



## PROGRESSIVE MASSACHUSETTS

### 2022 Auditor

## ENDORSEMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

**Date:** 3/22/22

**Candidate:** Diana DiZoglio

**Office Sought:** State Auditor

**Party:** Democrat

**Website:** [www.dianaforma.com](http://www.dianaforma.com)

**Twitter:** @DianaDiZoglio

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Email questions to [elections@progressivemass.com](mailto:elections@progressivemass.com).

*Questionnaire Responses (excepting sections labeled CONFIDENTIAL) will be published on our website.*

## CONFIDENTIAL SECTION

*The information in this section is for the Elections Committee's viewing only.*

### **CANDIDATE CONTACT INFO CONFIDENTIAL**

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### **CAMPAIGN CONTACT INFO CONFIDENTIAL**

Campaign Contact: Joe Thibodeau

Campaign Contact Phone: (978) 886-8089

Campaign Contact Email: TBD

Campaign Office Phone: TBD

### **Questions About Your Campaign CONFIDENTIAL**

1. How many votes do you believe that you need to win?

*50% + 1. I will work hard for every vote.*

2. How much money has your campaign raised to date, and how much money do you intend to raise?

*My fundraising totals are posted on the OCPF website. To date, we have roughly a little over \$450k on hand.*

3. Whom do you consider to be your key constituencies, and how do you plan to mobilize them?

*I am traveling the state, talking and listening to EVERY voter that I can, to make the case that we need increased transparency, equity, accountability and accessibility for all, regardless of our family background, bank balance or zip code.*

### **Practicing What We Preach CONFIDENTIAL**

1. Including diverse voices is essential to policymaking at all levels. How has your campaign made this priority (e.g., in terms of composition of your campaign team)?

*As someone who has grown up in and represented diverse communities, including diverse voices and perspectives is a priority in my campaign. To date, our campaign has been primarily fueled by volunteers, though our one paid staffer at this time is LGBTQ+ with a history of building and leading diverse teams and political coalitions, having previously worked on Senator Markey's 2020 re-election campaign. As we continue to expand our organization, I intend to make the recruitment and support of diverse staff a cornerstone of my campaign.*

2. The MIT Living Wage Calculator defines a living wage for a single adult without children to be \$17.74 per hour. Do you plan to pay all staff at least \$18 per hour?

*Yes. As a former staffer, I have experienced firsthand the economic hardships people working in government and politics face on a daily basis.*

*Throughout my career, I have fiercely advocated for living wages and workplace protections for government and political staffers. As a State Senator, I have organized alongside Beacon BLOC, a collective of Beacon Hill staffers demanding living wages and collective bargaining rights for state legislative staffers. I have filed legislation on behalf of Beacon BLOC to ensure living wages and cost of living adjustments for staffers, and as a result, have faced criticism from my colleagues and members of leadership. Time and time again, I have committed my career to fighting on behalf of staff members who have struggled to make ends meet while dedicating themselves to surviving in the communities they continue to be priced out of. As State Auditor, I will continue to stand with these workers, and as a candidate, I am committed to paying my staff a living wage.*

3. Will you refuse to hire any consultant currently working on anti-labor ballot initiatives or legislation?

YES

- END CONFIDENTIAL SECTION -

RESPONSES ON THE FOLLOWING PAGES WILL BE PUBLISHED ON THE  
PROGRESSIVE MASS WEBSITE AND AVAILABLE TO VOTERS

## 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 and provides progressive voters an extremely valuable resource when making a decision.**

Our Questionnaire 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.

*Each section contains open-ended questions and YES/NO questions. **If the question is a YES/NO question, please answer either YES or NO.** Feel free to expand your answers, 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

### **I. About You & Your Governing Approach**

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

*I'm running for Auditor to ensure that no one — no matter their background, bank balance or zip code — receives different treatment on Beacon Hill. I will use my decade-long experience in the Legislature — where I have repeatedly demonstrated my willingness to take on the powerful Beacon Hill establishment — to fight for transparency, accountability and equity for the people of Massachusetts. To that end, my [14-point Social Justice and Equity Audit Plan](#) — co-drafted with Senators Lydia Edwards, Julian Cyr and Adam Gomez — aims to dismantle outdated and unfair policies that continue to disproportionately harm underserved and marginalized communities. Our state government is great at making progressive promises but, too often, it fails to actually live up to those ideals. Growing up, housing insecure in Lawrence and Methuen, I saw first-hand the disproportionate impacts of unfair policies on underserved communities. My Audit Plan lays out a number of specific priorities including greater transparency and accountability across state and local government, battling climate change and increasing affordable housing.*

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

*Born to a 17-year-old single mom, I waitressed and cleaned houses to make my way through community college. I then earned a full scholarship to Wellesley College to become the first in my family to graduate. When I later secured a job at our state house, I was sexually harassed as a younger aide and had the unique opportunity to see, firsthand, how the toxic culture on Beacon Hill operates behind closed doors when there is no accountability. When I later became a state legislator, I took on the corrupt practices of the entrenched Beacon Hill insiders. I fought for increased transparency, equity, accountability and accessibility for all. I've worked to ban powerful politicians from abusing taxpayer-funded non-disclosure agreements to silence workers, who are disproportionately women, BIPOC, LGTBIA+, persons with disabilities and other historically disenfranchised populations.*

*I've led efforts to increase transparency in the legislature alongside progressive activist groups such as Act on Mass. This includes demanding decentralization of power on Beacon Hill, a system of shared leadership, making committee votes public, and ensuring 72 hours to read legislation. I've gone line-by-line in the state budget fighting for our most vulnerable communities and taken on powerful interests such as Columbia Gas for environmental justice. I worked overtime to ensure that our most vulnerable were protected and treated equitably during the course of the COVID-19 emergency.*

