



**PROGRESSIVE MASSACHUSETTS
2020 LEGISLATIVE
ENDORSEMENT QUESTIONNAIRE**

Date: 6/11/2020

Candidate: Patrick Beaudry

Office Sought: State Representative, 5th Hampden

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)*

I. About You

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

PB: I have often described my development in the political arena as spending half my life trying to understand how the city works and the other half trying to understand how it can work better. As I already stated above, my family has called Holyoke home for generations and the close ties I have to both the Irish, French and Polish families that settled Holyoke in the 1800s, as well as the Latinx families that I have come to know through Holyoke Public Schools and youth sports are the greatest blessings this life has bestowed upon me.

My Grandfather was a Holyoke Firefighter during a period when the city was the arson capital of the country. He was unequivocally my hero growing up and his commitment to family and public service drove me to seek my own path in government – starting with an undergraduate degree from Suffolk University in Political Science that has led to a decade of work in politics and the public sector and a Masters in Public Administration. I love policy's ability to raise people's quality of life, and, while almost never easy, am committed to the work of engaging diverse stakeholders to find pathways forward on complex issues – ranging from the conflicting needs to raise revenue for transportation without over relying on regressive forms of taxation like the Gas Tax, to subscribing to smart growth principles while avoiding punitive policies for the working poor residing in rural communities.

Holyoke Public Schools have been in state receivership for the past five years – moving the needle in terms of achievement very little while accelerating white flight out of the district. While the recently passed Student Opportunity Act represents potential tens of millions of dollars in funding by way of higher reimbursement rates for low-income students, special education and ESL, it will only truly matter if it is implemented by Gov. Baker and DESE with fidelity. I am all in for that fight and will not pull a punch to get what is rightfully ours and begin to right the decades-long wrongs enshrined in law by the 1993 Education Reform bill.

Public Safety is also of paramount concern. We have enjoyed a decline in crime over the past few years, but our community remains a critical hub for the Northeast drug trade. I am encouraged by the popularity of so-called Defund the Police movements, but prefer to see it as Recalibrating the Social Safety Net. For years police officers have been crying out that they are being asked to do too much they are not trained for – such as family, mental health or substance use disorder counselor. Let's listen to them and the community who has felt both underpoliced and overpoliced for decades to find ways to ensure a police response is the absolute last resort and funding is spent not on weapons of war for domestic law enforcement, but rather for chromebooks in our schools, addiction services in our neighborhoods, and a top-notch healthcare system. Two quick additional thoughts on public safety is the desperate need to ensure firefighters' disproportionate rates of cancer are addressed with urgency and absentee landlords are taken to task for the buildings that not only cause blight, but sincerely pose harm to residents living primarily in low-income neighborhoods.

Lastly, under the current revenue structure in this Commonwealth, municipalities are forced to over rely on regressive taxation like property taxes that do not reflect an individual's ability to pay in order to fund essential services. I am committed to the two-fold work of building a far more progressive revenue system in this state while also realizing that work will take time and our local tax base must grow in the meantime. I want to champion local businesses that pay people a living wage, help organizations explore cooperative models, and fight city and state's impulses to participate in race to the bottom state incentive efforts to draw corporate investments that already benefit far too much from our current system.

2. What prepares you to serve in this capacity?

PB: I served as a legislative aide on Beacon Hill for three years – including for Senator Sonia Chang-Díaz, and Holyoke’s Rep. Mike Kane and the 2nd Hampden & Hampshire’s Sen. Mike Knapik. Yes, that is an odd batch of former bosses! I worked in roles ranging from scheduler and constituent casework, to legislative and budgetary director. I’ve helped work through committee negotiations, filed amendments, and have relationships across the Commonwealth and ideological divide.

In my current role as Manager of Public Affairs at the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission – a majority of my work has centered around policy advocacy and public engagement regarding issue areas such as land use and environmental protection, transportation with an emphasis on transit, and the distribution of CDBG funding. I have testified before the Joint Committees on Revenue, Transportation, and Housing on bills that will make Valley residents’ lives better. I am also currently serving a four-year term on the Executive Committee of Transportation for Massachusetts, which has put significant effort into transportation justice over the past several years.

