



**PROGRESSIVE MASSACHUSETTS  
2020 LEGISLATIVE  
ENDORSEMENT QUESTIONNAIRE**

**Date:** 5/13/2020

**Candidate:** Stephanie Everett

**Office Sought:** State Representative, 12th Suffolk

**Party:** Democratic

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# OVERVIEW

***We view our questionnaire as an educational resource, for both candidates and voters, on progressive approaches to the issues. It provides candidates the opportunity to address a number of important issues beyond the surface talking points, which progressive voters find extremely valuable when making a decision.***

Our Questionnaires starts with an "About You" section and ends with an opportunity for you to include additional remarks beyond what we asked.

The bulk of our questionnaire is focused on the issues outlined in our [Progressive Platform](#), which also inform our [Legislative Agenda](#). We are interested in your overall philosophy as well as your views on specific policy and legislation.

Each section features charts or graphs (with links to sources) that illustrate one or more facets of the issue under discussion.

**We encourage you to expand your answers beyond "yes/no" in the additional comments space provided on the form, but please keep answers < 150 words.**

**Issue Subsections:**

- A. Revenue and Taxation
- B. Jobs and the Economy
- C. Education
- D. Health Care
- E. Housing
- F. Racial and Social Justice
- G. Good Government and Strong Democracy
- H. Sustainable Infrastructure and Environmental Protection

*Our questionnaire is comprehensive and will take time to complete. Please develop your answers in a separate document before inputting them into the submission form.  
([progressivemass.com/questionnaire](http://progressivemass.com/questionnaire))*

## **I. About You**

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

**SE:** I am running for State Representative because a lifetime spent living, working, and raising a family in this district, gives me the experience to advocate and organize for the policies and actions our district needs. As a community activist, attorney, and former senior aide on Beacon Hill and in Governor Patrick's administration, I pride myself on being solution driven and community focused.

When the quarantine started with business and school closures, I was on the phone with friends, neighbors, and colleagues ensuring they had the resources and support to be in their homes for an extended period of time. It was during those calls that the need to run for this seat became my reality. Far too many people were struggling before the quarantine - with inadequate housing, jobs, nutrition, and limited ability to access the resources they needed to change their harsh reality. I have lived through that - as a young mom I was on assistance and in and out of shelters while I struggled to provide for my daughter. I cannot imagine going through that experience under this quarantine - cut off from work and from the community and support I relied on.

In 2009 as our state weathered the Great Recession, I was a senior aide on Beacon Hill advocating for policy and budget line items to protect vulnerable members of our community and give our local economy a much needed boost. The next State Representative is going to face many of those same issues when they take office in the middle of the slow recovery from the quarantine. While we don't know exactly what the new normal will look like, we do know that the only way to get through it is together.

If elected, I will enter the Legislature ready to work collaboratively with my colleagues and with our community to put forth policies and budget line items that (1) keep our neighbors in their homes, (2) address our children being out of school for 6 months, and (3) get our community back to work.

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

**SE:** In 2009, I had the pleasure to serve as the Deputy Chief of Staff to State Senator Sonia Chang-Diaz. At the time, the country was in the Great Recession, our communities were riddled with foreclosures and the unemployment rate was increasing at alarming rates. I worked with leaders across the state to draft bills and organize advocacy around foreclosure prevention, equitable distribution of federal funding to revitalize the community through sustainable job creation, and fighting for youth violence prevention funding. I then went on to serve as the Chief of Staff for the Department of Transitional Assistance under Governor Patrick, where I was on the front line of managing assistance programs that I had been on as a single mother a client of only a few years previously.

My campaign is solution focused and my experience in the State House and the Executive Branch will benefit our district and our state as we fight to understand and build our new normal. We have to hit the ground running on day one with weeks to file new bills and begin the work necessary to advocate for funding that will be substantially reduced in FY2021 and FY2022.

### **3. What do you view as the biggest obstacles to passing progressive policy at the state level?**

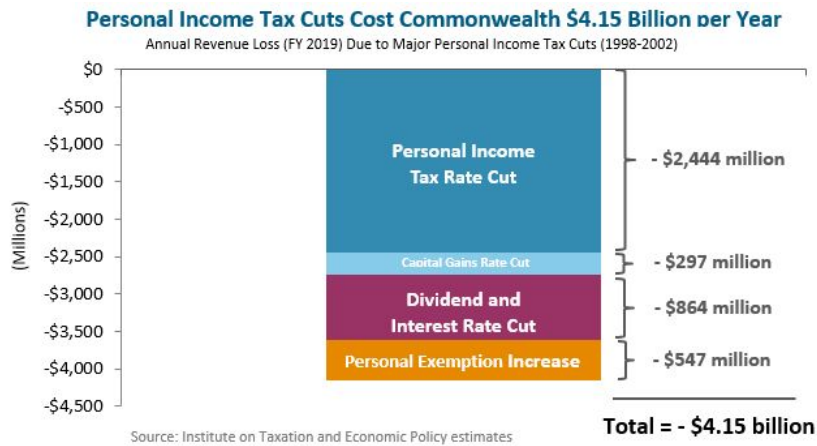
**SE:** The biggest obstacles to passing progressive policies on the state level is a lack of progressive leaders in the state legislature. There is strength in numbers and there is movement in unity. We have to find a bridge that connects us all so that our communities all benefit equally.