*I've co-led efforts in the Senate to ensure accountability in the distribution of ARPA and other monies to prevent abuse of hard-earned tax-dollars while leading efforts alongside marginalized State House staffers to provide more equitable compensation. As a legislator, I've strongly supported efforts of grassroots groups such as Raise Up Mass and labor unions such as SEIU, NAGE, IBEW, LIUNA and others to fight for social justice and ensure workers across the Commonwealth are able to live with a standard of dignity in the communities they work so hard to serve. It's why I am the only candidate in this race to have earned the support of labor unions. As Senate Chair of the Small Business Committee, I led efforts alongside the Black Economic Council of Massachusetts (BECMA) to hold the administration*

*accountable on meeting our diversity, equity and inclusion goals in state contracting through updating policies for the Commonwealth's Supplier Diversity Office.*

*I've stood up — even when it meant standing alone — to the most powerful politicians on Beacon Hill on behalf of workers' rights and accountability of your hard-earned tax dollars. I'm the only candidate in this race who has committed to auditing and reporting the legislature. The legislature has for too long fostered a dictatorial rather than democratic environment. If we are to ensure transparency, equity and accessibility across our state, we need to begin by holding our legislative leaders accountable.*

*As State Auditor, I am ready to get to work on day one, conducting the several audits that I've been calling for as a Senator, and implementing my social justice and equity audit plan.*

**3.** How would you describe the role and importance of the Office of the Auditor to a voter?

*The Auditor is the state's chief accountability officer. Her role is to make sure our state government runs better while also ensuring that there is transparency and accountability in the decision-making process of how tax dollars are spent and policies are made. Struggling, underserved populations can't afford to keep taking financial hits for the mismanagement of their hard-earned tax dollars because of outdated, bureaucratic and flawed processes. As State Auditor, my team will spend every working hour standing up for working families and marginalized communities while also searching for, reporting on and preventing financial loss. We will work tirelessly to improve the performance of our government. We will report on what's going right and what's going wrong, so the public knows what is being done across state government.*

**4.** What would be your top 3 legislative priorities as Auditor, and how would you work to pass them?

- **Implement my comprehensive, 14-point Social Justice and Equity Audit Plan.** *The plan focuses on auditing state agencies relative to important and pressing challenges facing underserved and marginalized communities such as the housing crisis, early education and care, legislative accountability, and environmental justice. Regarding environmental justice, in particular, the Mass Save program too often benefits wealthier communities while low-income neighborhoods are overlooked and ignored. In addition, while not getting the benefits these underserved communities are being charged the costs through their utility bills. Mass Save's stated goal is to help "residents and businesses across Massachusetts save money and energy, leading our state to a clean and energy efficient future." These are laudable goals, however, we must ensure environmental justice is not taking a backseat. The Mass Save program itself is funded through our utility payments, across the board, in Massachusetts. I will analyze and report on disparities between services provided to low-income residents and underserved communities and residents in more affluent communities. My audit plan may be found here :*

<https://www.dianaforma.com/post/dizoglio-state-senator-and-candidate-for-auditor->

[announces-social-justice-equity-audit-plan](#) or by visiting [www.dianaforma.com](http://www.dianaforma.com) and clicking on “Read My Audit Plan.”

- **Audit the abuse of taxpayer-funded NDAs by Beacon Hill politicians, the administration and all state agencies.** *This practice silences historically marginalized workers on harassment, discrimination, and abuse in the workplace, and I will expose this potential abuse of taxpayer funds. As a Senator, I was successful in filing and passing language to help prevent the abuse of taxpayer-funded NDAs for both the Senate and victims of police brutality. However, workers across the Commonwealth continue to be silenced on workplace abuse as provisions we passed in the Senate continue to stall in the House and be actively opposed by the Administration.*
- **Audit our diversity, equity and inclusion goals in state contracting.** *In 2020, the state spent \$4.8 billion on contracting but only \$23 million went to Black or Hispanic owned businesses — only 0.005% of total spending. The share of state contracts going to minority-owned businesses declined by 24% from 1998 to 2018. Marginalized communities deserve access.*

5. What do you view as the role of the state government in supporting progressive policy at the local level?

*State government needs to partner with leaders who are developing progressive policies on the local level – leaders who are on the ground and seeing the impacts of policies on residents in real time. We need to support the efforts that work, take the best practices and make them transferable to communities across the Commonwealth.*

6. Audits can identify important changes that need to be made in state government, but there is no guarantee that the recommended changes will be made. What steps will you take to follow up on audits conducted to ensure accountability?

*One of my strengths that I believe has, in part, defined my time in the legislature is the determination to not be silent when something wrong is happening, regardless of what the powers-that-be may think. I will bring that same determination to the Auditor's office. When my office finds a lack of transparency, equity, accountability or accessibility in a critical state function, I will use my voice and the power of the office to shine a light on the issue. I won't be quiet until it is addressed. I have committed to following up on important audits that have been conducted in the past as outlined in my audit plan.*

*One example concerns the Department of Early Education and Care. The 2016-2018 audit of the Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) found several significant problems directly impacting children. EEC failed to review or initiate investigations into reported child abuse and neglect. It did not always conduct background checks for those involved in caring for children, and it did not complete licensing investigations into care programs, or even visit them in a timely manner. These problems disproportionately impact lower-income communities and communities of color because of the underinvestment in affordable childcare. These failures have serious impacts on our children and need to be addressed.*

*This is why I have committed, as your State Auditor, that we will follow up these critical findings.*

**7.** What is one policy pioneered by another state that you would like to see Massachusetts adopt?

*Colorado empowers their auditor with the authority to audit corporate tax breaks. We must do the same here in Massachusetts. Our current State Auditor has consistently advocated for transparency and equity on corporate tax breaks. Right now, so-called economic development incentives are handed out with little oversight and even less transparency. I will work alongside colleagues in government to pass legislation empowering the Auditor's office to monitor corporate tax breaks to prevent abuse.*