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

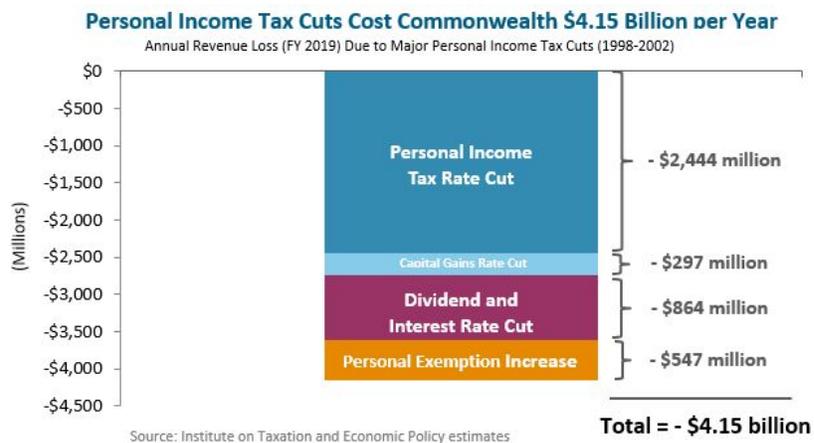
PB: Money in politics, lack of imagination, fear of electoral challenges, top-heavy decision-making.

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.



- 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.).**

PB: I am seeking to represent the poorest city in the poorest county in the Commonwealth. Our metro area has been designated the Asthma Capital of the Country by the Asthma & Allergy Foundation of America, our school district is in receivership and the Soldiers' Home here was the site of the worst COVID-19 outbreak in the nation. We are in an underinvestment state of emergency. Zoning and other policies have led to a relentless stacking of poverty on top of more poverty. I am ready to ask our Commonwealth's millionaires and billionaires to step up and do their civic duty by paying more taxes into essential services that are literally determining life or death for our most vulnerable.

I am a proud supporter of Fair Share and believe our Commonwealth has doled out millions to corporations who do not need it and who do not use those precious dollars to advance the common good. Western Massers watched in awe as GE was handed millions in state and local public subsidies in order for that global behemoth to relocate to the hottest real estate in New England at the same time their lawyers and lobbyists were fighting with everything they had to avoid taking responsibility for the environmental destruction they visited upon the Housatonic River in Berkshire County.

While my previous positions have not necessarily granted me the professional freedom to be as outspoken on this matter as I would like, I am running for Representative precisely so that I may chart my own advocacy course and speak my mind as I see fit. Revenue Reform is a central example.

- 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?**

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

- 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")?**

PB: 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?**
 - Raising the corporate minimum tax for larger companies? (The corporate minimum tax is currently only \$456.)
 - Imposing a tax on the portion of corporations' US profits that are shifted to offshore tax havens?
 - Raising the corporate tax rate from 8% to 9.5% (where it stood in 2009)?
 - Raising the tax on long-term capital gains from 5% to 8.95%, in line with states like New York and Vermont?
 - Levying a modest tax on university endowments greater than \$1 billion?

B. Jobs and the Economy

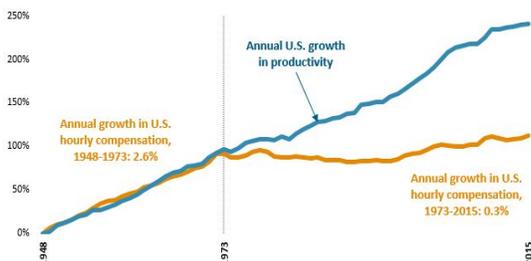
Massachusetts ranks as one of the top ten [most unequal states](#), as the gains from economic growth have disproportionately benefited the already well-off. Compounding this, we are one of the most expensive states in the country for [health care](#), [housing](#), and [child care](#), all of which 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.

A Large Gap Has Opened Between Wage and Productivity Growth Since 1973

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



Source: Economic Policy Institute analysis of unpublished Total Economy Productivity data from Bureau of Labor Statistics' Labor Productivity and Costs program, wage data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics' Current Employment Statistics, Bureau of Labor Statistics' Employment Cost Trends data, and the Bureau of Economic Analysis' National Income and Product Accounts
Note: Wages are the inflation-adjusted average hourly compensation of private-sector production/nonsupervisory workers.

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

Wages For Most MA Workers Have Stagnated Since Great Recession

Real Value of Hourly Wage for Selected Wage-Earning Groups in MA and U.S., 1979-2016 (2016\$)



Source: Economic Policy Institute analysis of Current Population Survey data (deflated using CPI-U-RS).