## II. The Issues

### A. Revenue and Taxation

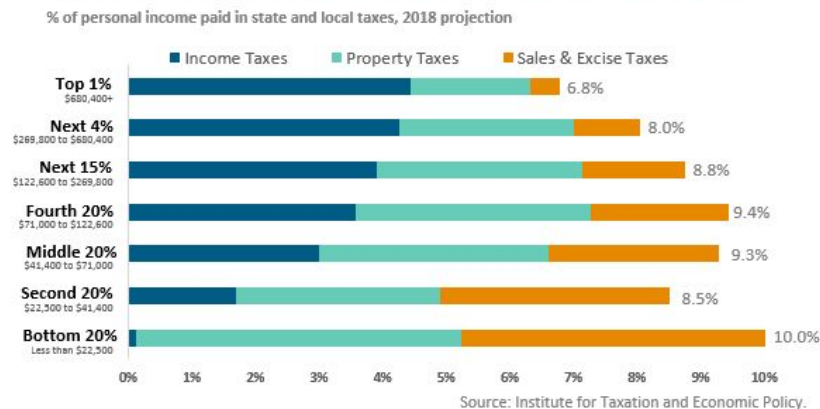
Between 1977 and 2016, Massachusetts [reduced state taxes](#) by more than all but two other states. Because of income tax cuts enacted between 1998 and 2002, Massachusetts loses over \$4 billion in tax revenue *each year*--\$4 billion that is not invested in our roads, bridges, schools, parks, and services, all of which have historically been part of why MA is a great place to live. 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--and willingness--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 state and local taxes are regressive.**

#### Highest Income Taxpayers Pay Smaller Share of Income in State and Local Taxes



1. **Please explain your principles and proposals as relate to this issue, and what work you personally have done to advance them (legislation, community work, published writings, etc.).**

**SE:** As a senior Aide, I advocated for progressive tax legislation and educated our community on how having residents pay their fare share would increase revenues to fund programs that fully fund programs that our community relies on.

2. **Corporate Tax Breaks. Corporate tax breaks cost Massachusetts [more than \\$1 billion in foregone revenue](#) each year. Companies can secure access to such tax breaks due to political connections whether or not the promised benefits ever materialize. Which of the following accountability steps would you support?**

- a. Collecting and publicly disclosing information about the benefits to the state from any tax break?
- b. Repealing any tax break that does not provide the intended benefits in a cost-effective manner?
- c. Establishing sunset dates for all tax breaks so that they must come up for periodic review?

**SE:** For far too long there has been a question about the community benefits that are supposed to come from corporations afforded a tax break. What we have found is that the program(s) is either non-existent or is offered to a small group of other politically connected individuals which defeats the purpose of the benefit. We must start holding corporations accountable and I believe "c" offers that accountability. No more operating without oversight. No more saying that a program was established without evidence and no more lining pockets of corporations without true transparency. If corporations are unwilling to provide a benefit we should be unwilling to give them one.

3. **Fair Share. Would you support 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")?**

**SE:** YES.

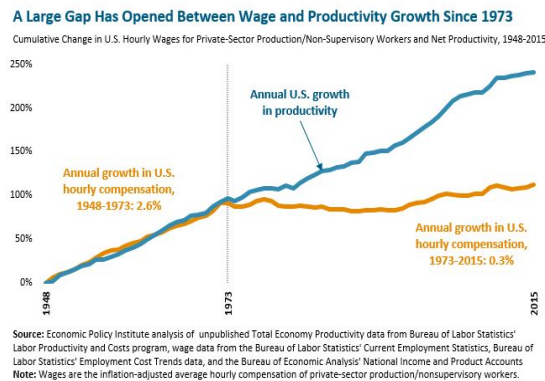
4. **Progressive Revenue.** Massachusetts will not see new revenue from the Fair Share Amendment until 2023, but we have unmet needs now (and will still even with the Fair Share Amendment). Which policies would you support to make a more progressive tax code?
  - a. Raising the corporate minimum tax for larger companies? (The corporate minimum tax is currently only \$456.)
  - b. Imposing a tax on the portion of corporations' US profits that are shifted to offshore tax havens?
  - c. Raising the corporate tax rate from 8% to 9.5% (where it stood in 2009)?
  - d. Raising the tax on long-term capital gains from 5% to 8.95%, in line with states like New York and Vermont?
  - e. Levying a modest tax on university endowments greater than \$1 billion?

## B. Jobs and the Economy

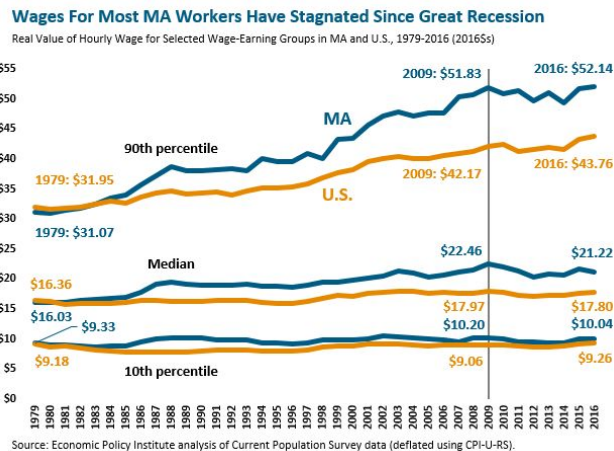
Massachusetts ranks as one of the top ten [most unequal states](#), as the gains from economic growth have disproportionately benefited the already well-off. Compounding this, we are one of the most expensive states in the country for [health care](#), [housing](#), and [child care](#), all of which strain wages. A strong economy depends on strong wages, as workers spend and help local economies thrive. Although the recently passed minimum wage increase will eventually lift the minimum wage to \$15 per hour, this is [still not a living wage](#) for many.

In recent decades, unions have been under attack. However, unions played -- and continue to play -- a pivotal role in creating a strong middle class. With weaker unions (or no unions at all) come weaker social and economic rights and an imbalanced economy.