*I will continue our current Auditor's fight for increased accountability and expanded "clawback" provisions. The Auditor's office should have the power to analyze the tax returns of corporations receiving these incentives, in order to determine whether this is the best use of taxpayer dollars. Every dollar given away as a tax break is a dollar that could have been invested in our schools, our public transit system, our roads, and many other worthy causes. Therefore, it is essential that there is accountability to ensure these taxpayer dollars are used fairly and wisely.*

**8.** Provide an example of a time that you built a broad coalition to achieve a desired policy outcome.

*Four years ago, I took on the former Speaker of the House on his use of taxpayer-funded non-disclosure agreements (NDAs) which prevented workers from talking about abuse they experienced. I [made a speech](#) on the floor of the House of Representatives that broke the taxpayer-funded NDA his office required of me after experiencing sexual harassment in the building at the age of 26. I broke my silence to uncover state government's shameful silencing tactic that protects abusers and forces victims of sexual abuse and harassment into the shadows. Since then, [I have led the charge to end this practice](#) – not only to help those who have already been silenced but also to protect potential future victims from abusers who could be hiding in plain sight. I was proud to sponsor the Senate rules change that banned the use of NDAs in the chamber. I also built a coalition in the Senate to pass – by a 38-1 margin – my broader legislation banning NDAs across state government.*

*However, the Massachusetts House of Representatives, known to have given out at least 33 NDAs in recent years, has not adopted such reform and continues to support the use of these taxpayer-funded hush agreements. Six states to date, including California, Tennessee and Washington, have outright banned NDAs as a condition of employment for all employees, public or private.*



*I am working closely with the national advocacy organization Lift Our Voices and its founders Gretchen Carlson, Julie Roginsky and Diana Falzone to end the practice of mandatory NDAs both locally and nationally. Carlson, the woman at the center of the #MeToo movement known for taking down Fox News titan Roger Ailes, [joined me at a rally at the State House](#) to urge the Governor, the Speaker of the House, and members of the legislature to support NDA reforms. I also worked closely with Mitchell Garabedian, best known for getting justice for child victims of clergy sexual abuse who were also coerced into signing NDAs.*

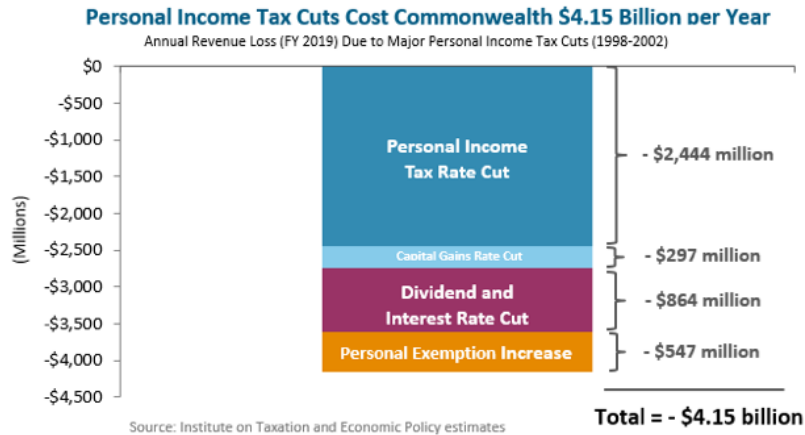
*As Auditor, I will continue this fight to protect victims and ban NDAs throughout the state government by using the subpoena authority of the office to audit and investigate this corrupt practice.*

## **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 the Commonwealth is a great place to live. Such cuts to the state income tax, combined with [low corporate income taxes compared to other states](#), 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**

% of personal income paid in state and local taxes, 2018 projection



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

*I was proud to vote to place the Fair Share question on the ballot – the fourth time that I have voted in favor of the amendment. I was also thrilled to stand with Raise Up Massachusetts at a [rally](#) in my district to publicly endorse the campaign as the first to sign their petition and urge my constituents to talk to their families, friends and neighbors to get the vote out in support of the Amendment.*

2. **Corporate Tax Breaks -- Part I.** 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 and advocate in support of legislation to enact?

1. Creating an easily accessible public database of all corporations currently receiving tax breaks from the state? (Y/N)

YES

2. Collecting and publicly disclosing information about the benefits to the state from any tax break? (Y/N)

YES

3. Repealing any tax break that does not provide the intended benefits in a cost-effective manner? (Y/N)

YES

4. Establishing sunset dates for all tax breaks so that they must come up for periodic review? (Y/N)

YES

3. **Corporate Tax Breaks -- Part II.** What role do you see for the Office of the Auditor in addressing such overuse and under-performance of corporate tax incentives?

*Right now, so-called economic development incentives are handed out with little oversight and even less transparency. As part of my [Audit Plan](#), I will work to pass legislation empowering the Auditor's office to monitor corporate tax breaks. I will continue our current Auditor's fight for increased accountability and expanded "clawback" provisions. The Auditor's office should have the power to analyze the tax returns of corporations receiving these incentives, in order to determine whether this is the best use of taxpayer dollars. Every dollar given away as a tax break is a dollar that could have been invested in our schools, our public transit system, our roads, and many other worthy causes. Therefore, it is essential that there is accountability to ensure these taxpayer dollars are used fairly and wisely.*

4. **Corporate Tax Breaks -- Part III.** Often corporations secure tax giveaways from the state that only seek to pad already high corporate profits, rendering hollow any pretenses to the necessity of the public's money. Would you support legislation to give the Office of the Auditor power to investigate the finances of any corporation that receives tax breaks from the Commonwealth? (Y/N)

YES

5. **Fair Share.** Do you support the proposed constitutional amendment to increase the tax on income over \$1 million by 4%, with the resulting revenue devoted to education and transportation needs (Fair Share Amendment)? (Y/N)

YES. As referenced above, I was proud to vote to place the question on the ballot – the fourth time that I have voted in favor of the amendment. I was also thrilled to stand with Raise Up Massachusetts at a [rally](#) in my district to be the first to publicly sign the pledge for Fair Share and urge my constituents to talk to their families, friends and neighbors to get the vote out in support of the Amendment.

