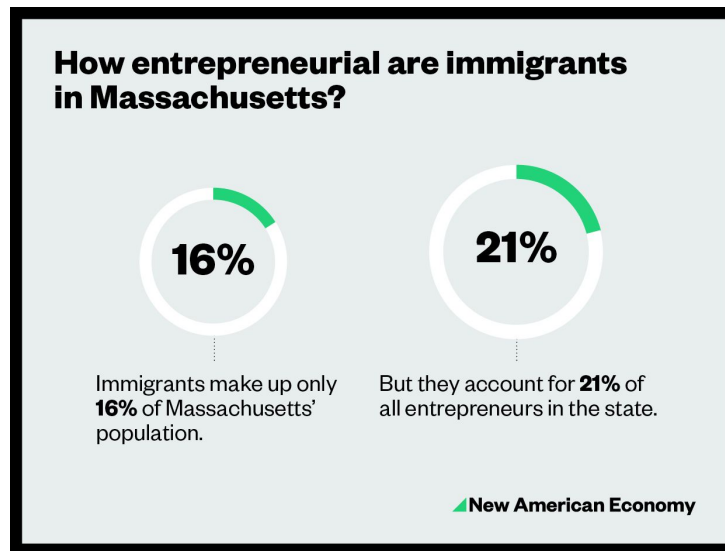
Massachusetts must continue to strive to be a state that welcomes and embraces all of its residents and combats prejudice and discrimination of all kinds. The social and economic costs of mass incarceration and the policies that created it, in particular, have put our aspirations of “justice for all”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

Jamie Eldridge: I believe that institutional racism continues to exist in Massachusetts. This has led to massive gaps in racial wealth, a disproportionate percentage of the prison population being people of color, disparate treatment of kids of color in public schools, and corporate boardrooms, major institutions, and, leadership positions being overwhelmingly white. I am deeply committed to changing this. I am proud to sponsor legislation such as the Environmental Justice Act, repeal of mandatory minimum drug laws, and the Safe Communities Act, and also to have a State House with a majority of employees who are people of color. I also am very committed to addressing racial and social injustice in the 14 communities that I represent.

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

Jamie Eldridge: I am proud to have supported same-sex marriage my entire legislative career, and before the SJC ruled that gay marriage was the law of the Commonwealth. I was one of the leading advocates in the Senate for criminal justice reform, including serving as the Senate chair of the Harm Reduction Drug Law Reform Caucus. I am the lead sponsor of the Environmental Justice Act.

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?*

Jamie Eldridge: 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?*

Jamie Eldridge: 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?

Jamie Eldridge: 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?*

Jamie Eldridge: 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)?*

Jamie Eldridge: 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?*

Jamie Eldridge: Yes.

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

Jamie Eldridge: 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?*

Jamie Eldridge: 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?*

Jamie Eldridge: 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?*

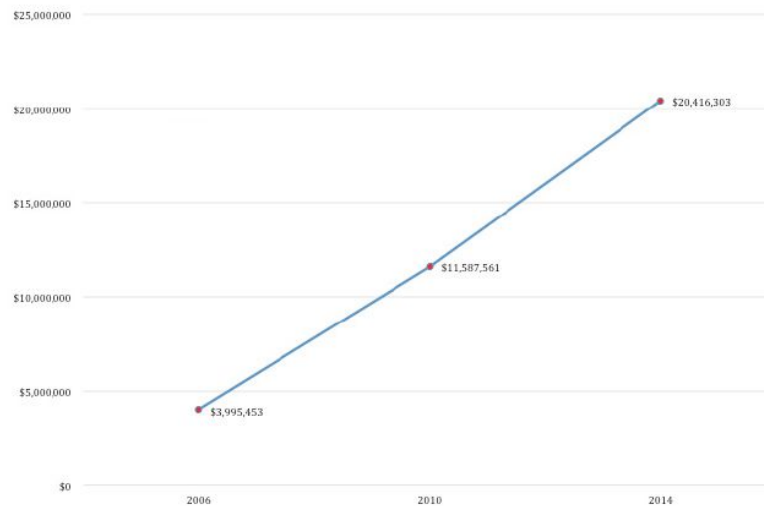
Jamie Eldridge: Yes.

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.*

Jamie Eldridge: I agree that the state government needs to be dramatically more transparent, including the Legislature. I have fought to increase transparency in government since I first joined the Legislature, and have successfully passed legislation creating the “Open Checking” provision that makes budget spending more clear, the Disclose Act, requiring the source of the funding of SuperPACs to be disclosed publicly, require that Senate roll calls be published online, and filed one of the major public records reform bills, that became law. I do believe that the public records law should be expanded to all 3 government branches. Finally, while the Legislature has made some progress on election reform, I believe that much more needs to be done, including Same-Day Election Registration, more comprehensive early voting, and Ranked-Choice Voting.

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

Jamie Eldridge: I have fought to increase transparency in government since I first joined the Legislature, and have successfully passed legislation creating the “Open Checking” provision that makes budget spending more clear, the Disclose Act, requiring the source of the funding of SuperPACs to be disclosed publicly, require that Senate roll calls be published online, and filed one of the major public records reform bills, that became law. I have also filed a public campaign finance bill, and a bill prohibiting a candidate from raising money to a federal campaign account, to be used for state campaign purposes (something that Governor Baker has done, using a loophole).

