



# PROGRESSIVE MASSACHUSETTS

statewide, grassroots organizing for progressive change in Massachusetts

## 2014 STATE RACES ENDORSEMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

**Date:** February 3, 2014  
**Candidate:** Warren Tolman  
**Office Sought:** Attorney General  
**Party:** Democratic  
**Web Site:** [www.warrentolman.com](http://www.warrentolman.com)

### CANDIDATE CONTACT INFO

Email:  
Mobile Phone:  
Home Phone:

### CAMPAIGN CONTACT INFO

Campaign Manager: **Chris Joyce**  
Campaign Manager Phone:  
Campaign Manager Email:  
Campaign Office Phone: **617-744-8351**

**RETURN COMPLETED QUESTIONNAIRES BY MONDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 5:00PM, BY EMAIL ONLY  
RETURN QUESTIONNAIRE AS (1) WORD FILE AND (2) PDF.**

E-mail completed questionnaire to [deborah@progressivemass.com](mailto:deborah@progressivemass.com).

Please be in touch with Executive Director Deborah Shah with questions, at 917-922-7947 or by email.

***Please compose your answers directly in the document, underneath the question. Limit answers to 250 words or fewer. No attachments.***

### **I. About You**

**1. Why are you running for office?**

**I am running for Attorney General because I believe there is no other job that enables you to do more to protect Massachusetts families, their homes, and their pocketbooks. Growing up, my parents instilled in me the value of standing up for what you believe in. I have made this value a guiding principle throughout my life and career. As a State Representative and Senator for eight years, I led on issues like Campaign Finance Reform, Environmental Protections, Early Childhood Education and ending the reign of Big Tobacco. My success led the American Cancer Society to send me across the country to help other Legislators learn how to stand up for what is right, even when it's hard to beat a giant.**

**I will be an Attorney General that takes on the big issues that matter in the daily lives of people across the Commonwealth. I will advocate for the families whose homes have been unfairly foreclosed upon. I will fight for the students whose loans have spiraled out of control from predatory lending practices. I will work with the families and businesses struggling to pay for the escalating cost of health care. And much like I did in taking on Big Tobacco, I will stand up to special interests to help every family in the Commonwealth.**

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

**I bring a unique background to this office that gives me the perspective and leadership experience to hold this office. Over my career, I've worked in both the public and private sectors. For eight years, I worked for my constituents as their advocate on Beacon Hill, as a member of the Progressive Caucus, and I took a lead on the issues that I felt could make our Commonwealth and country a better place. For the last eleven years, I have been in the private sector, helping to grow businesses and working with both business leaders and workers to invest in Massachusetts and to improve work standards.**

**My personal experiences will also guide my approach to leading the Attorney General's office. My family started in a Boston federal housing project and I was the first in my family to graduate from college. I know about the struggles and experiences of building a family, getting a home, and pursuing the American Dream. I'm the father of three children, one a recent graduate from college, one in college, and one preparing for college, and I am focused on the predatory lenders that are making money off of our children as college expenses continue to escalate. And as a husband and a father of two daughters who face a workforce where women continue to make 77 cents on the dollar, I will refuse to allow this inequality to continue and will take steps to ensure that an equal day of work is compensated equally, no matter who is doing the job. I will be an Attorney General who fights to ensure that the least of our sisters and brothers has the same rights as anyone else.**

**All of these experiences, together, shape my vision for the job.**

3. What do you think is the proper role of government in Massachusetts residents' daily lives?

**I believe that government can be a vehicle for good in our society. The Attorney General is the Peoples' Advocate. The role is to protect and serve the residents of the Commonwealth to make sure that their interests are protected and their futures are secure.**

**For the woman who loses her home to foreclosure and does not know where to turn, the Attorney General's office can be her advocate. For the student who is sinking further and further into debt from unscrupulous lenders, the Attorney General's office can fight for him. For the families across the Commonwealth that worry about gun violence and accidents, the Attorney General can be a leader on new regulations that save lives and make our communities safer.**

4. If elected, what would be your top three priorities?

**The office of the Attorney General is one where you can start making a difference for people right away. I intend to utilize the powers of this office to push a progressive agenda and to move the ball forward in a variety of ways.**