6. **PILOT Reform.** Massachusetts is home to some of the world's most prestigious cultural, educational, and medical institutions, but many of them are exempt from property taxes. Some cities and towns collect PILOT payments (Payment in Lieu of Taxes), but many institutions underpay such commitments considerably. What role do you see for the Office of the Auditor in PILOT reform?

*As Auditor, I will advocate on behalf of PILOT reform. The state cannot continue shortchanging municipalities by improper reimbursement of state-owned land. I also support institutions with huge endowments, such as Harvard, paying their fair share of taxes.*

7. **Divestment.** Do you support divesting public investments from private prisons, fossil fuel companies, and weapons manufacturers? (Y/N)

YES

8. **Cannabis Revenue.** When Massachusetts legalized adult-use marijuana in 2016, state law [specified](#) that tax revenue shall be expended for five areas, including restorative justice. While states like New York are [devoting](#) hundreds of millions of cannabis revenue dollars to restorative justice and equity efforts before sales begin, it's difficult to track where ours are going even 5 years after legalization. What would you do to help ensure that marijuana tax revenue is tracked and spent as intended?

*This is an important goal of my [Social Justice and Equity Audit Plan](#). Massachusetts voters approved a ballot initiative to legalize cannabis believing – based on the actual text of the ballot question – that equity would be at the forefront. Legalization was supposed to ensure that people who were unfairly impacted by cannabis laws would have an opportunity to succeed in this new industry. Implementation has not lived up to these promises. Only 8% of businesses are owned by social equity participants and the industry remains dominated by former medical marijuana companies, which were not subject to any equity goals.*

*As Auditor, I will report on the actions of the Cannabis Control Commission and other state agencies to make sure they are doing everything possible to encourage diversity and equity in the industry. Additionally, I will monitor licenses to ensure that investors who partner with*

social equity applicants are actually living up to the equity components on their license application.

I will also report on the disparity between where cannabis revenue was intended to go and how it has actually been spent. State government gets 17% of revenue in taxes. Among other things, the money is intended to be spent on education, substance addiction prevention programs, and supporting social equity in cannabis. Currently, it is difficult to track how that revenue has actually been spent and voters deserve to know whether the legislature is keeping its promises about cannabis revenue.

## 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.

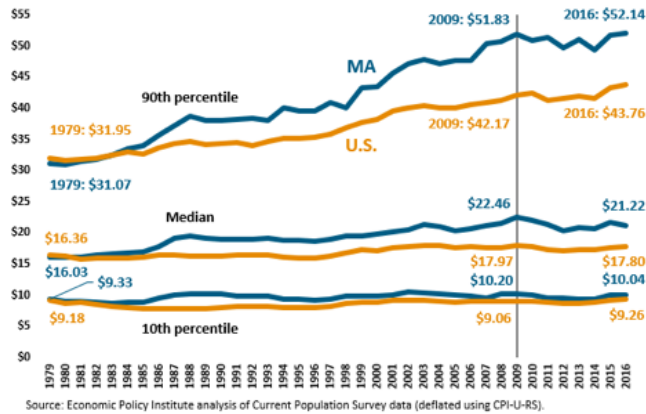
### Productivity has grown significantly since the 1970s, but it is not being reflected in higher wages.



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

### 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\$)



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

*I know the financial challenges that too many families are struggling with because I have lived them. My single mom had me when she was 17 and helped raise me through the support of public assistance. We struggled to make ends meet, were victims of domestic violence and were often housing insecure. It is why I am proud to have voted to increase the minimum wage, for paid family and medical leave, and for the rights of organized labor to organize and collectively bargain. I've continued to support priority legislation for workers to live with dignity. It is also why I'm thrilled to have the growing support of so many of our friends in organized labor including but not limited to the MBTA Inspectors Union, NAGE, Boston Carmen's Union, Iron Workers Local 7, Machinists District 15, Operating Engineers Local 4, Teamsters Local 170 and 25 and the IBEWs. They are supporting me because I have always stood with the organized labor and the families they fight for every day.*

2. **Economic Recovery.** What are your top priorities in ensuring the sound and equitable use of funds received by Massachusetts through the American Rescue Plan Act?

*It is critical that this much-needed infusion of federal funding gets to the families and communities that need it most and that we take every step possible to prevent waste, fraud and abuse. This is work I already began in the legislature – co-sponsoring an amendment that would increase accountability and transparency in the expenditure of ARPA funds. (You can see my remarks from the floor debate [here](#).) It would provide a user-friendly tracking system and website through which the public may access, in near real-time, the amount and percentage, by spending category, of funds appropriated under this act spent in communities that were disproportionately impacted by the pandemic.*

- 3. Economic Development.** In recent years, we have seen a race to the bottom between cities and states to offer special perks for large corporations considering new development or relocation. What would be your approach to such bids or proposals from cities in Massachusetts?

*As I mentioned previously, when it comes to corporate tax breaks – which are the main perks used to lure companies – I will work to pass legislation empowering the Auditor's office to monitor them and continue the office's fight for increased accountability and expanded "clawback" provisions. In addition, the Auditor's office should have the power to analyze the tax returns of corporations receiving these incentives in order to determine whether this is the best use of taxpayer dollars.*

- 4. Privatization.** Privatization of state services typically leads to higher costs and worse service for residents of the Commonwealth. The Office of the Auditor oversees the Taxpayer Protection Act (Pacheco Law), the series of tests that must be passed before a service can be privatized. How would you approach this responsibility?