1. 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.).

PB: I graduated from college in 2009 at the height of the Great Recession. It was not, at that time, as crystal clear how damaging our nation's ballooning student debt crisis would be, but I sure did not like my prospects of having that extra \$350 that first payment cycle as Pomp and Circumstance faded into memory.

The fact is I was one of the lucky ones who found work in my chosen field. I racked up credit card debt, paid rent and student loans late plenty of months, and worked late night shifts at a bar to make ends meet, but at the end of the day, I knew if it was this hard for me – a white college educated male – to make it on my own, it must be hell to try to provide for a family with even slightly less privilege.

I'm a first-time candidate and my professional work has admittedly not much focused on labor issues, but I am an ardent supporter of collective bargaining and the Labor Movement. There was so much bad in that period between 1950 to 1970 that ought to never be brought back and plenty more wrongs yet to be righted, but the simultaneous rise of American productive and hourly compensation is what made us the economic envy of the world and allowed millions and millions of families post-World War II to make the jump from their previous tenement apartment dwelling to more suburban one families – white picket fence and all – as well as a transition into white collar careers. No wonder older Americans can't wrap their heads around the fact that younger generations aren't buying homes, getting married, or having children in the same manner and at the same age that they did.

COVID-19 has laid bare exactly who the essential workers are in our society. They are women, People of Color, immigrants, and getting paid way too little for the critical service they provide. Their fight is my fight. I am a firm believer that investments in wages and the social safety net directed to the bottom economic rungs yield the highest returns for communities who for too long have seen the cost of living continue to rise to the benefit of corporate executives. I am proud to have received the endorsement of Laborers Local 596 last week as my first union endorsement and I am just getting started.

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

PB: YES.

Too often tipped workers are serving customers who A.) wield their tipping power to get away with rude, inappropriate, or straight up abusive behavior towards their servers, and B.) serving customers in communities also severely underpaid and unable to properly tip what is required for that server to walk away from their shift with a livable wage in their pocket.

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?

PB: YES.

Employee misclassification is a great example of a growing trend destroying individuals and families' ability to make a living. Less benefits and protections for essential workforce has long been cast as 'freedom' on the part of the worker, but we know it is only to the benefit of the corporations sucking up profits for them and their shareholders.

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?

PB: YES.

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?

PB: YES.

Yes – though if we were getting close to a compromise in negotiations and business side needed that period shortened a day or two I would be open to that if it meant a far better system than what we've got.

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?

PB: YES.

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?

PB: YES.

C. Education

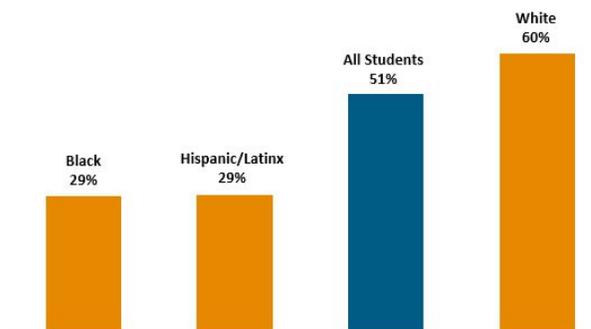
The promise of public education has always been as a gateway to opportunity and mobility for all, regardless of economic circumstances, a cornerstone of the American dream for all residents. Although our public education system gets high marks overall, it remains one of the [most unequal](#) in the country. 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

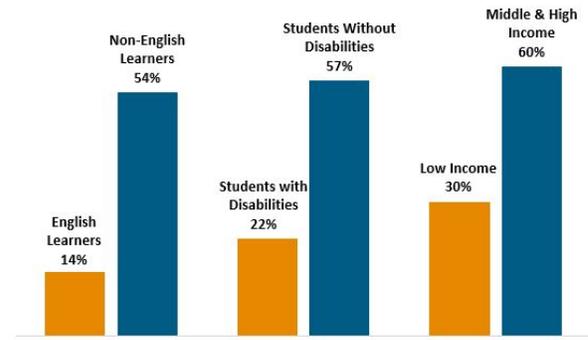
Share of MA 4th Graders Proficient on the 2017 NAEP Reading Exam, by Student Race, all students