- 1.) **We can, and will, battle urban gun violence and loosen the stranglehold of the NRA by using the Massachusetts Consumer Protection Law, Chapter 93A, to require fingerprint technology be incorporated on all guns sold in Massachusetts. In January, the American Academy of Pediatrics released a study that found over 10,000 children are hurt or killed by guns every year. Of these, almost a third were directly attributed to accidents in the home. Fingerprint technology can keep kids from firing their parents' guns and injuring or killing themselves. The technology can also slow down illegal trafficking that leads to guns falling into the wrong hands. We need to make our communities safer, and the Attorney General can make this regulation part of the law, today.**
- 2.) **We must continue our efforts to bring down escalating health care costs by combating Medicaid fraud and working to eliminate waste, fraud, and abuse wherever we find it in Massachusetts health care. As Attorney General, I will closely monitor and regulate health care markets to ensure that Massachusetts's residents continue to receive high quality care at fair rates.**
- 3.) **We must continue to ensure equality to all citizens on every level. Massachusetts has been a leader throughout history on moving the ball forward on equality, but even with all of our recent advancements, the work is not done. I will use the office to advocate making the Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA) the law of the land, I will confront gender inequity and pay gaps, and I will work to address bullying and discrimination that persists in our society.**

## **II. The Issues**

***Please compose your answers directly in the document, underneath the question. Limit answers to 250 words or fewer. No attachments.***

Our questionnaire is focused on economic justice and inequality, as outlined in our Shared Prosperity Agenda (forthcoming). We are interested in your overall philosophy and approach to the components of the Shared Prosperity Agenda, as well as your views on specific policy and legislation.

In each section, **Question 1** seeks your overall view, values, principles and priorities. You do not need to address each item embedded in these first questions; they are suggestions.

In each section, **Question 2** asks about your advocacy experience; you may leave it blank if appropriate—we do not expect candidates to have a record on every issue. Current or former elected officials: please outline your leadership roles, as opposed to simply your voting record.

Additional questions seek your position on specific policies and legislation. At a minimum, please answer “yes” or “no”; you may also provide an explanation of your positions, as appropriate.

### **A. 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. Poverty levels continue to increase, while the minimum wage loses value every year. Massachusetts now ranks 8th in the nation for income inequality.

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?*

**I believe the best way to grow our economy is by making sure that every American has a fair shot at the American Dream. Massachusetts residents trying to find good jobs to make enough to provide for themselves and their families deserve the protection of their government against big businesses that would prey on their well-being. As Attorney General, I will be a voice for consumers and stand up to big industries that prioritize profits over progress, because the best way to grow our economy is from the middle out and not the top down. I will also be vigilant against discrimination in the workplace, so that women can earn as much as their male counterparts and so that members of the LGBTQ community will not have to live in fear of losing their jobs just because of who they are. Our state will attract new residents and new businesses if they know that in Massachusetts, workers get paid what they deserve and can focus on their jobs.**

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).

**As Senate Chair of the Joint Committee on Taxation, I worked to increase a state Earned Income Tax Credit in 1997, providing a refundable credit for low-income working families with children. I authored the Mutual Funds Job Growth Bill, the first law in the country to link tax breaks with a job creation requirement. I have been a consistent advocate and supporter of increasing the state’s minimum wage. I was also a key supporter of The Life Initiative, which allowed insurance companies to reduce their net investment income tax rate if they contributed to a fund for community development. Over the last 10 years, the fund has invested \$200 million in affordable housing developments, commercial properties, businesses and community facilities for Massachusetts residents.**

3. **Minimum Wage.** Do you support:
- |   |   |                             |
|---|---|-----------------------------|
| Raising the wage to at least \$10.50/hour:          | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Indexing automatic yearly increases to inflation:   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Increasing tipped wages to 60% of the minimum wage: | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
4. **Unemployment Insurance and Minimum Wage.** As of January 2014, the legislature is negotiating a bill that would pair an increase in the minimum wage with cuts to unemployment insurance. Do you oppose this effort?
- Yes      No
5. **Earned Sick Time.** Do you support requiring businesses with more than 11 employees to provide earned, paid sick time to their employees?
- Yes      No
- In addition, I will make the Attorney General's office employee-friendly, with receptiveness to job sharing/flex scheduling and family friendly conditions.**
6. **Job Creation and Standards.** A "Job Creation and Quality Standards Act" would require corporations that receive any kind of public benefits (grants, tax expenditures procurement contracts) to, in turn, pay a living wage (\$15 per hour plus benefits) to full-time employees. Do you support such legislation?
- Yes      No
7. **Employee-Owned Businesses.** Do you support legislation to foster and develop employee ownership of businesses in Massachusetts?
- Yes      No
8. **Co-ops, Benefit Corporations, Community Banks.** Do you support legislation that would encourage the formation of cooperatives and/or benefit corporations and the development of community banks?
- Yes      No

**B. Education and Workforce Development**

Public education has always been a gateway to opportunity and mobility for all, regardless of economic circumstances, a cornerstone of the American dream for all residents. However, 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. Meanwhile, powerful corporate interests have been steadily undermining public school teachers and unions and siphoning money from our public K-12 system.

