



# **PROGRESSIVE MASSACHUSETTS**

statewide, grassroots organizing for progressive change in Massachusetts

## **2014 STATE RACES ENDORSEMENT QUESTIONNAIRE**

**Date:** 4/24/14  
**Candidate:** Evan Falchuk  
**Office Sought:** Governor of Massachusetts  
**Party:** United Independent Party  
**Web Site:** [www.Falchuk2014.org](http://www.Falchuk2014.org)

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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 governor because I am a voter, who, like a lot of people, have gotten tired of voting for the lesser of two evils. We must have smart, brave reform of our politics, economy and government, and I, like many voters, believe it is clear that the two parties are not offering that combination of solutions. I am running because I believe that everyone is equal, everyone's civil rights must be protected, and that the government must spend our money wisely. I believe we must have a practical framework to bring new, independent-minded people into our political process in order to take on the serious challenges we face. It is why I founded the United Independent Party and it is the motivating principle of the Falchuk-Jennings ticket.

This spirit, above all, is what has motivated me and a group of supporters to found the United Independent Party in Massachusetts, and it is the rationale for my seeking to serve as governor. I believe the political process is not set up to generate or breed leadership that seeks out these shared understandings, that is brave enough to take on our most difficult challenges, or to take meaningful action to solve them. I also believe there are many, many people in our Commonwealth who share this view, and who together form the basis of a coalition of those who feel the current system no longer represents their interests. It is a coalition of people who feel their issues are not taken seriously, or who feel, as people, that they too often are not treated seriously by the very people they elect to serve. I'm a voter – and I've felt this exact way myself, for some time now.

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

I spent the first few years of my career as a lawyer doing work that was enjoyable, but ultimately unsatisfying. One thing I learned is that my spirit is motivated by a desire to build and organize people around ideas and purpose and meaning – particularly ideas that call into question widely held preconceptions, and that force people to *think for themselves* about a problem.

In my 13 years on the executive team of Best Doctors, including as President, we grew that Boston-based global health care company from 9 employees to over 600. I traveled the world speaking to audiences, employees, sales prospects, government groups and others challenging them to see health care not just as a money issue, but rather from a larger perspective: getting the right diagnosis. The best way to connect with skeptical or hostile audiences is to connect on a personal and emotional level. That is, in my view, the clearest path to a shared understanding of a larger truth, to build consensus on difficult subjects, and to compel action.

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I believe the process of electing a Governor is very much like an extended, public job interview. Perhaps the most important qualification is finding out exactly what *kind* of person you are hiring. What motivates them? What is their personality? How will they handle the unpredictable challenges they will face on the job? Most importantly, do they really *believe* what they say and will they act on that – or just pay lip service to difficult challenges?

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

The government's role is to ensure that the American promise of equality for all is fulfilled. It has a responsibility to address problems that can only be solved through collective action and to ensure that the playing field for businesses and consumers is fair and level. In this regard, it has a particular responsibility to make sure that concentrations of economic power that undermine the equality of opportunity in Massachusetts or prey on consumers are confronted and demolished. In addition, the government has a responsibility to implement smart, effective policies that address the underlying causes of problems. Finally, on a basic level, the government has a responsibility to provide outstanding customer service to voters and others.

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

My legislative priorities are grounded in the need to address significant structural problems in our politics, economy, and government. In particular, the cost of living in Massachusetts has continued to skyrocket even as median incomes remain flat. As the two biggest drivers of this problem are healthcare costs and housing costs, my top two legislative priorities are to address the underlying causes of these problems.

First, we must stop the continual mergers of hospitals into giant monopolistic hospital systems. These systems increase their prices as they see fit and cost consumers and businesses dearly while putting at risk high-quality healthcare. In addition, we must establish an all-payer fee schedule for hospitals that can eliminate billions of dollars in unnecessary hospital expense.

Second, we must empower cities and towns to choose to produce new housing. This means enacting legislation that will appropriately fund the education, transportation, and other forms of local aid. Housing is a jobs issue and it must be in the best interest of cities and towns to produce more housing so their own actions, through the local legislative and permitting processes, advance the Commonwealth's interest in increasing and broadening housing options..