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

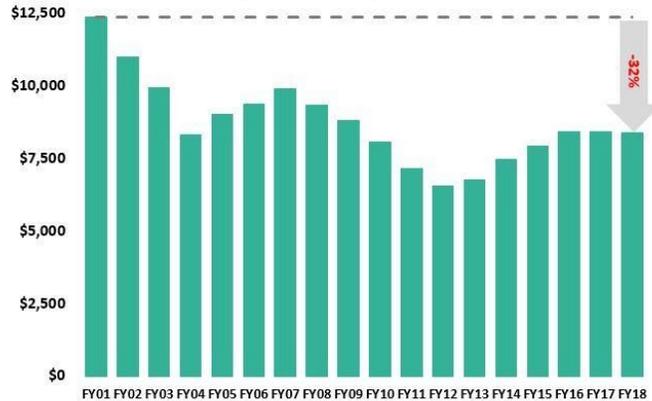


Source: National Center for Education Statistics, 2017

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.).**

PB: Again, I am seeking to represent – and am a proud alumnus of – a public school district in its fifth year of state receivership. The 1993 Education Reform Act has been a disaster for Holyoke and cities like it across this Commonwealth. I am heartened by the potential the Student Opportunity Act represents but am likewise very concerned by Gov. Baker’s spread the love approach to implementation. Gateway City school districts desperately need low-income, special education, and ESL reimbursement rates increased, like yesterday. We have failed generations of students because we have not funded the neediest districts with what is required to meet all students’ needs. Likewise, our community suffered through a divisive and ultimately failed school building vote with state reimbursement rates falling far short of what a city with such limited revenue raising was able to afford. Lastly, my partner is a HPS educator and, while I remained in awe during normal times, I can’t imagine the progress they would make with their students with the proper resources based on the miracles they have worked during virtual learning with many students who initially lacked internet connectivity and the technology they needed at home and often relying on parents with very low to no internet literacy themselves to assist.

On the higher education front, the 32% decrease in funding figure you provide above is blood boiling, as officials ask aloud how the heck the cost of a college degree got so out of control. I was able to pay for grad school at UMass Boston through a combination of loans and bursar office payment plans – several semesters only taking one 3-credit course at a time to not push myself further into debt. I am a big believer in successful pathways that do not involve a college degree, but as the world continues to automate and innovate, I believe making it in this world without a four-year degree is going to continue to be more and more difficult.

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

PB: YES.

I believe in universal Pre-K and would love to learn more about the pros and cons and having them all integrated into the public schools as opposed to the Pre-K offered at the Greater Holyoke YMCA, for example.

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?**

PB: I've already touched on this quite a bit, but I'll reiterate that not all implementation approaches are equal. Before we uniformly distribute funding across districts of various means, we ought to intentionally focus our, very likely limited, resources into bringing the districts left behind by MERA up to snuff first and fast.

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.)**

PB: NO.

I am very much open to this conversation but would need to know more about how we would measure learning and hold districts, schools and educators accountable in its place. The MCAS is far from perfect and the disproportionate time spent teaching to the test is a major concern. I just would love to know more.

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?**

PB: YES.

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

PB: YES.

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

PB: NO.

I support funding higher ed to the point that all students are able to earn a degree at a public college or university debt-free. In some cases that will in fact mean free. For many families, however, I believe there would be an ability to pay something in support of these institutions and free up the resources we would spend to educate students of means on other more urgent needs.