1. Please share your personal values and principles regarding public education and workforce training. *What value does public education and workforce development have in improving our economy as well as in addressing matters of economic justice? What measures should the Commonwealth take on these issues? You might address, for example, charter schools, school vouchers, standardized testing and federal programs like No Child Left Behind and Race to the Top.*

**Public schools are our foundation of education and an institution that I firmly support and believe in. I am the product of public schools and my three children are Watertown Public School graduates and attendees. As Attorney General, I will ensure the safety and security of our students against guns, bullying and any other threats, so that our schools are welcoming places where students can learn and grow. Workforce training is an integral component of ensuring that we have a well-educated and trained workforce. I have seen directly the positive impact that good worker training programs can have in my work with 1199/SEIU.**

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

**As a member of the legislature, I was the sponsor of a number of measures to ensure local school districts receive their fair share of funding. I was the chief Senate sponsor of the Reading Recovery Program, an early intervention literacy program that targets children who are at ready of not learning to read and provides them with individualized instruction. After this program was developed, we found that nearly all children completing the program were brought up to grade level. I was also the chief sponsor of the "Invest in Children" license plates, the proceeds of which fund grants for projects to improve the quality of day care at non-profit day care centers throughout the state.**

3. **Achievement gaps.** What would you do to address persistent racial and economic achievement gaps in education?

**It is unacceptable that a child's ZIP code can determine their future. We need our schools to be equal-opportunity learning centers. As Attorney General, I will closely monitor our schools to make sure that all students have access to a quality education. I will advocate for fair funding in the education formula and shares of revenue so that struggling school districts have the resources they need.**

4. **Universal Pre-K.** Do you support creating universal, free Pre-K, accessible to any resident of Massachusetts, integrated into the public school system?  
 Yes       No

5. **Universal higher education.** Do you support a program that provides free, publicly funded higher education for every student who wants it?

Yes       No

**There are some students who can afford to pay and limited state dollars must be allocated in the best way possible, as in funding universal pre-K education.**

6. **Funding Structure.** Do you support changes to 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?

Yes      No

**C. Health Care**

Massachusetts has led the way in providing near universal health care insurance coverage. However, we still spend an oversized portion of public and private money on health care, without necessarily achieving better health outcomes.

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

**Massachusetts has been a leader in securing health insurance for nearly all residents and taking concrete steps to limit the growth of health care costs. But we must not rest on our laurels, because Massachusetts residents should never have to worry about medical bills threatening their economic security. The Attorney General's Health Care Division has played an important role as a strong taxpayer advocate, taking on health insurance companies and pharmaceutical companies to stop unfair practices. As Attorney General, I will continue and strengthen that important work so that my office is closely monitoring and regulating health care markets to ensure that Massachusetts's residents continue to receive high quality care at fair rates. We must continue our efforts to bring down escalating health care costs by combating Medicaid fraud and working to eliminate waste, fraud, and abuse wherever we find it in Massachusetts health care. Finally, as a Senate sponsor of the Buffer Zone legislation, we must remain vigilant in protecting a Woman's right to make their own health care decisions. This means being prepared for an adverse decision by the Supreme Court at the end of the term in June.**

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

**As a State Senator, I was a chief sponsor of Single Payer Legislation. When I ran for Governor in 2002, part of my Health Care Platform was to begin a transition to a single-payer system, which provides universal coverage while alleviating many of the problems that our health care system sees. I was also the chief sponsor of the first-in-the-nation Tobacco Disclosure Bill, which required tobacco companies to disclose the ingredients added to their tobacco products and to provide accurate nicotine yield ratings. Throughout my career, I have been a strong and consistent advocate for a woman's right to choose and other measures to protect reproductive health. I was a co-sponsor of legislation that banned "drive-through" deliveries and ensured a minimum 48 hours of medical coverage for postpartum hospital stays for new mothers.**

3. **Single Payer and Public Option.** Do you support moving Massachusetts to Single Payer insurance?  
 Yes       No

What role might a Public Option play, in your view?

**As Attorney General, I will stand up against private industry establishing monopolies in any sector. I believe a public option could take meaningful steps to providing more competition and more fairness for consumers in an industry with escalating costs.**

4. **Costs and Quality.** What steps would you take to lower health care costs while maintaining or improving health outcomes?