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Third, we must equalize the unfair two-tiered system of campaign finance that gives special advantages to Democrats and Republicans, including a 10:1 difference between what those candidates are permitted to raise as compared to the independent Falchuk-Jennings ticket. In addition, we must play a leadership role in amending the U.S. Constitution to confirm that money is not speech.

## 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?*

Over the last decade, median incomes in our state have been flat, while the cost of living has grown at a fast pace. These cost of living increases have been largely driven by increases in health care and housing costs. These factors must be comprehensively addressed in order to deal with the issues raised in this important question.

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Controlling health care costs by stopping monopolistic mergers in the hospital markets and creating an all-payer fee schedule based on global payments will have a significant impact on the cost of living for families - making it that much easier to save, and to get ahead. Driving investment in education and other forms of local aid will help make it in the best interests of cities and towns to produce the thousands of new units of housing we need to drive down the cost of owning or renting a home. More than any other issue, driving down the cost of living in Massachusetts is the best way to improve the economy, economic security, incomes, poverty and inequality.

We also must invest resources and mind power in tailoring our education and training – at all levels. Expanded job training could range from technical skills or engineering; communication or health training; or critical thinking, work ethic, and practical problem-solving. Students need more modern, expanded educational options if they are to find a place in the job market of the future – just as growing businesses benefit by hiring much more skilled workers.

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 a business person, I know firsthand that it is exceedingly expensive to hire workers in Massachusetts for the reasons outlined above. At Best Doctors, we hired hundreds of workers in Massachusetts and worked hard in our business practices to address the underlying causes of rising health care costs by tackling the problem of misdiagnosis in medicine.

In addition, I have had the privilege of working with an inspirational community development organization called Interise. Interise works with small- and medium-sized businesses, particularly in underprivileged areas, helping owners or executives of those businesses with technical assistance, building networks of colleagues and advisors and customers, creating business plans, and providing many of the fundamental structural skills that often are the difference between success and failure. As I speak Spanish, I worked with the Interise group in Lawrence, Massachusetts, working with members of the business community there, many of whom are first-generation immigrants. The power of connecting with these motivated, creative, and fearless leaders is remarkable. Programs like Interise ought to be a centerpiece of government policy on economic development and I am committed to expanding that model.

3. **Minimum Wage.** Do you support:
- |   |            |
|---|------------|
| Raising the wage to at least \$10.50/hour:          | <b>Yes</b> |
| Indexing automatic yearly increases to inflation:   | <b>Yes</b> |
| Increasing tipped wages to 60% of the minimum wage: | <b>No</b>  |

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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**

I support increasing the minimum wage. I also believe that raising the minimum wage will help workers at the low end of the income scale. It is not a strategic solution to the problems of poverty, stagnant income and the excessively high costs of living in Massachusetts. For this reason, I believe that an increase in the minimum wage, if tied to any other policy initiative, should be paired with increased funding for job training, community development corporations (such as Interise), support for technical education, and other measures that will fundamentally improve the economics of living in Massachusetts.

5. **Earned Sick Time.** Do you support requiring businesses with more than 11 employees to provide earned, paid sick time to their employees?

**Yes**

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?

**No**

7. **Employee-Owned Businesses.** Do you support legislation to foster and develop employee ownership of businesses in Massachusetts?

**Yes**

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**

## **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.

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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.*

My wife, Felicia, and I have three children in the Newton public schools. Not all communities have the positive social and economic foundation that this one does. The Commonwealth's ability to address these challenges is driven by the very traits that we must instill in our children - resilience, critical thinking, leadership, and grit.

State funding for education has been reduced over the last decade, with "Race to the Top" grants expiring. Meanwhile, Chapter 70's foundation budget formula has not been updated to reflect the realities of education in the second decade of the 21st century, including rising health care costs, greater special education needs, increased use of technology, and the emergence of charter schools.

Our educational system is at a crossroads. This is a challenge and an opportunity. My plan, called "Action to Honors," includes immediately revising the Chapter 70 funding formula - as the state is required to do regularly but has not done in a decade. Second, in 2015, a Falchuk-Jennings Administration will convene visionary education leaders - including representatives from teachers, parents, students, academics, union groups and others - to create a plan for how our educational system should look in 2035. I want that group to look to the future, beyond the day-to-day challenges facing us, and describe what an educational system would look like that was modern, advanced, highly-functioning, and student-centric. The findings of this expert panel will form the foundation of our educational planning.