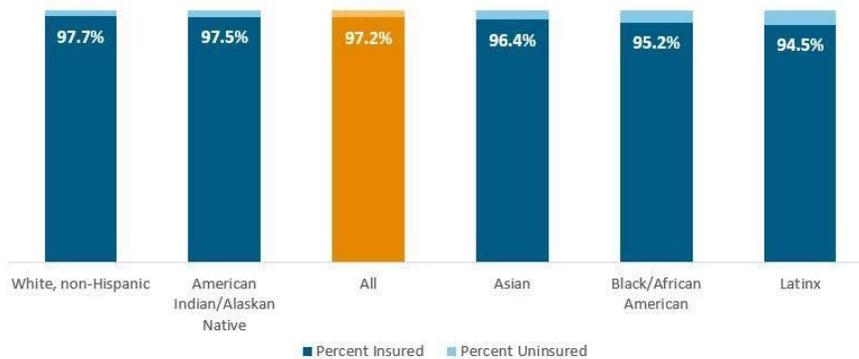
D. Health Care

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

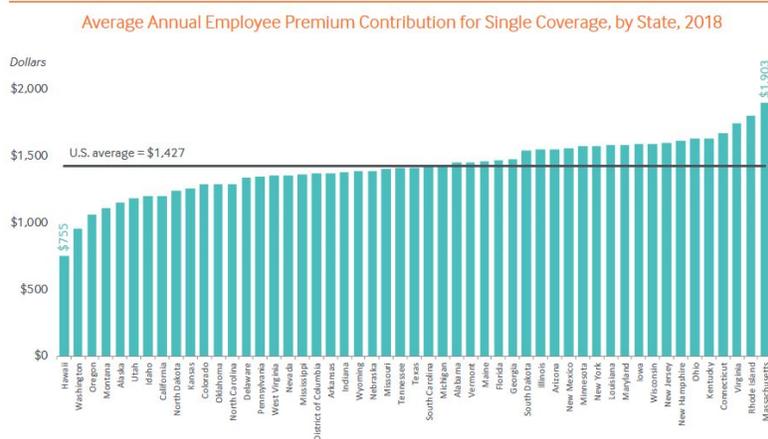
Percent with health insurance in Massachusetts, by race, 2017.



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.).**

PB: Excuse me in advance if my thoughts on this aren't as organized as I'd like, but our current health care system has been a parade of failures of late. We just saw millions of workers lose their employer-based health insurance due to layoffs because of a public health crisis. Closer to home, Holyoke in the past month has learned Providence Health is proposing to shutter their psychiatric unit and Holyoke Medical Center their birthing unit, not because of lack of need in the community – far from it, but rather because of profitability. How savage is that?! Holyoke literally had a state task force established in the 80s to better understand our infant mortality rate and yet a few short decades later, we are told Holyoke's expecting mothers – so many of whom are low-income, have language needs, and are transit dependent – can easily head 15 minutes down the road to Baystate Medical for care. Well its not 15 minutes if you use our beleaguered PVT system and the real fear is necessary health care will be forgone as a result. I guess my point is, the health care system, as I see it, is broken and since we are the only country in the world that spends so much for such poor outcomes, we ought to give it the reassessment of a lifetime and make major structural changes.

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

PB: 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?**

PB: 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?**

PB: YES.

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

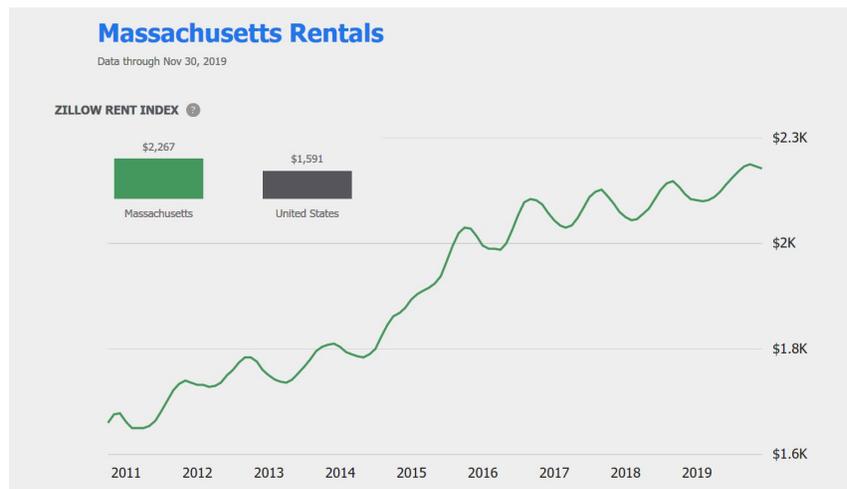
PB: I am not a public health expert and generally saw hospital capacity increases rising to the task that was at hand at the peak of (at least the first) wave. We failed miserably in the assisted living setting and had several friends' grandparents pass away in the past months because they were infected in places they were supposed to be safe. I knew I wanted to be a champion for the Soldiers' Home in Holyoke, but know now that if elected I will be incredibly involved in sorting out what went so wrong that it would be the site of the deadliest outbreak in the nation, and fight for scarce funds to build that regional institution back up operationally and with badly needed capital dollars.

While I am still sorting through all of the details, DESE's reopening plan is deeply concerning for a district like Holyoke's and I'll be paying close attention to how the Administration reacts to the chorus of voices raising the alarm on what has been proposed.