### Productivity has grown significantly since the 1970s, but it is not being reflected in higher wages.



### Wages for most MA workers have remained stagnant since the Great Recession.



1. **Please explain your principles and proposals as relate to this issue, and what work you personally have done to advance them (legislation, community work, published writings, etc.).**

**SE:** Sustainable job creation is critical in our communities. We have to invest in education and training programs that prepare us to enter careers that support our families and boost our economy. While Deputy Chief of Staff to State Senator Sonia Chang-Diaz, I worked on issues and legislation related to minority contracting to expand economic opportunities in Black and Latinx communities. I also worked with state leaders to ensure federal funding went towards critical job creation opportunities in Black and Latinx communities.

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

**SE:** YES.

Tips are not guaranteed but your monthly rent and other expenses are. It also ensures that customers are not being asked to subsidize the labor costs of businesses - especially large chain restaurants.

3. **Wage Theft. Do you support holding businesses responsible for the wage violations of their subcontractors when the work they do is substantially connected to the company's operations?**

**SE:** YES.

I also believe we can help fight wage theft by ensuring nontraditional workers can easily access and form a union.

4. **Overtime. Would you support updating MA's state overtime law to restore overtime pay protections to low- and moderate-income salaried workers when they work more than 40 hours a week?**

**SE:** YES.

Working over 40 hours requires workers to incur other costs such as daycare.

5. **Fair Scheduling. Many workers in the service sector face irregular working hours, making it difficult to plan for other life events. Do you support providing workers the right to 14 days advance notice of hours and the right to request specific hours without retaliation from the employer?**

**SE:** YES.

As a single mother, I remember struggling to find childcare coverage so that I could provide my children with their basic needs. An advance schedule allows employees to find suitable and adequate care for their children or aging family members they may care for.

6. **Unions. Since the 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?**

**SE:** YES.

I am a proud wife of a union member (Local 369) and so are many others in my district. All contracts come with a detriment and benefit to both parties. They are supposed to be equal and any roll back benefits one party only. The right to negotiate from an equal starting point is essential.

7. **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?

**SE:** YES.

Employees should not be forced to give up any of their rights in order to secure employment.



### C. Education

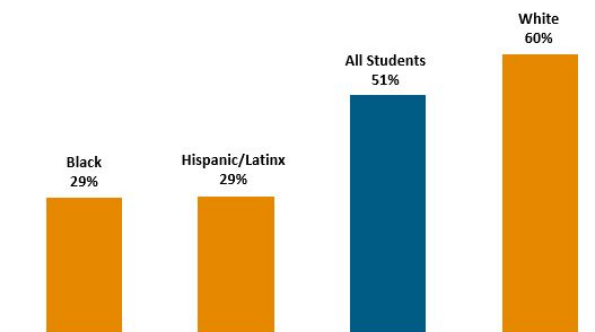
The promise of public education has always been as a gateway to opportunity and mobility for all, regardless of economic circumstances, a cornerstone of the American dream for all residents. Although our public education system gets high marks overall, it remains one of the [most unequal](#) in the country. Powerful corporate interests are promoting false solutions and working to undermine public schools, teachers, and unions. These groups invest 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. Costly, mandated standardized test results are used to label schools as “failing” and justify these privatization schemes.

Most of the [fastest-growing occupations](#) require education beyond a high school diploma, but Massachusetts has been disinvesting from public higher education for the past two decades. This has led to higher tuition costs, putting students at risk of long-term debt or making higher education out of reach for them entirely.

#### Massachusetts has significant achievement gaps reflective of resource gaps.

**Massachusetts Has Significant Achievement Gaps for Youth of Color in 4th Grade Reading**

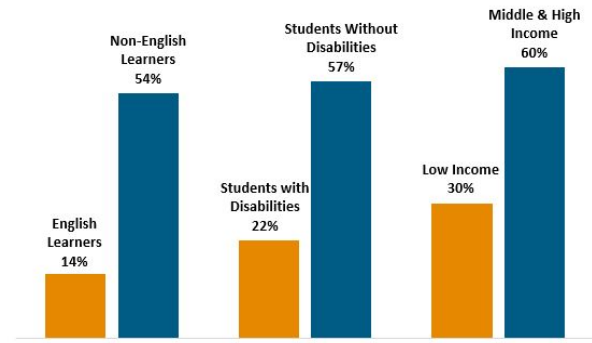
Share of MA 4th Graders Proficient on the 2017 NAEP Reading Exam, by Student Race, all students



Source: National Center for Education Statistics, 2017

**Massachusetts Has Significant Achievement Gaps for Disadvantaged Youth in 4th Grade Reading**

Share of Mass. 4th Graders Proficient on the 2017 NAEP Reading Exam, by Student Category

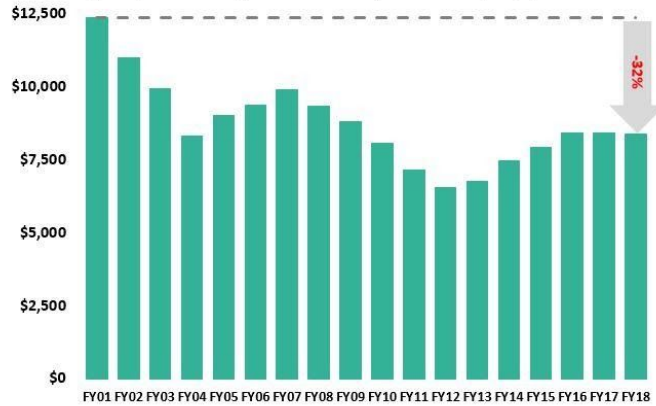


Source: National Center for Education Statistics, 2017

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

**Per Student, MA Has Cut Higher Ed Funding by 32 Percent Since FY 2001**

State spending on higher education per resident student, FY 2001-2018 (2018\$)



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

- 1. Please explain your principles and proposals as relate to this issue, and what work you personally have done to advance them (legislation, community work, published writings, etc.).**

**SE:** We must address the inequities in resources and funding for our current neighborhood schools. Elementary schools are the foundation to education. It is where our children learn to hate or love school. Where learning disabilities are first identified and addressed (although not always completely or accurately). It is where we should invest more of our time, resources and money to ensure that children regardless of their neighborhood make up come out prepared to be successful in education and their careers.