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).

I believe that public education is a fundamentally important part of the civic life of our cities and towns and Massachusetts. For this reason, it has always been important to me and my wife to ensure that our three children would be educated in the public schools. This is not just because of the educational opportunity but also because of the meaningful connection that is created among students in school and out, as well as parents and teachers. These bonds of community are the fundamental basis of what makes Massachusetts more than just a place on a map.

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

The fundamental drivers of these achievement gaps are the complicated social and economic challenges that exist in many communities around the Commonwealth. Particularly in these situations it is critical to understand that an effective education involves far more than the ability to score well on a standardized test. Instead, the government has an obligation to ensure that the full range of social, health, and mental health services are available to support students who may be dealing with numerous issues in their home or community. We must address these racial and economic achievement gaps not as how to improve test scores, but rather in a broader context of how to address the underlying disparities that exist, as well as how to ensure that each and every student receives the services they need so they can become happy, effective, contributing members of society.

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**

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

**Yes**

I have proposed that any student who graduates from a Massachusetts high school should be able to attend a community college or technical school free of charge for two years. I believe we have an obligation to ensure that the increasingly (and excessively) high cost of higher education must not become a barrier to economic mobility.

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**

Changing the Chapter 70 education formula is one of the core priorities of my campaign and a Falchuk-Jennings administration.

### **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.



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Each patient must have access to the right diagnosis, the right treatment, and health care that is affordable. The current economic model for healthcare, driven by fee-for-service medicine, puts all of these core values and principles at risk. The continuing monopolistic consolidation of hospitals into giant hospital systems has led to massive increases in the cost of care that are harming consumers, businesses, doctors, and nurses, and must be stopped. The economic model of healthcare must be fundamentally changed.

The financial risk of medical care should be placed on the hospitals, through a system of global payments based on a state-established all-payer fee schedule. Under this model, hospitals would be incentivized to reduce their administrative overhead and waste, would be motivated to profit from the prevention of illness, rather than its treatment, and would create far more efficient models of care than is currently the case. If such a program eliminated just 5% of wasted hospital expense, that is \$2 billion a year in savings that would go back into the pockets of taxpayers.

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

In my 13 years as a senior executive of Best Doctors, Inc., I worked every day with doctors, nurses, and others on programs that helped ensure each individual received the right diagnosis and treatment. I have spoken and written extensively on the issue of misdiagnosis in medicine, particularly the underlying causes of misdiagnosis.

Fundamentally this is caused by an economic model for healthcare that has created a situation where doctors spend, on average, less than 15 minutes with each patient, or medical information is highly fragmented, and where rates of incorrect diagnosis often exceed 20%. This tragic outcome is avoidable, and the work we did at Best Doctors was highly effective at dealing with the results of this broken system. But truly resolving the problem requires the kind of policy approach I have described.

3. **Single Payer and Public Option.** Do you support moving Massachusetts to Single Payer insurance?

**No**

I do not support Single Payer because I believe we must think more boldly. What we need is a *single payment system*. The government must establish an all-payer fee schedule based on global budgets that would completely reverse the economic incentives in our healthcare system. It is critical to eliminate the profiteering and market distortions that hospital systems have created and the most direct approach to this is through this mechanism.

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

It may be worthwhile to make available to the public the opportunity to buy into a state-sponsored insurance program to the extent such a program would be less expensive than existing alternatives on the private market. At the same time, fundamentally addressing the problem of access to and affordability of healthcare requires addressing the economics of how healthcare is delivered rather than another mechanism for health insurance.

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

As described, fundamentally altering the economic model of healthcare away from fee-for-service medicine to one based on an all-payer global budget system established by the state is the single most important step that can be taken to lower healthcare costs and improve health outcomes. Patient and doctor must be at the center of the healthcare question, rather than insurance company and hospital administrator.