*Senator Marc Pacheco, the author of the Taxpayer Protection Act, has endorsed my candidacy for State Auditor because of my work alongside him in the Senate demanding transparency around privatization. This is a crucial statute for our Commonwealth. It ensures a transparent, open cost analysis of public and private bids through the Auditor's Office and requires contractors to prove cost savings before they are considered as service providers. I would uphold this responsibility by making high-quality service with taxpayer accountability my main priority. My stance is clear: a public process allows for the proper vetting of contracts and prevents unfettered privatization. As Auditor, I have pledged to conduct regular audits to ensure we are fulfilling our commitments made through legislative efforts.*

- 5. Closing the Racial Wealth Gap.** What role do you see for the Office of the Auditor in addressing wide racial/ethnic wealth gaps in the Commonwealth, especially but not limited to achieving greater equity in state contracting?

*My 14-point [Social Justice and Equity Audit Plan](#) is aimed at dismantling outdated and unfair policies that continue to disproportionately harm underserved and marginalized communities. As Auditor I will:*

- Analyze and report on state spending with minority-owned businesses and highlight areas that require improvement.** *WGBH News Center has done exceptional reporting highlighting inequities in what contractors receive state tax dollars, with a focus on how "minority-owned, and particularly black-owned businesses – receive a shockingly small portion of contract opportunities" from state agencies. Of the 13,000 construction contracts studied by GBH, only 250 were awarded to minority-owned businesses. Government shouldn't have to wait for reporters to uncover structural inequality. Regular audits will expose when state agencies fail to meet equity goals and hold them accountable for actually achieving inclusion standards.*
- Examine our state contracts and procurement processes to ensure engagement and fair treatment for women-, veteran-, LGBTQ-, and minority-owned businesses.** *I will use the Auditor's office to examine our state contracts and*

procurement processes to ensure engagement and fair treatment for women-, veteran-, LGBTQ-, and minority-owned businesses. As your next Auditor, I will tell you if your taxpayer money is spent equitably and hold the state government accountable to modernize its operations in the interest of justice and fairness. Massachusetts has consistently failed to meet diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) goals in state contracting. In 2020, the state spent \$4.8 billion on contracting but only \$23 million went to Black or Hispanic owned businesses — only 0.005% of total spending. The share of state contracts going to minority-owned businesses declined by 24% from 1998 to 2018. Inability to access state contracts is one of many challenges faced by minority entrepreneurs and our government needs to actually enforce diversity goals it adopts. When this does not occur, we will publicize data to ensure all residents of the Commonwealth know how and where we are failing to meet our DEI goals. Additionally, it is essential to hold contractors accountable for meeting DEI goals in their subcontracting. Too often, big contractors make promises about diversity in their bids but do not follow through. That can be exposed and remedied through effective auditing and reporting.

- **Audit state programs designed to assist minority businesses.** Massachusetts has many programs to assist minority entrepreneurs, which typically require the certification of a business as minority-owned. We need to determine how quickly, effectively, and equitably the state certifies these businesses, assists them, and helps them grow and succeed. Small businesses face so many problems, the last thing they need is long waiting periods for certification or access to opportunities like the Workforce Training Fund Program or Massachusetts Vacant Storefront Program for example. In the State Senate, as Chairwoman of the Committee on Community Development and Small Business, I would often hear from minority small business owners who felt disenfranchised when it came to accessing opportunities through state agencies. I would hear that direct support was needed and that technical challenges prevented them from successfully submitting applications. Those challenges need to be identified and fixed.
- **Review all agency contracting, starting with the Auditor's office, relative to the 25-point inclusion standard adopted by Massport.** The Massport standard applies to a wide range of activities including equity participation, workplace and supplier diversity, and wrap-around services to enhance diversity efforts. These contracts also hold recipients accountable for actually meeting DEI goals. It was used effectively during the recent construction of the Omni Seaport Hotel, which had far more diverse contractors than the typical Boston construction project.
- **Report on gender and racial pay disparities within our state government.** It is well established that women and people of color earn less money than other employees with the same job and experience. We need systemic change to combat pay inequality. The easiest place to start is making sure the government itself is not part of the problem. Lawmakers, administrators, and voters should be aware of what state agencies and quasi-public agencies are failing to treat women and minority workers fairly.
- **Report on the equitable implementation of legalized cannabis.** Massachusetts voters approved a ballot initiative to legalize cannabis believing – based on the actual text of the ballot question – that equity would be at the forefront. Legalization was supposed to ensure that people who were unfairly impacted by cannabis laws would have an opportunity to succeed in this new industry. Implementation has not lived up to these promises. Only 8% of businesses are owned by social equity participants and the industry remains dominated by former medical marijuana companies, which were not subject to any equity goals. As Auditor, I will report on the actions of the Cannabis Control Commission and other state agencies to make sure they are doing everything possible to encourage diversity and equity in the industry.



*Additionally, I will monitor licenses to ensure that investors who partner with social equity applicants are actually living up to the equity components on their license application. I will also report on the disparity between where cannabis revenue was intended to go and how it has actually been spent. State government gets 17% of revenue in taxes. Among other things, the money is intended to be spent on education, substance addiction prevention programs, and supporting social equity in cannabis. Currently, it is difficult to track how that revenue has actually been spent and voters deserve to know whether the legislature is keeping its promises about cannabis revenue.*

6. **One Fair Wage.** Do you support eliminating the subminimum wage for tipped workers? (Y/N)

*YES. As someone who spent years waiting tables in numerous restaurants to help pay for college, and to make ends meet afterward, I bring deep personal experience to this issue. I would support eliminating the sub-minimum wage and would add that we should engage in regular reviews of the impact of this change to ensure these well-intentioned goals are resulting in the best possible outcomes for low-wage workers. All too often, we see well-intentioned legislation passed but never followed up on to ensure the vision is becoming the reality. We must hold ourselves accountable in this manner.*

7. **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? (Y/N) If you identified such violations in state government, would you refer them to the AG's office?