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

**SE:** YES.

The foundation to a strong education starts before 1st grade.

- 3. Equitable Funding. In 2019, Massachusetts updated its 25-year-old education funding formula and committed to \$1.5 billion more in investment in public schools. How will you make sure the state follows through with this promise?**

**SE:** Accountability is the first step. The language in the bill gives definitive dates for school departments to report. However, it will be up to the Executive Office of Education to enforce these deadlines and report back to the legislature when a city or town is failing to meet targeted goals and deadlines. I would actively work to ensure deadlines are met and that reports are utilized when making our next big decisions on education.

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

**SE:** YES.

Standardized Testing fails to capture critical data on the knowledge of a child but instead punishes a child who may have an undiagnosed learning disability or suffers from anxiety. I would support a moratorium on testing but would go a step further and come up with solutions on how to adequately assess the needs of individual students to ensure they are supported and assess the efficacy of teachers to ensure they're also fit for the classroom.

5. **Charter Schools. In 2016, MA 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 school districts.**
  - a. Do you support keeping the cap on charter schools? **YES.**
  - b. Would you support legislation to bring greater accountability to charter schools by requiring them to adhere to the same disclosure and disciplinary standards as public school districts? **YES.**

6. **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 and includes the effective use of contraception?**

**SE:** YES.

7. **Higher Education Access. Do you support granting in-state tuition and financial aid to undocumented students?**

**SE:** YES.

8. **Debt-Free College. Do you support making tuition (and mandatory curriculum fees) free at public colleges and universities?**

**SE:** YES.

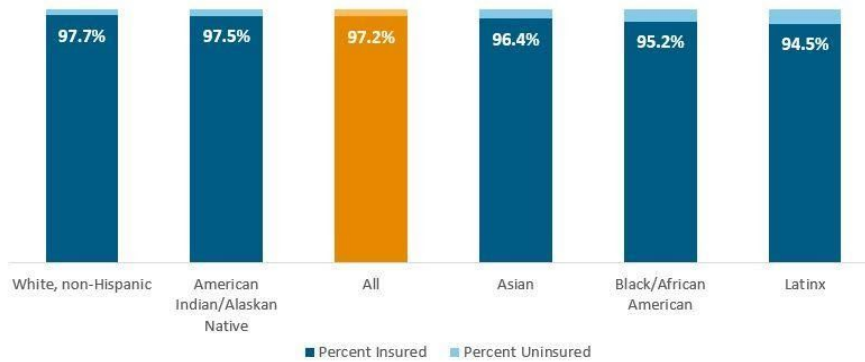
## D. Health Care

Massachusetts has led the way in providing near universal health insurance coverage, with [97% of the state](#) having health insurance. But until that is 100%, we haven't reached truly universal coverage or tackled critical barriers to accessing care. Disparities in insurance coverage and health care access continue to exist along income, racial, and education lines. Premiums continue to rise, and high deductibles mean that many do not get the health care they need -- or suffer from long-lasting debt if they do. We still spend an oversized portion of public and private money on health care, but without necessarily achieving better health outcomes.

**We have yet to achieve truly universal coverage, with continued disparities along racial lines.**

### Barriers to health insurance coverage remain for some

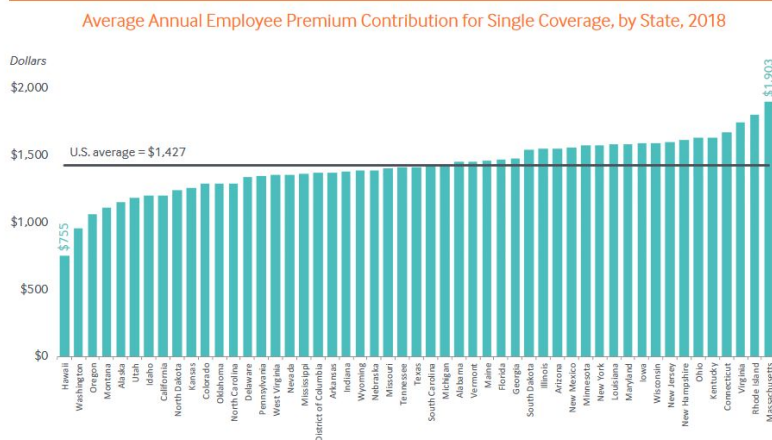
Percent with health insurance in Massachusetts, by race, 2017.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey.

\*Note: Use particular caution when considering the American Indian/Alaskan Native data, because of small sample sizes. This chart does not include Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander because the sample was too small and therefore was not included in the Census Bureau's data.

## MA has the highest health insurance premiums in the US.



Note: Employee premium contributions are for insurance policies offered by private-sector employers in the U.S.  
Data: Medical Expenditure Panel Survey--Insurance Component (MEPS-IC), 2018.

1. **Please explain your principles and proposals as relate to this issue, and what work you personally have done to advance them (legislation, community work, published writings, etc.).**

**SE:** I'm the foster mom to a young son who is differently abled and is on MassHealth. As we move towards guardianship, I'm acutely aware that moving him on private insurance with my husband, myself, and 7 other children will be costly. It will be so costly that my husband and I know we will have to choose which medications and services we can afford for my foster son every month. It should not be this way and we are not the only family in the Commonwealth faced with this unjust decision forced upon us by an unaffordable system.

I believe healthcare is a human right. Everyone should have access to affordable high-quality care. I also believe we must adequately support our health workers PAGE 12 throughout the system from the home aid worker to our medical specialists.