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

State budgeting for mental health services has been substantially cut over the last several years. Through these cost reductions there is an inadequate supply both of mental health professionals and sufficient settings for patients to receive care. As with many other areas, these reductions impact those at the lower end of the income spectrum in a way that creates a gap in affordable mental health services. I am particularly concerned about the efforts to close mental health facilities, and the increasing use of emergency departments and prisons for people dealing with mental health issues, particularly in a state with such an advanced medical community and compassionate culture.

I will work with the legislature to implement increased funding to the Department of Mental Health, with the goal of restoring funding to levels that existed prior to the cuts enacted over the last several years. In addition, we must ensure that young people in schools have access to mental health services through social workers or other professionals, and that the public is educated about how seeking mental health services is part of living a health life. Finally, I am also committed to accelerating the creation of drug, mental health, and veteran courts to ensure that the criminal justice system is better equipped to deal with cases of mental illness and substance abuse in ways that are tailored to the needs of the people appearing before it.

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

Under the current economic model for healthcare, patients who are at the lower end of the income spectrum face more significant public health issues and relatively poorer access to the healthcare system, including access to and use of primary care. In an environment in which primary care continues to be devalued in the current economic model, this problem is particularly acute. By changing the economic model of healthcare to one in which hospitals are incentivized to focus on issues of public health, it will be in the financial best interest of hospitals to work with individuals in all communities to ensure good public health, strong programs of prevention, and improved access to

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primary care. This combination of factors will improve public health as well as the healthcare outcomes experienced in the Commonwealth.

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**

I support an Independent Payment Advisory Board because in a fee-for-service world, government intervention becomes necessary in order to recommend against low-value, cost-ineffective services. On some level, it is absurd that there must be such a program but the economics of the current healthcare model leave few alternatives. I believe programs like the Independent Payment Advisory Board are not a substitute for aligning the economic incentives for healthcare around high-quality, cost-effective healthcare focused on the needs of each patient.

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

**Yes**

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

**Yes**

I support pursuing programs that take advantage of the Commonwealth’s size as a purchaser with respect to lowering the administrative and direct costs of prescription drugs, taking into account the sophisticated programs already in place at state agencies including the Group Insurance Commission and MassHealth.

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

**Yes**

While many employers across the Commonwealth have in place effective programs for pharmacy benefit management, it is worthwhile to consider making the Commonwealth’s program available more broadly.

#### **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.

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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?*

Housing is a fundamental human need, and for too long housing production has lagged relative to demand. The result has been dramatic and sustained increases in housing costs, and a loss of young people in their 20s and 30s who have moved to other parts of the country, costing the Commonwealth a portion of its future labor force and the associated productivity and innovation that will now happen elsewhere. Inadequate housing production has cost Massachusetts families, cost the economy as higher proportions on incomes are allocated toward housing relative to other goods and services, and have caused particular harm to those with the greatest need. With baby boomers reaching retirement age, and looking to “age in place” in their hometowns, these challenges will worsen if the market cannot provide more housing in a broader range of forms than has been built in the past decade plus.

In the home rule framework established by the Massachusetts Constitution, an alignment of interests is needed between the Commonwealth’s need for more housing and municipalities’ need to balance their budgets and ensure sound planning for housing located in sensible locations, including in proximity to jobs and transportation. Existing “smart growth” policies have an important role, but must be enacted far more broadly to make a real impact on housing costs and opportunities. Infrastructure improvements, including through streamlined public/private partnerships, will be needed.

Housing is a jobs issue, and will rely on true partnerships among state and local governments, with the private sector.

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

My pick as United Independent Party Lt. Governor candidate is Angus Jennings, a land planner certified by the American Institute of Certified Planners. He has led zoning amendments allowing for more housing, including mixed-income inclusionary zoning, in thirteen cities and towns, has been a featured speaker at countless local, regional and statewide conferences and trainings regarding housing, smart growth, downtown revitalization, and adaptive reuse of historic buildings into housing. He is a trainer on housing topics for the Massachusetts Citizen Planner Training Collaborative.