**As Attorney General, I will combat Medicaid fraud and working to eliminate waste, fraud, and abuse wherever we find it in Massachusetts health care. Health care companies should continue to face scrutiny over increasing costs, and I will hold them accountable for explaining cost increases and business practices, as well as keeping a watchful eye on competitive pressures.**



5. **Mental Health.** What steps would you take to address the gap in affordable mental health services?

**Fully funding our mental health system and removing the stigma of mental illness will strengthen our families, our schools, and our communities. As Attorney General, I will continue to fight for fairness and equality in our mental health system so that Massachusetts residents can access the care they deserve. Mental health parity means just that. Far too many people in non-violent settings are sentenced to jail when they should be treated for mental illness or substance abuse. Our criminal justice system can be more efficient and more effective by focusing on incarcerating violent perpetrators of crime.**

6. **Health disparities.** What steps would you take to reduce racial and income disparities in health outcomes?

**All Massachusetts residents deserve access to quality, affordable care. As Attorney General, I will ensure that everyone can access the medical care they need in the communities where they live. My office will fight health care companies that try to close hospitals or facilities in underserved, urban cities and towns. I will also work with the state's Department of Public Health to track health outcomes in underserved areas to ensure that all Massachusetts residents are receiving quality care.**

7. **Standards of care and cost.** Do you support establishing a state panel of experts (such as the Affordable Care Act's IPAB/"Independent Payment Advisory Board") to recommend high-value and cost-effective services?

Yes       No

8. **Pharmaceutical companies.** Do you support prohibiting pharmaceutical companies from including direct-to-consumer drug advertising as tax-deductible expense?

Yes       No

9. **Bulk prescription programs.** Do you support establishing a bulk prescription drug program that would provide lower cost prescription drugs for public employees?

Yes       No

Do you support establishing this same program for *all* Massachusetts residents?

Yes       No

**D. Housing**

In the last ten years, the need for affordable housing has increased, while funds for affordable housing have decreased, federal and state. Currently there is a 10-year waiting list for a rental voucher, and the average rent for a two bedroom apartment requires a wage 50% higher than the median Massachusetts wage. Half of families in Greater Boston alone pay over 30% of their income in housing and utilities costs—and 25% of households pay *more than half* their income to housing. 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.

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?*

**Helping families stay in their homes strengthens our communities and improves our economy, and I have consistently fought to make housing more affordable and accessible for those who need it. My family started in Boston federal public housing. I know the importance and value of having a home. As Attorney General, I will aggressively enforce recently enacted state laws that assist borrowers in obtaining a loan modification and prevent unnecessary foreclosures. This office is where Massachusetts residents can turn to in their times of crisis and we need an Attorney General who will find ways to stand up to the banks forcing foreclosure and keep families in their homes. Attorney General Coakley has done a tremendous job in recovering millions of dollars for investors and borrowers that fell victim to predatory lending schemes. I will continue this advocacy, utilizing the HomeCorps program to prevent unnecessary foreclosures. A foreclosed home that sits empty for 5 years is bad for the family, it is bad for the community, and it is bad for the banks. We can find better solutions and we must protect our residents.**

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

**As a legislator, I was the chief sponsor of the law that created Home Modification Program to provide grants and loans for the elderly and disabled individuals to make their homes more accessible. I was also the chief sponsor of that law the created and funded the state Housing Registry to match disabled tenants with owners of accessible housing units.**

3. **Housing Authorities.** Governor Patrick has proposed consolidating the Housing Authorities to six regional authorities, from the current 242 authorities. The legislature appears reluctant to agree to this reform, in part because it would reduce local control. What is your position?

**In the wake of the problems discovered in the Chelsea Housing Authority and across the statewide system, the Attorney General's office must continue to look closely at the way the current Housing Authority exists and operates to ensure there are no more examples of incompetence, indolence, or improper action by directors across the Commonwealth. The Housing Authority is intended to be an instrument of opportunity for families that need assistance, not a place where scandal can occur from lack of oversight. In addition to protecting the price paid by taxpayers, the tenants who live in poor conditions with problems that go unfixed under inattentive management deserve the attention of the Attorney General's office. I support action that brings Housing Authorities under greater supervision, but I support having local Housing Authorities. I look forward to seeing the bill currently in committee by Senator Eldridge and Representative Honan following a statewide tour of Housing Authorities.**

4. **Affordable Housing.** What would you do to increase the number of affordable housing units in the State? What would you do to ensure that no low-income family has to spend more than 50% of their income on housing and related expenses; and that fewer than a quarter of families spending more than 33% of income on shelter?