2. **Single Payer. Do you support enacting a single payer health care system in Massachusetts, which would guarantee health insurance as a right?**

**SE:** YES.

I believe in a solution that would reduce costs without compromising the quality of care folks are used to. If we can ensure the cost of care and prescription drugs are reduced, the quality of care would be maintained, and there would be negligible impact on our healthcare workers, then yes.

3. **Reproductive Rights. In Massachusetts, women under eighteen seeking an abortion must obtain parental consent or judicial authorization. This can lead to young women going out of state, or risking their lives and health with illegal or self-induced abortion. Would you support repealing this restriction?**

**SE:** YES.

4. **Harm Reduction. An essential part of addressing the opioid crisis, safe consumption sites allow medical professionals to respond to overdoses and engage participants in medical and behavioral health services. Would you support the legalization of SCSs?**

**SE:** YES.

I would support SCSs that are hospital run and maintained.

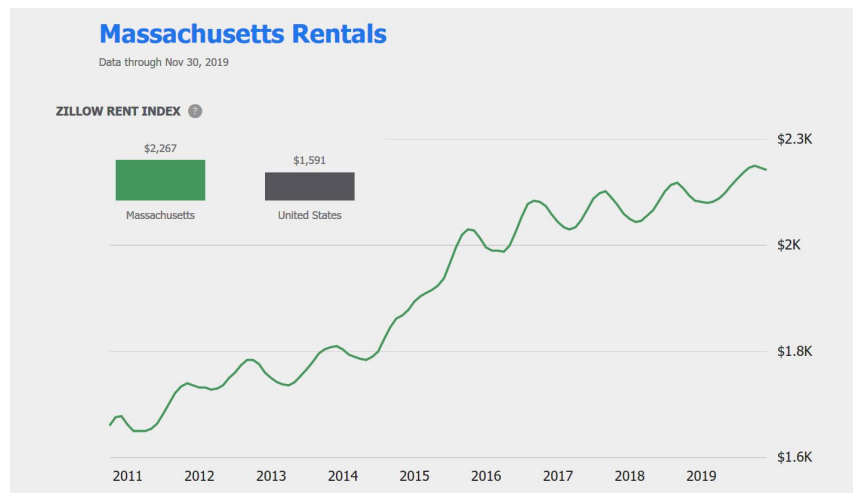
5. **Pandemic Response. How would you evaluate the state's response to the Covid-19 pandemic?**

**SE:** There was no roadmap to this pandemic and I think Massachusetts as a whole is trying to adjust to being inside. We have work to do as we slowly come out of this quarantine and transition into our new normal.

## E. Housing

Massachusetts has a lot to offer, but that does little if people can't afford to live here. The [US News & World Report's annual state rankings](#) put Massachusetts at #41 in housing affordability (and #43 in cost of living). A worker earning minimum wage in Massachusetts would have to work [91 hours a week](#) to afford a modest one-bedroom rental home at market rate (and 113 hours for a modest two-bedroom). 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. 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.

**Monthly median rents have gone up by more than one-third since 2010, outpacing income growth.**



(source: [zillow.com](http://zillow.com))

- 1. Please explain your principles and proposals as relate to this issue, and what work you personally have done to advance them (legislation, community work, published writings, etc.).**

**SE:** Affordable housing needs to be viewed as a basic human right. We have to begin to dismantle the stereotypes associated with providing or building affordable housing and those who need them. I was in the state house 10 years ago when people were losing their housing due to adjustable rate mortgages, subprime lending practices and unemployment and it depleted communities. When the economy started to rebound our attention and advocacy shifted to other pressing matters such as deportation and the opioid crisis but we needed to remain engaged to continue the fight for increase in affordable housing and access to quality housing.

- 2. Funding. Would you support legislation that would allow cities and towns to impose a fee on real estate transfers to generate revenue for affordable housing, with the ability to create local exemptions as appropriate?**

**SE:** YES.

- 3. Tenant Protections. Do you support passing enabling legislation to provide municipalities with the authority to implement rent-stabilizing regulations, just cause eviction protections, stronger condominium conversion and foreclosure protections, anti-displacement zones, and options to help tenants manage the upfront costs of leasing an apartment?**

**SE: YES.**

4. **Zoning Reform/Housing Production.** Do you support requiring cities and towns to allow multifamily housing to be built as of right within 1 mile of transit stations?

**SE: YES.**

5. **Eviction Sealing.** Today, when a tenant exercises their legal rights in housing court, it creates a permanent record. Eviction records create lasting stigma, are error prone and impair access to stable housing. Would you support legislation to seal eviction records so that both tenant and landlord could move on with their lives after three years?

**SE: 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.

Mass incarceration in Massachusetts has proven socially and economically destructive, breaking apart communities across the state. From 2011 to 2016, [spending on prisons](#) grew faster than any other part of the Massachusetts budget, while funding for necessary services languished. The average cost per year to house an inmate in the Massachusetts Department of Corrections is [more than \\$60,000](#), money that could be better reinvested into the communities that have suffered from decades of misguided and racially discriminatory “tough on crime” policies. To achieve “justice for all,” we need a judicial system that does not disproportionately target communities of color and the poor and that does not criminalize public health issues such as addiction. The April 2018 criminal justice reform bill made strides forward, but there is more work to do.

Immigrants make up 16% of Massachusetts’s population; however, demagoguery against, or indifference to, immigrant populations has historically been a mainstay of Massachusetts politics. As the Trump administration in Washington ramps up a xenophobic mass deportation agenda, it is important for states like Massachusetts to take leadership in protecting and advancing the rights of our immigrant communities and making clear that all are welcome.