YES

8. **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? (Y/N)

YES

9. **Gig Economy.** More than 200,000 workers in Massachusetts now work in the "gig economy," with the rise of app-based platforms. However, their employers often seek to evade labor law in order to avoid treating them as employees and provide decent pay and benefits.

1. Do you oppose the November 2022 ballot initiative backed by Uber and Lyft to rewrite current state labor law to exclude hundreds of thousands of workers from fundamental rights and protections? (Y/N)

YES

2. What role do you see for the Office of the Auditor in ensuring greater accountability in the gig economy?

*As a Senator, I have worked on legislative efforts to address these challenges. I am proud to join my friends in organized labor – many who have endorsed me – in standing up against the Big Tech companies trying to buy the ability to hurt gig workers in Massachusetts through this ballot question and as your next State Auditor by fighting for access to any corporate tax breaks for companies like these and reporting on predatory practices.*

10. **Public Benefits -- I.** The Office of the Auditor often spends considerable resources investigating allegations of erroneously disbursed public benefits. Would your office conduct an audit the office's work in this area, which likely spends a high share of funds relative to what it recoups (Y/N)

YES.

11. **Public Benefits -- II.** On the home page of the Office of the Auditor is a request for individuals to report allegations of "public benefit fraud," suspicions that low-income individuals may be receiving more money than they should from the Commonwealth. What is the appropriate approach for the Office of the Auditor to this work?

*As I have mentioned before, but will mention again, born to a 17-year-old, single mother, and having grown up housing-insecure in the Lawrence and Methuen area, we would not have gotten by without the support of public assistance. I know how much of a lifeline it was for us. We also need to ensure that public dollars are not being misappropriated since actual cases of fraud undermine the general public's support for such important assistance and hurt struggling families who are in dire need. Ensuring that families are able to obtain the services they need will be a top priority.*

12. **Unemployment Overpayments.** During the pandemic, the Massachusetts Department of Unemployment Assistance made overpayments to some workers who were later deemed ineligible or received more money than they should have. This occurred through no fault of the unemployed workers, and the state is now seeking to collect such money back, at a time when many are still struggling to recover from the economic downturn. What do you believe the appropriate response of the state should be in such a situation?

The current administration blatantly refused to release data regarding the unemployment insurance trust fund that was required on a monthly basis but ignored for several months. When it was finally uncovered that millions of dollars was missing from the fund due to overpayments, the administration refused to accept full responsibility for withholding information about the status of this fund until it was too late to remedy systemic challenges. The failures of this administration should not fall to the low-income workers of the Commonwealth to resolve and pay for. I strongly believe that unemployment overpayment claims that occurred through no fault of the unemployed worker should be waived.

## C. Education

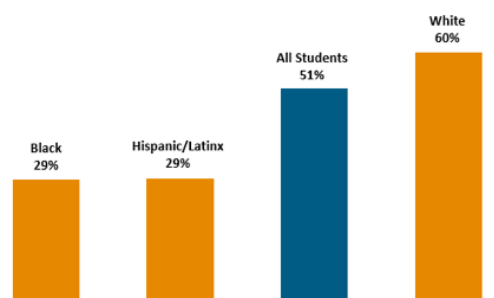
The promise of public education has always been as a gateway to opportunity and mobility for all, regardless of economic circumstances, a cornerstone of the American dream for all residents. Although our public education system gets high marks overall, it remains one of the [most unequal](#) in the country. 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. State receiverships in struggling school districts advance a privatization agenda by disenfranchising voters through stripping those they elect of their power to represent them.

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

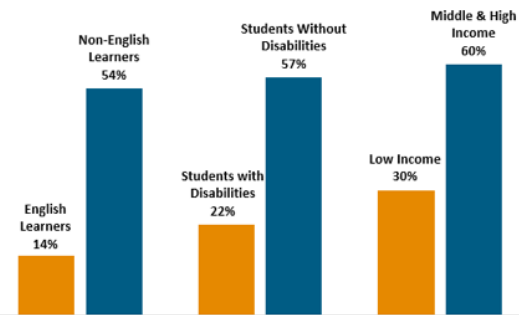
Share of MA 4th Graders Proficient on the 2017 NAEP Reading Exam, by Student Race, all students



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

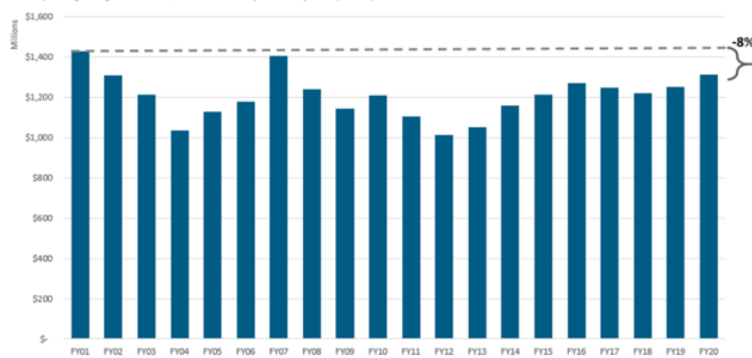


Source: National Center for Education Statistics, 2017

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

### Massachusetts Has Cut Spending on Higher Ed. by 8 Percent Since FY 2001

State spending on higher education, FY 2001-2020 adjusted to inflation (2020 \$)



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 relative to this issue, and what work you personally have done to advance them (legislation, community work, published writings, etc.).