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)

- 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.).**

PB: This country has used zoning as a weapon of racism and class warfare for years. Suburban communities use exclusionary zoning to maintain homogeneity of their residents and force poverty to be staked on top of poverty in Gateway Cities – straining local school districts and other essential services and further perpetuating white flight. This is so wrong.

The Pioneer Valley Planning Commission has long sought a major zoning reform bill at the state level after decades of failure to make even modest improvements to a housing market that has changed dramatically.

While far from comprehensive, I have testified on behalf of the Governor's Housing Choice bill because I believe it does take a major step towards ensuring all 351 cities and towns have an easier pathway to diversifying their housing stock and the residents who call their communities home.

Housing, like education, is a powerful tool to reverse the inequalities from which our Commonwealth suffers.

- 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?**

PB: YES.

Yes, though not especially relevant for Gateway City real estate markets.

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?

PB: YES.

Enabling legislation is a beautiful thing and reflects the broad disparities in real estate markets across this Commonwealth.

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?

PB: YES.

Transit-Oriented Development, all day!

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?

PB: YES.

I would be concerned as a landlord myself with no prior reference points to understand that individual or families' rental history, but after three incident-free years, one can make a reasonable judgement that whatever transpired was not a chronic problem, but rather an isolated conflict between tenant and landlord that ought not be a barrier to quality housing for the rest of their lives.

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.

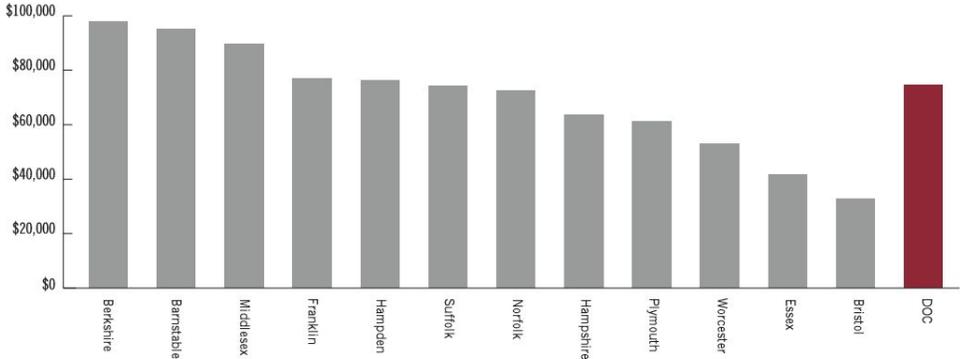
Imprisonment by Race/Ethnicity (2014)	
White imprisonment rate (per 100,000)	81
Black imprisonment rate (per 100,000)	605
Hispanic imprisonment rate (per 100,000)	351

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.).**

PB: I cut my teeth in public service for Senator Sonia Chang-Díaz – the first Latina state Senator in Massachusetts history – who instilled in me a fierce commitment to advocacy for those with less privilege than myself. I have served diverse communities throughout my career from the 2nd Suffolk district to Holyoke, Chicopee and Springfield in the Pioneer Valley. I do not have the lived experience to have all the answers, but am committed to following the lead of others who do and of leveraging my privilege to fight this historic, relentless wrong – in our criminal justice system, our housing, our workplaces, our health care, and our schools.

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

PB: YES.

- 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?

PB: Re: (c), I understand what this policy is intended to do and just want to educate myself more on unintended consequences before committing.

- 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?**

PB: YES.

- 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?**

PB: YES.

- 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?**

PB: 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?

PB: 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?**

PB: YES.

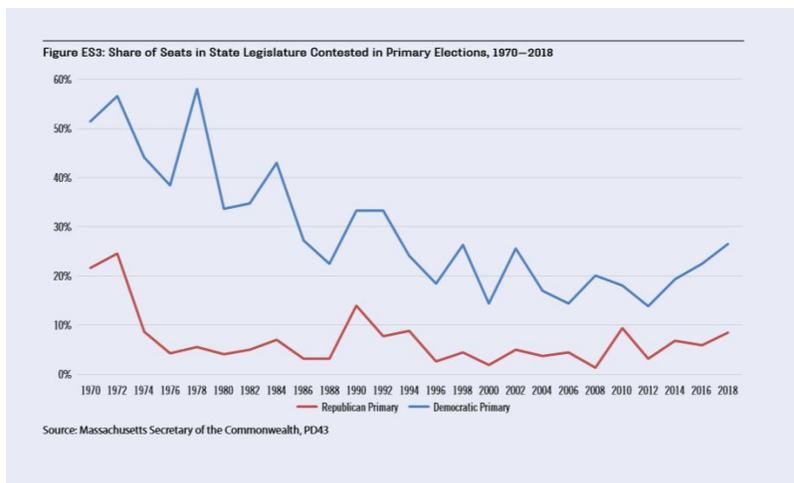
Have been in discussions with the Pioneer Valley Workers Center who has been a great regional leader on the issue.