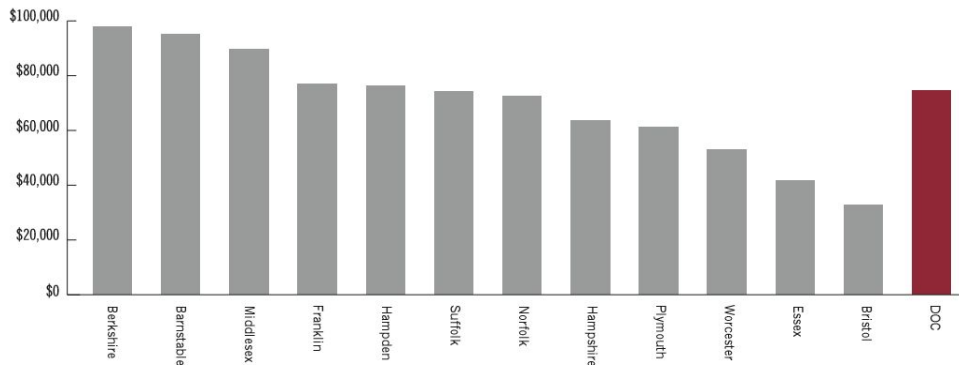
### Significant racial disparities exist in incarceration in Massachusetts.

Imprisonment by Race/Ethnicity (2014)	
White imprisonment rate (per 100,000)	81
Black imprisonment rate (per 100,000)	605
Hispanic imprisonment rate (per 100,000)	351
Racial/Ethnic Disparity in Imprisonment (2014)	
Black : white ratio	7.5
Hispanic : white ratio	4.3
Juveniles in Custody (2015)	
Juvenile custody rate (per 100,000)	66
White custody rate (per 100,000)	22
Black custody rate (per 100,000)	222
Latino custody rate (per 100,000)	172
American Indian custody rate (per 100,000)	0
Asian custody rate (per 100,000)	7



**Massachusetts spends large (and growing) sums per inmate -- while still not providing for basic needs.**

Figure 4: Estimated expenditure per inmate, FY 2019



Source: MassINC's analysis of Department of Correction Weekly Count Sheets, April 2018, and average House and SWM FY 2019 budget proposals (adjusted upward based on final expenditures, FY 2011 to FY 2018)

- 1. Please explain your principles and proposals as relate to this issue, and what work you personally have done to advance them (legislation, community work, published writings, etc.).**

**SE:** As a criminal defense attorney, I see the good and the very ugly of the Court system. We need to have a conversation on race and implicit bias and everyone needs to get uncomfortable. We tiptoe around race, we worry about who we are offending and as a result we turn a blind eye to people of color who have for decades have tried to have this conversation. We don't need permission to have the conversation but we will need the honesty about ourselves to make any type of change.

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

**SE:** YES.

This would promote community support and an unintended consequence could be that communities of colors may begin to build relationships with the police departments.

- 3. Sentencing Reform. The 2018 criminal justice reform bill was an important first step in reducing mass incarceration. However, in our "liberal" state, incarceration rates remain much higher than they are in other countries, and sentencing laws can be even more punitive than those in states viewed as conservative. Which of the following reforms would you support?**

- Eliminating mandatory minimums for opioid-related offenses?
- Raising the age of criminal majority from 18 to 21, in line with research that shows that young offenders served by a juvenile system are much less likely to reoffend and more likely to successfully transition to adulthood?
- Decriminalizing consensual sexual activity between adolescents, by creating an exception to the statutory rape law for youth close in age?
- Eliminating the sentence of life without parole, which is costly and has been shown to be racist in its application?

**SE:** Judges should be the only decider of sentencing. 18 year olds are still in high school and live at home without anything more than a part-time job. We have to give children a chance to redirect with proper support.

- 4. Solitary Confinement. In Massachusetts, prisoners can be sentenced to 10 years of**

**solitary confinement—per infraction. The UN defines holding someone in solitary confinement for more than 15 days as torture. Do you support limiting the use of solitary to no more than 15 consecutive days?**

**SE: YES.**

The mental health implications are far to great for anything over 15 days. The jail system is supposed to rehabilitate an inmate not destroy their mental stability.

5. **Prison Visitation. Maintaining connections with friends and family outside prisons is one of the most important factors in ensuring successful reentry. In March 2018, the DOC severely limited the ability of prisoners to receive visits and the rights of family and friends to visit their loved ones in prison. ([Read more on this here.](#)) Do you favor ending these restrictions?**

**SE: YES.**

It is imperative that inmates experience, even if for a short moment, the love and attention of their families.

6. **Prison Profiteering. While Massachusetts does not have private prisons, the DOC invites private companies to profit off of the families of prisoners by price gouging inmates who have no alternatives but to buy from the sole providers of goods in prisons. Do support ending the price gouging of inmates for necessary items and requiring DOC to adequately supply inmates with the basic requirements necessary for life to keep in contact with their families and maintain good health and hygiene?**

**SE: YES.**

7. **Safe Communities Act. Do you support the Safe Communities Act, which limits local and state police collaboration with federal immigration agents, bars law enforcement and court personnel from inquiring about immigration status, and ensures due process protections?**

**SE: YES.**

8. **Work and Family Mobility Act. Do you support removing immigration status as a barrier to applying for a license or learner's permit?**