*I am a proud graduate of Methuen Public Schools and graduated from Middlesex Community College prior to earning a need-based, full financial scholarship to Wellesley College. I am here today because so many public school and college teachers, professors, and advisors believed in me and supported me along the way. It is why, as a legislator, I have fought to increase funding and resources for public schools in my district and across the Commonwealth. And that support starts with our youngest students, and it is why I am proud to have co-sponsored legislation creating a system of universal high-quality early education in Massachusetts. I was also proud to support and vote for the Student Opportunity Act of 2019 which infused billions of dollars in new funding for our public schools, primarily benefiting low-income students, students of color and English language learners who for too long have been left behind.*

*My six years of service on the Education Committee and overall policy work in the legislature has earned me the endorsement of both the Massachusetts Teachers Association and the Massachusetts Federation of Teachers in my past legislative races. I look forward to continuing my efforts to increase access and opportunity for ALL children in the Commonwealth through great educational opportunities, regardless of zip code, as the next State Auditor.*

*Youth need and deserve educational supports that help ensure healthy relationships and a full understanding of consent. That's why I have fought hard for the passage of An Act Relative to Healthy Youth, among other important pieces of legislation, that seek to promote the best possible outcomes for ALL children in the Commonwealth.*

2. **Early Education and Child Care.** What role do you see for the Office of the Auditor in ensuring that child care workers are being adequately paid with the money being given by the state to large child care providers?

*First and foremost, I am proud to have co-sponsored [Common Start](#) legislation creating a system of universal high quality early education in Massachusetts. I have also worked for the last several years alongside unions, such as SEIU 509, advocating for the rights of child care workers, both in the public and private sector. It's why I have earned their support and endorsement during my time in the legislature. The Auditor's office plays a critical role in oversight of the Department of Early Education and Care in the Commonwealth – as I outlined previously in a question above regarding the necessity of following up on previous audits, I have committed to auditing and reporting on the processes and procedures at EEC in my [Social Justice and Equity Audit Plan](#). This work will seek to shine a light on current protocols to help ensure that child care workers are receiving the compensation they deserve.*

3. **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.

1. Do you support keeping the cap on charter schools? (Y/N)

YES.

2. What role do you see for the Office of the Auditor in ensuring greater accountability for state funds spent on publicly funded yet privately run charter schools?

*As a legislator who fought hard alongside our public schools, The Massachusetts Teachers Association and American Federation of Teachers to keep the cap on charter schools, I have the lived experience and proven track record we need in the Auditor's office to ensure that we're using every available tool to promote greater accountability regarding charter schools.*

4. **Receivership.** The Lawrence Public Schools, Holyoke Public Schools, and Southbridge Public Schools are currently under state receivership, with a state-appointed receiver assuming the powers of a superintendent or democratically elected school committee. Would you commit to auditing the expenditure of funds by state-appointed receivers? (Y/N)

*YES. I grew up in Lawrence and represented the City of Lawrence as a State Representative for six years. I saw the injustices that took place in denying parents and local elected officials the right to advocate for effective policies to help their children. This top-down, dictatorial approach has resulted in the same outcomes, years later. Children in Lawrence continue to receive the short end of the stick because of these failed attempts to impact change. The only way to create real, systemic change is by working alongside those who are in the trenches everyday helping our kids. Opportunity continues to be denied to the children of Lawrence, and it's unacceptable. We must continue to demand action.*

*I am so grateful that my strong position on receivership was [lauded](#) by our local families and Jobs for Justice's Dr. Mariaela Rivera in a call to action for others to join our fight: "We hope others in the Merrimack Valley delegation will follow Sen. DiZoglio's lead in recognizing the need for meaningful and progressive change that ends the racist policy of receivership and standardized testing, and restores democracy and the voices of educators in the region."*

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

YES

6. **Higher Ed Affordability -- I.** Would you consider using the existing authority of the Office of the State Auditor, or filing legislation to expand the authority of the office, to provide reports on (1) tuition and fee rates, (2) average post-grant costs for students, and (3) student debt burdens to ensure that the Department of Higher Education and the 29 Massachusetts public higher education institutions are fulfilling their mission to provide affordable associate's, bachelor's, and postgraduate degrees to all Massachusetts residents? (Y/N)

YES

7. **Higher Ed Affordability -- II.** Would you also commit to providing reports that inform the public as to whether efforts to keep degree programs affordable for Massachusetts residents are impacting: (1) wages and benefits for faculty and staff (e.g. increasing the number of lower-paid, poorly-benefited "adjunct"/non-tenure track positions), (2) the number of academic programs and degree programs offered by institutions (e.g. elimination of arts or language departments), and (3) the economic growth of host communities and surrounding communities for public higher education institutions? (Y/N)

YES

8. **Student Safety and Well-Being -- I.** In 2018, there was an [auditor report](#) that showed UMass Amherst Equal Opportunity & Diversity office did not always follow its protocol for student grievances. Given the recent uptick in student activism around campus sexual harassment and sexual assault policies, would your office commit to auditing whether public colleges and universities are adequately following their own policies regarding reporting and support for survivors, and whether such policies should be changed? (Y/N)

*YES. As a survivor of childhood sexual abuse, this is personal for me.*

9. **Student Safety and Well-Being -- II.** Would you commit to auditing campus police departments and whether they are adequately responding to complaints about misconduct by officers? (Y/N)

YES

10. What other roles do you see for the Office of the Auditor in ensuring that every student is able to attain a high-quality public education, pre-K to higher ed?