G. Good Government and Strong Democracy

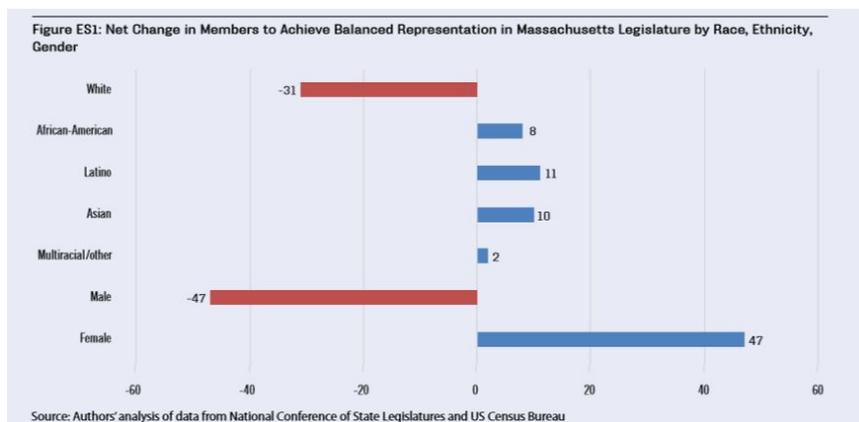
A strong democracy depends on a transparent and representative government and an engaged public. Too often, however, we see centralized, unaccountable power and barriers to participation. An undemocratic, centralized power structure on Beacon Hill makes it easier for lobbyists to target the top and undermine 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.).**

PB: In 2010, I was proud to be serving as Senator Chang-Díaz's policy adviser on election law when our office successfully helped pass a Boston home-rule petition to offer state, federal and local ballots in Chinese and Vietnamese. It was my first taste of satisfaction we should all feel when we fight to expand access to our fellow citizens' franchise. I support vote-by-mail, same day registration, ranked choice voting, and expanding access to the ballot to those who need them in languages other than English.

During my time at MassDems, I spent a great deal of time and energy battling Mass Fiscal Alliance – a Republic front group who has funneled millions into state races – spreading lies about Democratic legislators they perceive to be vulnerable with zero accountability of where their dark money comes from.

I also support returning to legislating with greater transparency by way of longer reading periods for newly introduced bill language, more roll call votes, and less budgetary bundling.

I do have concerns about making legislative emails FOIA-able as they are not only making policy decisions, but also managing sensitive constituent casework. I would need to see privacy protections for such correspondence in any bill that opens up Beacon Hill's email accounts.

- 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?**

PB: YES.

See note above – in principle yes, but there are legislator duties that would need protection in order to best serve constituents.

- 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...?**

- All committee votes, whether taken by electronic poll or formal roll call?
- All written testimony submitted for or against bills?
- 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...?**

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

PB: Representing Holyoke means representing one of the most vulnerable and state funding-dependent districts in the Commonwealth. Making enemies in leadership is not a light matter. I can promise I will stand up when it really counts, but will not make a blanket commitment to do so in every single instance.

- 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?**

PB: 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?

PB: YES.

In principle – yes, but I need to educate myself more on modern examples and how they are working.

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?

PB: 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?

PB: YES.

Perhaps the single most important election reform we can pass - as differentiated from voting rights reform - to get us back to consensus candidates who truly represent that majority of a district!

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?

PB: YES.

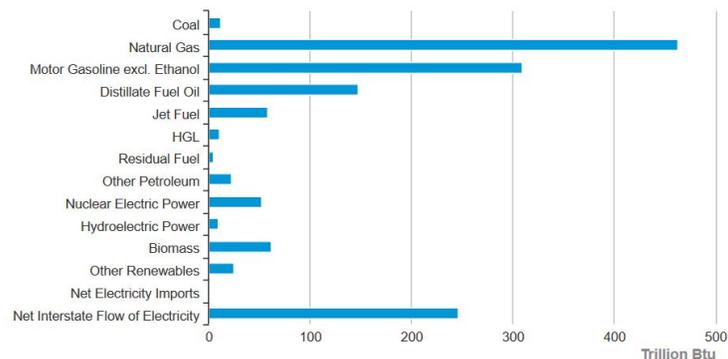
H. Sustainable Infrastructure and Environmental Protection

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.