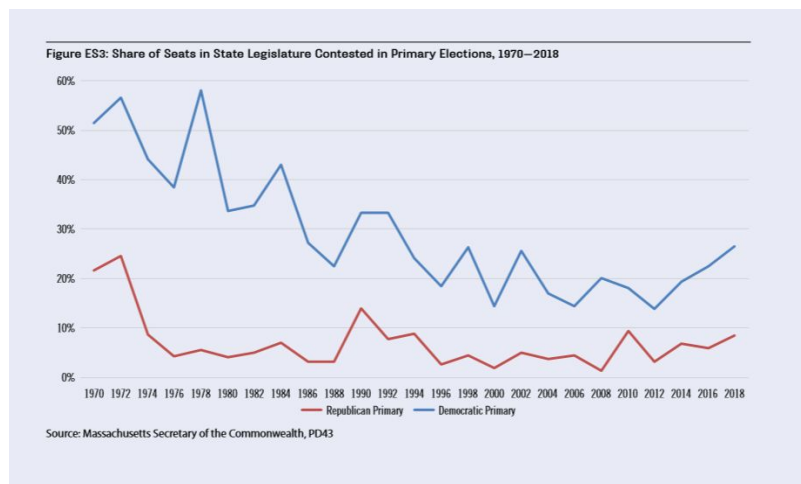
**SE: YES.**

## G. Good Government and Strong Democracy

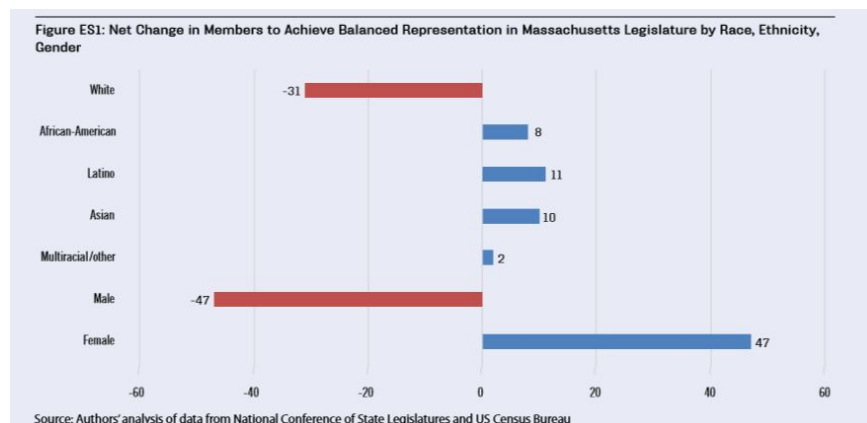
A strong democracy depends on a transparent and representative government and an engaged public. Too often, however, we see centralized, unaccountable power and barriers to participation. An undemocratic, centralized power structure on Beacon Hill makes it easier for lobbyists to target the top and undermine the system. Despite recent reforms, a weak public records system stymies government accountability: MA is one of only two states where all three branches of state government claim to be exempt. A strong democracy requires an engaged electorate, but voter turnout in midterm elections, and especially local elections, remains low. Although election modernization legislation in 2014 and 2018 helped bring much-needed reforms, we still lag behind states in New England and around the country in making voting accessible (Maine, for instance, has allowed for Election Day Registration since the 1970s).

A centralized power system, a skewed campaign finance system, and restrictive voting laws together help create a situation in which our elections are the [least competitive in the country](#).

**Our elections have grown less competitive over the past four decades.**



**Our legislature is not reflective of the population as a whole.**



1. **Please explain your principles and proposals as relate to this issue, and what work you personally have done to advance them (legislation, community work, published writings, etc.).**

**SE:** I support same day registration and believe we need a system that allows for more people to be engaged without building barriers to prevent or dissuade groups of people from participating in elections. For almost a decade I have served as the Affirmative Action Liaison for Ward 17. In this role, I increased the number of members on our ward resulting in a diverse body and support of candidates. I am devoted to moving off the table to having a seat at the table.

2. **Public Records Law. 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 eliminating this exemption?**

**SE:** YES.

I believe transparency is key to maintaining trust with the public and ensuring corruption is rooted out and squashed. While I believe not every form of communication is pertinent to the public, there have been allegations of sexual assault and harrasment, nepotism, and failures of the system to act (ex: NDAs for sexual harrasment in the House)that the public still lacks details on. If we are to move in and restore faith in government, all 3 of those branches do need to be subject to public records law when someone or the larger public is at risk.

3. **Legislative Transparency -- Part I. The Massachusetts Legislature lacks many basic transparency measures found in other state legislatures around the country. Would you vote in favor of making the following items available online...?**

- a. All committee votes, whether taken by electronic poll or formal roll call?
- b. All written testimony submitted for or against bills?
- c. Reader-friendly summaries of bills currently in or reported out of committee?

4. **Legislative Transparency -- Part II. Legislators only vote to change the rules at the start of the legislative session, but all legislators can model transparency on their own throughout the session. Would you commit to doing the following...?**

- a. Standing for a recorded vote when a colleague asks for one on any amendment which you have co-sponsored?
- b. Making your committee votes available online on your website?

5. **State House Culture. Do you support the creation an independent commission to investigate and report on complaints of workplace and sexual harassment in the Massachusetts Legislature?**

**SE:** YES.

6. **Public Campaign Financing. Our campaign finance system favors incumbency and discriminates against potential candidates who do not have a ready pool of wealthy donors. Do you support the creation of a robust public financing system for state elections?**

**SE:** YES.

7. **Removing Barriers to Running. 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 child care?**

**SE:** YES.

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

a. Election Day Registration?

b. The expansion of early voting to municipal elections and primaries?

c. No-fault absentee voting?

d. Ending the disenfranchisement of prisoners serving with felony convictions (Their right to vote was taken away by ballot twenty years ago)?

9. **Ranked Choice Voting**. Do you support the 2020 ballot initiative to adopt ranked choice voting for state, county, and (non-presidential) federal elections?

SE: YES.

10. **Election Integrity**. Do you support requiring **risk-limiting audits** of election results, in which a statistically significant percentage of ballots are hand counted to ensure that the reported winner was the actual winner, preserving the integrity of elections from foreign interference, technological glitches, or simple human error?

SE: YES.