Angus wrote a 24-page paper entitled “MGL Ch. 40R: A Piece of the Emerging Smart Growth Puzzle in Massachusetts” which was included in the 2005 publication of the Suffolk Law School Center for Advanced Legal Studies Growing Smart by Working with 40R. He co-authored an op-ed for Banker & Tradesman in 2006 entitled “Smart Growth Initiatives are Exceeding Expectations.” In his work as a municipal Town Planner and Director of Land Use, he has provided support to local Affordable Housing Committees and Housing Trusts.

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My selection of Angus as my running mate reflects by deep commitment to addressing the Commonwealth's housing problems in a legitimate, structural way that results in a land use permitting framework organized around shared interest outcomes, rather than the oppositional "zero sum game" dynamics that characterize so many permitting processes today. Only by aligning the interests of the Commonwealth, its communities and the private sector will we see the amount and type of investment needed to bring housing supply into balance with demand.

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?

I do not believe that this move toward consolidation would be helpful or productive. Among other concerns, it would draw resources further from the local level where they can be applied most effectively toward the needs of real people.

There are real opportunities for reform of Housing Authorities in Massachusetts, including broadening their ability to undertake activities in direct support of creating new housing. However, the broad-brush approach proposed by the current Administration reflects a lack of understanding of the broad range of capacity and value of existing Housing Authorities.

The well-known failings of several Housing Authorities have been within some of the largest Housing Authorities; many of the smallest Housing Authorities provide vital support to people in need, and to communities with constrained resources to proactively expand housing opportunities. There is much to learn from the practices of some small, local Housing Authorities, and with appropriate attention these "best practices" can become common practice. However it should be clear that, in ensuring that taxpayer funds are allocated responsibly, some amount of restructuring and personnel changes can be expected.

A Falchuk/Jennings administration would initiate a deliberate, broad-based analysis of opportunities to enhance the functionality and efficiency of local Housing Authorities, and the results of this analysis could lead to recommendations for some consolidation of local offices. However, any such recommendations would rely upon specific local and sub-regional conditions justifying such action based on how it would affect real people who live in or are in need of public housing.

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?

Local zoning reforms will be needed to create new districts that welcome and encourage the creation of new mixed-income housing through construction, renovation and adaptive reuse. In order to achieve these reforms within the home rule Constitutional framework of

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Massachusetts, this will require enacting legislation to appropriately fund education, transportation, water and sewer infrastructure, and other forms of local aid.

There are also opportunities to expand the availability of suitable land for housing development, including through disposition of surplus and underutilized public land for redevelopment based on public interest performance standards, including affordable housing.

In order to reduce the percentage of household income allocated toward housing costs, it will be necessary to both increase housing supply and moderate prices, but also to create many more jobs. Due in part to Massachusetts' tremendous educational resources, housing production is a key impediment to jobs growth. However, a Falchuk/Jennings administration will not view housing in a vacuum, but will recognize its interrelatedness with education (including technical and vocational education), workforce development and training, infrastructure, and those quality of life resources and amenities that make Massachusetts a desirable place to live, work and raise a family.

For those Massachusetts households in greatest need, a Falchuk/Jennings administration will advance administrative efficiencies within state government to minimize bureaucratic overhead and ensure that the greatest proportion of taxpayer dollars possible will be allocated to help real people.

5. **Temporary Housing Transitions.** What would you do to move homeless families and individuals out of motels and shelters and into permanent housing?  
The most important part of addressing the problem of homelesses is to ensure there is more housing available, and that is the focus of our housing platform. Placing people and families experiencing homelessness in hotels is an ineffective short-term band-aid approach, and is a specific example of state government not spending taxpayer money wisely. The state must take action to get families out of these settings and into more permanent housing, closer to social services, education and more stable environments. The cuts to the state's rental housing voucher program should be reversed.
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

The United Independent Party Lt. Governor candidate Angus Jennings has been active within the Zoning Reform Working Group, a coalition of attorneys, planners, housing advocates, environmental activists and others, since 2001. He has actively tracked zoning reform initiatives during this time, and has personally presented testimony in hearings before state legislative committees in favor of zoning reform initiatives on many occasions, including in 2013. As past president and a current Board member of the non-profit Massachusetts Association of Planning Directors, Angus has worked hard to bring

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legislative attention to the necessity for improved state laws to give communities the tools they need to encourage sensible growth while preserving the Commonwealth's heritage landscapes and sensitive natural resources.