**The Massachusetts Affordable Housing Law, Chapter 40B, was designed with a goal of pushing communities across Massachusetts to have at least 10% of the available housing stock be affordable to low and moderate-income families. Providing an opportunity for a stable home for all families in Massachusetts will improve the quality of our economy. Our Commonwealth must continue to build and redesign new homes and apartments to meet the needs of our rising local population, or we will face the reality of families needing to move out of state. As the Attorney General, I will**

**continue the efforts of Attorney General Coakley to help keep people, at the risk of being foreclosed, in their homes, by working with and prosecuting banks as appropriate.**

5. **Temporary Housing Transitions.** What would you do to move homeless families and individuals out of motels and shelters and into permanent housing?

**As the Attorney General, I will use my position and the bully pulpit to advocate for increased funding from the legislature.**

6. **Regulation Reform, Development and Preservation.** Would you support reforms to update our outmoded zoning, subdivision, and planning laws, in such a way as to encourage balanced development and land preservation?

Yes

No

**E. Revenue and Taxation**

Because of income tax cuts and the effects of the recession, Massachusetts has lost nearly \$3 billion in revenue over the last 12 years. We now collect less revenue than 21 other states, and our tax revenue is below the national average. Since 1982, local aid has dropped 58%. Cuts to the moderately progressive state income tax has meant increasing reliance on fees, sales, gas and property taxes, exacerbating the overall regressiveness of our revenue. Regressive taxation strains low- and middle-income families, and reduced revenue collection curtails our ability to invest in vital infrastructure.

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?*

**We should examine the tax code for its provisions, some of which are outdated. As chair of Taxation committee, I introduced a successful measure doubling the personal exemption, thereby increasing the progressivity of our tax code. I would look for ways to continue that effort.**

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).

**While in the legislature, I was the Senate Chair of the Joint Committee on Taxation and worked to increase the Earned Income Tax Credit, which provides a refundable credit for low-income working families with children. As noted above, I helped write the law doubling the personal income exemption. I have spoken on behalf of Governor Patrick's plans on numerous TV and radio outlets including NECN, Fox 25, and WGBH.**

3. **Tax Rates for Upper Incomes.** Do you support increasing income taxes on the wealthiest residents of Massachusetts?  
Yes          No

**I support measures to make our tax code more progressive.**

4. **Automatic Tax Decrease Triggers.** Do you support halting the automatic decrease in state tax when Massachusetts state revenues grow four quarters in a row?  
Yes          No

**I support measures to make our tax code more progressive.**

5. **Capital Gains.** Do you support increasing the capital gains tax (with safeguards to protect seniors)?  
Yes          No

**I support measures to make our tax code more progressive.**

6. **Progressive Taxation.** “An Act to Invest in Our Communities” was designed to raise significant revenue while making our tax code more progressive, but it has not passed the legislature. Would you support a renewed effort to pass this or similar legislation?

Yes          No

**I support measures to make our tax code more progressive.**

7. **Corporate Tax Breaks.** Do you support eliminating or substantially reducing corporate tax breaks?

Yes          No

**I support eliminating or reducing corporate tax breaks that are ineffective.**

Do you support repealing or significantly reducing the Film Production Tax Credit?

Yes          No

**I am open to exploring the efficacy of this tax credit and act accordingly.**

8. **Clawbacks and Transparency in Corporate Tax Breaks.** Do you support increasing corporate tax break transparency and clawback provisions?

Yes          No

9. **Graduated Income Tax.** Would you support a state constitutional amendment creating a Massachusetts progressive income tax?

Yes          No

**IV. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS**

***Please compose your answers directly in the document, underneath the question. Limit answers to 250 words or fewer. No attachments.***

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.

**The Attorney General's office can have an impact on a wide variety of issues that are important to Progressives in Massachusetts. Gun violence is devastating our country over and over again, and Washington DC cannot escape the stranglehold of the NRA. As the Attorney General, I will take on the NRA and will mandate fingerprint technology be implemented on all firearms sold in the Commonwealth so that we can avoid accidents, slow illegal trafficking, and make our communities safer. This can be done through regulation that does not require the legislature to vote on the bill and does not have the opportunity for the NRA to derail progress. I am willing to stand up the gun lobby and say that it is time we use the best technological advancements to make our neighborhoods safe.**

**We also must address the future of our environment and the Attorney General's office can have an impact in investigating polluters and encouraging long-term renewable energy growth by working with the utility companies to plan and provide for a green future. I believe in renewable energy. I have had solar panels on my roof for ten years and I know that the long-term benefits of renewables outweigh the short-term costs.**

**We must to be a forward-thinking Commonwealth and continue to be a national leader on Progressive issues as a model to the nation. I intend to use the Attorney General's office to advance these causes.**