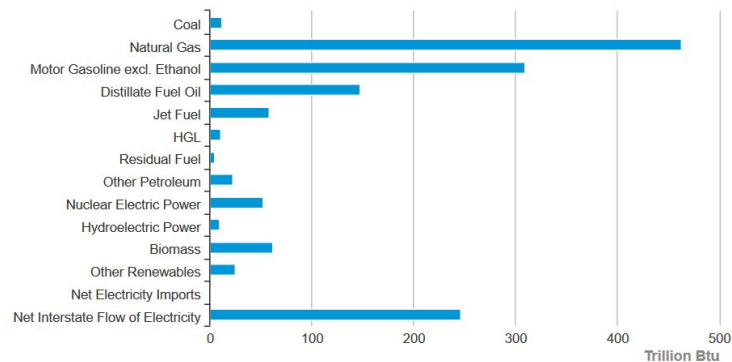
## H. Sustainable Infrastructure and Environmental Protection

As a coastal state, Massachusetts will be hit particularly hard by climate change, but we are not responding with the necessary urgency. In order to avoid catastrophic climate change, global carbon emissions need to be [halved by 2030](#) and brought to net zero by 2050. 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.

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 billion](#), and it would need [more than \\$10 billion](#) to bring infrastructure and equipment up to a state of good repair. Regional Transit Authorities that serve communities, including Gateway Cities across the state, face enormous capital needs as well.

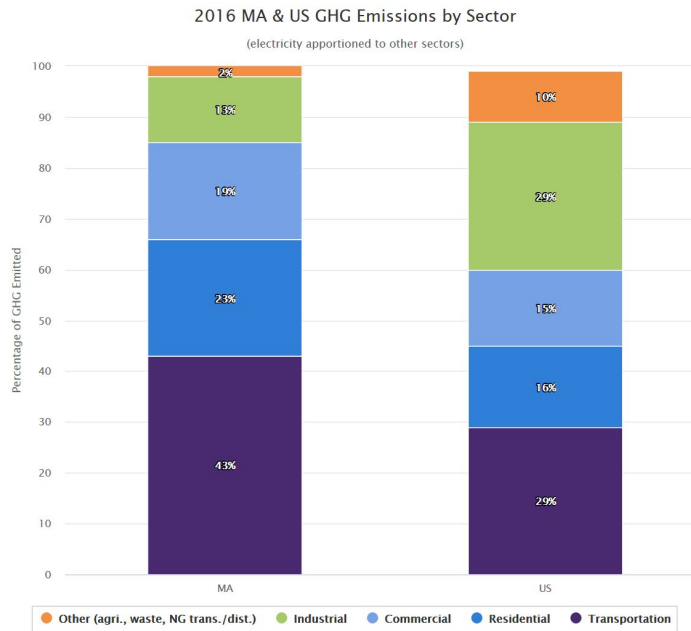
**Despite recent progress, Massachusetts is still overwhelmingly dependent on fossil fuels.**

Massachusetts Energy Consumption Estimates, 2017



 Source: Energy Information Administration, State Energy Data System

**Transportation is currently the largest contributor to greenhouse gas emissions in MA.**



(Source: <http://www.mass.gov>)

- 1. Please explain your principles and proposals as relate to this issue, and what work you personally have done to advance them (legislation, community work, published writings, etc.).**

**SE:** Climate change is the biggest threat to humanity and its impacts are exacerbated when race and class come into play. We must find a way to assist more people in understanding and connecting the issues that our communities face - like asthma and obesity - to the environmental impacts in our communities. From where garbage processing facilities are placed to where our water is sourced, everyday realities are impacted by climate change, and can be improved by the decisions of elected officials.

I believe that we must act swiftly and urgently to mitigate the impacts of climate change. I also believe that we must ensure access to free and safe drinking water, ensure that communities of color across the Commonwealth are not the dumping ground for the state and corporations (ex: Chelsea and Everett), and that we work diligently to find alternative energy sources to power the state.

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

**SE:** YES.

Yes but not before there is a data collected that discloses unintended consequences.

- 3. 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?**

**SE:** YES.

Yes with clear disclosure of any cost reduction and the possibility of an increase in your

monthly billing.

4. **Renewable Energy.** Do you support a target of 100% renewable energy economy-wide by 2045 and 100% renewable electricity by 2035?

SE: YES.

5. **Environmental Justice.** Successive 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. Would you support efforts to codify EJ into law?

SE: YES.

6. **Fossil Fuel Infrastructure.** Do you oppose the expansion of gas pipelines in the state?

SE: NO.

Yes with clear disclosure of any cost reduction and the possibility of an increase in your monthly billing.

7. **Carbon Pricing.** Do you support imposing a fee on carbon emissions and using some of the revenue to invest in green infrastructure, especially in frontline communities?

SE: YES.

8. **Public Transportation.** Will you oppose any fare increases to the MBTA or regional transit authorities and work toward the goal of fare-free public transit?

SE: YES.

9. **Regional Transportation Funding.** The unavailability of state funds for infrastructure spending has meant the deterioration of regional transportation systems. Do you support allowing municipalities to place a question on the ballot to raise revenue for local and regional transportation projects?

SE: YES.

Yes, so long as the revenue does not result in fare increases.



### **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.

**SE:** I decided to run for this seat in early April, several months after the incumbent announced he wasn't going to run for reelection, and after the other four candidates declared. I wanted to support a candidate who was outspoken on how COVID-19 was affecting our district, from school closures to lay-offs to the enormous health inequities. I was getting calls and emails as an attorney and a BPS parent urging me to speak out and then to run, so I heeded the call. The neighborhoods in the 12th Suffolk got hammered 10 years ago during the Great Recession, and they are being hammered again now, and I know that with my experience as a WIC recipient, as a BPS parent, as an attorney, and as a senior aide in the legislature and executive I can make a difference to how our district comes out the other side of COVID-19.