As an appointed member of the state 40R Smart Growth Zoning Regulation Committee in 2005, Angus actively contributed to this regulatory framework in a way that enhanced the value of 40R to cities and towns. In his professional work, he has led the adoption of eleven of the approved 40R districts in Massachusetts – roughly 1/3 of the total 40R districts. His combined work on zoning amendments in thirteen cities and towns represents nearly 10,000 zoned housing units.

Whether proposed legislative amendments pending before the Legislature are enacted or not, much more work will remain in order to modernize our planning and development framework, including better integrating zoning with the state's housing laws including Ch. 40B. Crafting such balanced reforms through a broad-based, consensus-driven process will be a priority of a Falchuk-Jennings administration.

### **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 must pay for the government we say we want. At the same time, too many taxpayers do not believe that they are getting a good value from government services. This creates structural barriers to making the kinds of investments in needed government services such as education and other forms of local aid that are the prerequisites for thriving communities and sustained economic growth.

In addition, I believe Massachusetts policy makers are constrained by the state constitutional requirement of a flat tax structure. I am calling for the creation of a Tax Modernization Commission which will be tasked with designing a tax code for Massachusetts suitable for a thriving, secure twenty-first century economy rather than one based on an outdated economic approach.

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).

As a taxpayer and a voter, I believe there is a tremendous opportunity to reframe the

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conversation around taxation to being focused on the most sensible and effective approaches to taxation that meet our modern needs.

3. **Tax Rates for Upper Incomes.** Do you support increasing income taxes on the wealthiest residents of Massachusetts?

**No**

This is the classic example of a counter-productive litmus test question. The political debate is plagued by an inability to discuss the question of how do we ensure that our tax code is designed in a way that maximizes economic growth and provides the funding state government needs. To be clear, I support the creation of a progressive tax code in Massachusetts but because the parameters of that tax code must be driven by the economic reality of a modern tax code, I will not prejudge what that top rate should be.

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**

5. **Capital Gains.** Do you support increasing the capital gains tax (with safeguards to protect seniors)?

**No**

No, entrepreneurialism is at the core of job creation in twenty-first century Massachusetts. People who dedicate their lives to the creation of business and take the risks inherent in doing so ought to be taxed at a rate that reflects the public policy benefit of encouraging this kind of activity. For this reason I support differential taxation of short-term capital gains, but not those realized from long-term savings and investment as well as the gains earned from building a business.

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**

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

**Yes**

Current tax policy with respect to enormous tax breaks to large corporations is based on an outmoded understanding of economic growth. The core driver of economic growth in the twenty first century is small and medium sized businesses, not the giant corporations opening large factories with high-paying, secure jobs. Money used for tax breaks in this way could instead be deployed to support more meaningful investments in economic growth such as addressing the lack of housing production in Massachusetts which would



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create more jobs and more economic opportunity than existing policies.

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

**No**

Promoting and supporting the creative economy is important. Films and television programs are produced in locations that have tax credit programs, which means that eliminating this credit will seriously impact the many small- and medium-sized businesses, laborers, artisans and others who do so much of the work on these productions. It remains important for the state to closely monitor tax credits like these, and others, to ensure that taxpayers are getting a good value for this investment.

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

**Yes**

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

**Yes**

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**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.

It is notable to me that, other than asking about capital gains taxes, there were no questions in this questionnaire about senior citizens in Massachusetts. As our population continues to change with the aging of the Baby Boomer population, seniors play an increasingly important role in not just our communities but in the daily lives of so many families in our Commonwealth. Senior citizens and their families today face a crisis due to the lack of affordability of long-term care and supports. The state has an obligation to provide increased funding for these services. The failure to do so is bankrupting families.

In spite of the fact that MA likes to boast of its universal health care coverage, the reality is that for the single largest health care related expense that most people will face- the cost of a nursing home in the later years of life, almost everyone has very limited coverage. For the next generations, the state has an obligation to create a program of long term care coverage given the failure of the private market to produce affordable products. I am calling for the creation of a long-term insurance pool in Massachusetts which would create a publicly supported, dedicated funding mechanism to ensure that universal coverage in Massachusetts actually means universal coverage.