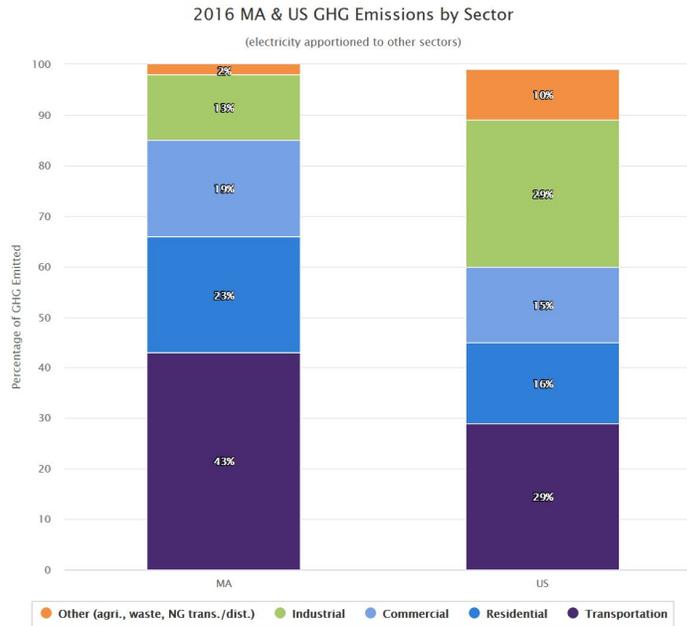
Despite recent progress, Massachusetts is still overwhelmingly dependent on fossil fuels.

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.).**

PB: At the PVPC, my work has focused primarily on the intersection of environmental protection, transportation, and zoning. Over the past four years I have served in staff roles on the Connecticut River Clean-up Committee and Stormwater Committee, the ValleyBike Share program steering committee, worked to expand passenger rail, and have worked alongside groups such as Transportation for Massachusetts, MassPIRG, and MA Public Health Assoc. to fight for ongoing war on regional transit authorities.

Personally, I have served on Holyoke’s Walking and Biking Committee and have supported the walking, biking, and transit landscape.

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

PB: YES.

- 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?**

PB: NO.

Need to talk to Holyoke Gas & Electric before committing.

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

PB: 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?**

PB: YES.

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

PB: NO.

Holyoke is currently under a natural gas hookup moratorium hamstringing our economic development prospects while ensuring outcomes that are 3-4x more expensive and nearly 5x the emissions.

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?**

PB: YES.

PVPC pointperson on TCI

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?**

PB: YES.

There has been a disproportionate increase in costs to transit riders compared to their driving counterparts that is surely born, at least in part, on race and class. It's dead wrong. I am committed to fighting for robust, reliable and affordable transit service that ensures residents are able to get to work, school, the grocery store, the doctor's office, among other critical destinations, regardless of their ability to own, maintain, or operate a personal motor vehicle.

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?**

PB: YES.

I have testified before the Joint Revenue Committee in favor of Sen. Lesser's bill.

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.

PB: Holyoke is in the fight of its life as we face decades-old challenges exacerbated by COVID-19 and its financial implications. I hope you can see my commitment to progressive policy reforms and desire to serve all Holyokers and Bay Staters regardless of who they are. I pulled papers to run for Rep. in a very different world than the one we find ourselves in now, but have been proud to lean into the role of public servant in these scary times. For two months my partner and I delivered Meals on Wheels Monday through Friday to Holyoke seniors as their older drivers sought safety at home, but before college summer hires were available. I have raised funds for the Greater Holyoke Boys & Girls Club, Homework House, and a COVID-19 recovery center for Valley first responders; have collected hygienic items for families displaced due to structural failure of their apartment building; gave blood; adopted a dog; and have done my best to maintain my relationship with my Little as he fought his way through a virtual 5th grade.

I'm not perfect, but I sure have tried to rise to this occasion and leverage my talents, energy, and privilege for good.