3. *Power and the Legislature. Concentration of power in Leadership remains a problem in the MA Legislature and has been a persistent obstacle to progress, and that power is maintained by “process” rules on how decisions are made and which legislation moves forward. Would you support the following rules changes to dilute the amount of power held by leadership in your respective branch of government...?*

- a. *Allowing committees to appoint their own chair, instead of Leadership?*

Jamie Eldridge: Yes.

- b. *Allowing bills to be discharged from a committee if they have majority support in a given chamber?*

Jamie Eldridge: Yes.

- c. *Limiting extension orders to one per bill per committee for a maximum of 1 week in order to prevent needless delay?*

Jamie Eldridge: Yes.

4. *Transparency. Too often, decisions that affect millions across the Commonwealth are made behind closed doors with little public input. Indeed, 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. Would you support the following efforts to increase transparency and public accountability...?*

- a. *Eliminating the aforementioned exemption?*

Jamie Eldridge: Yes.

- b. *Making all committee roll call votes available to the public?*

Jamie Eldridge: Yes.

- c. *Making conference committees more transparent by requiring minutes to be recorded and shared with the public within 24 hours of every meeting?*

Jamie Eldridge: Yes.

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

Jamie Eldridge: 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"?*

Jamie Eldridge: Yes.

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

a. *Election day voter registration*

Jamie Eldridge: Yes.

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

Jamie Eldridge: Yes.

c. *No-fault absentee voting*

Jamie Eldridge: Yes.

d. *Universal voting-by-mail*

Jamie Eldridge: Yes.

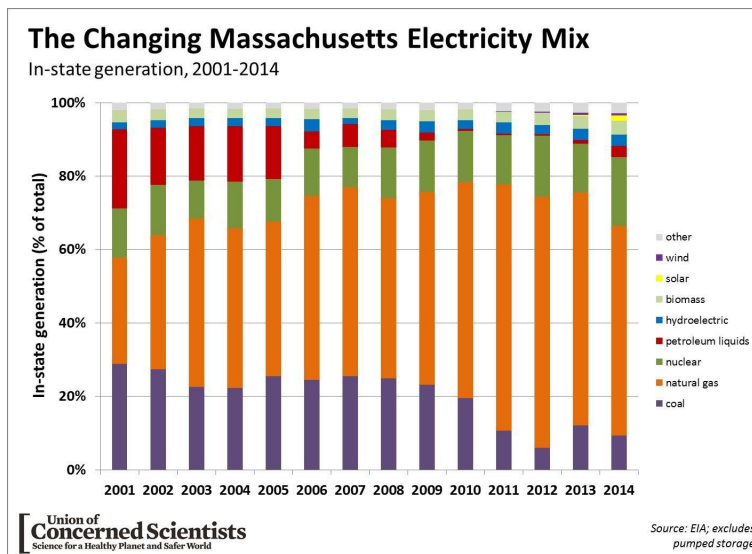
H. SUSTAINABLE INFRASTRUCTURE AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

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.

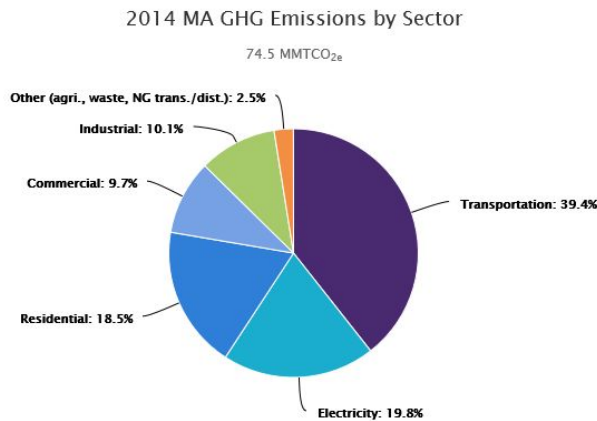
Equity issues loom large, as low-income communities and communities of color are often the most vulnerable to natural disasters and bear the brunt of pollution. In 2014, Governor Deval Patrick signed an executive order directing all state agencies to devote resources to protect the health, safety, and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

Jamie Eldridge: I believe climate change is already happening, and Massachusetts must do everything in its powers to slow the pace of global warming. I am proud to be a leader in the Massachusetts State Senate on clean energy policies, increasing the funding to enforce our environmental laws, and file legislation to increase funding for sustainable water and clean energy infrastructure.

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

Jamie Eldridge: Yes. I have opposed legislation by Governor Baker to weaken the enforcement of the state's wastewater laws. I have advocated for a bill to create a carbon tax that would invest the money in efforts to reduce carbon emissions, including public transportation. I have filed legislation to create a funding mechanism to increase funding for water infrastructure.

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

Jamie Eldridge: 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?*

Jamie Eldridge: 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?*

Jamie Eldridge: 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?*

Jamie Eldridge: Yes.

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

Jamie Eldridge: Yes.

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

Jamie Eldridge: Yes.

8. **Carbon pricing.**

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

Jamie Eldridge: Yes.

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

Jamie Eldridge: 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?*

Jamie Eldridge: Yes.

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

Jamie Eldridge: 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?*

Jamie Eldridge: Yes.

III. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Limit answer to 150 words or fewer.

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

Jamie Eldridge: I would be deeply honored and appreciative to receive the endorsement of Progressive Massachusetts.