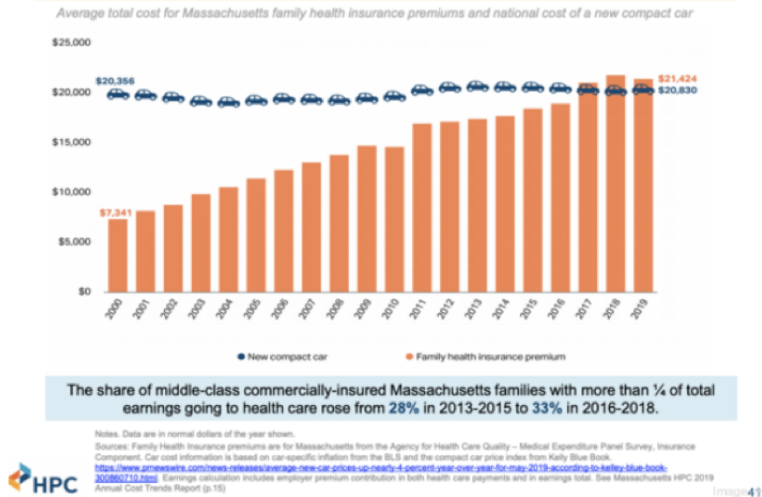
*I will seek to audit and report on the implementation of the Student Opportunity Act to ensure that the vision we set forth in the legislature and passed into law is actually producing the changes our students need to close the achievement gap and create real opportunities for success. For years, we in the legislature did not have adequate reporting on the outcomes of the Education Reform Act of 1993 to help drive the conversation around the need for increased funding and overall policy updates for our most underserved communities. I will do everything in my power to shine a light on where we are continuing to fall short in closing the gap, as we know that the bill's passage was meant to be just the first step in addressing inequities. In addition to regular reporting of outcomes, we need to now follow through.*

## **D. Health Care**

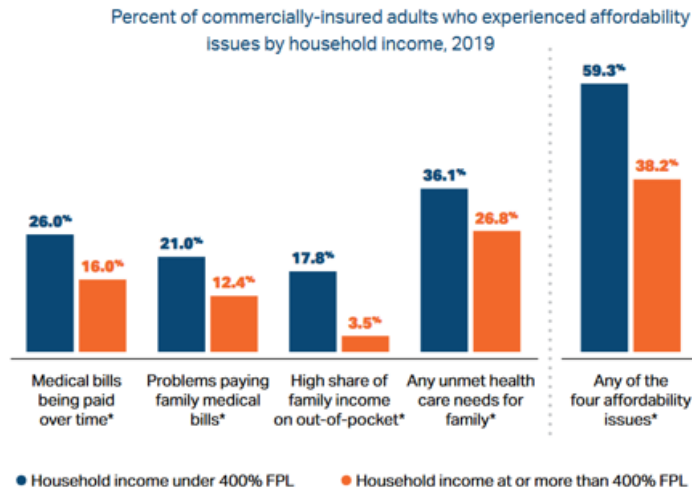
Massachusetts has led the way in providing near universal health insurance coverage, with [97% of the state](#) having health insurance. But until that is 100%, we haven't reached truly universal coverage or tackled critical barriers to accessing care. Disparities in insurance coverage and health care 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. The pandemic has put a spotlight on these health care inequities and the need to invest in a stronger public health infrastructure and be more resilient for the pandemics and challenges of the future.

**Massachusetts health insurance premiums have skyrocketed over the past two decades.**

**Massachusetts health insurance premiums have tripled in 19 years and consume an ever-larger portion of earnings for middle class families.**



**Many MA residents face difficulty paying health care bills.**



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

*I firmly believe that healthcare is a human right, and that is why I am a proud co-sponsor of [An Act to Establish Medicare for All](#), which would enact a single-payer health system in Massachusetts. I also believe that we need a greater focus on mental healthcare.*

2. **Single Payer.** Do you support legislation to enact a single payer health care system in Massachusetts, which would guarantee health insurance as a right? (Y/N)



YES. I proudly [co-sponsored](#) the legislation to enact a single-payer health system in Massachusetts.

3. **Reproductive Justice.** Do you support requiring health insurance plans to cover all pregnancy care, including abortion care, prenatal care, childbirth, and postpartum care, without any kind of cost-sharing? (Y/N)

YES

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

*Continuing my legislative leadership on this issue, I am committed to auditing the Baker Administration's actions during the pandemic. When the Governor diverted vaccines away from our local communities of color and marginalized populations, our elderly, disabled, immune-compromised and those without transportation suffered as a result. When that occurred, as a Senator, I stood up and demanded equity and accountability from the Governor and also called for an audit and investigation into the millions of taxpayer dollars he spent on no-bid contracts with his friends in the private sector, instead of reinvesting those dollars into our local communities, where families could get equitable access.*

*When we found out through a Boston Globe Spotlight Team investigation that the Governor told falsehoods at our legislative oversight hearings regarding what actually caused the Holyoke Soldiers Home tragedy, I stood up in the Senate and called on the Governor to come before us under oath. I pushed the Senate to conduct additional oversight hearings where we could utilize our full subpoena authority to get to the bottom of what occurred because their loved ones deserve the truth.*

*While I have just voted for the passage of the recent [Soldiers' Home Bill](#) which will go a long way in ensuring increased accountability in the overall governance and operations of our Soldiers' Homes here in Massachusetts, work still remains in identifying potential rocks left unturned and ensuring that the practices we have required are actually being implemented in an effective manner.*

*Early in this race, I committed to auditing the Holyoke Soldiers' Home tragedy, failed vaccine rollout and no-bid contracts that went out in the millions. I have been [vocal](#) on this from the onset, demanding accountability from all those responsible, and that will only intensify in the Auditor's Office.*

5. **Public Health.** What are the main lessons you would take from the state's experience with the COVID-19 pandemic in order to put our state on a stronger public health

footing for future crises, especially as relates to protecting the state's most at-risk populations?

*During the shutdown we saw, time and time again, marginalized populations experience tremendous and unnecessary challenges due to unilateral control of the administration. This was the result of our current state of emergency statutes that allow one person to govern with no checks or balances for an unlimited amount of time. While the law was intended to allow the Governor to take swift action in cases of emergencies and avoid cumbersome legislative processes, it was not intended to grant unilateral authority to one person for more than a year without the ability to challenge ineffective policies impacting vulnerable residents.*

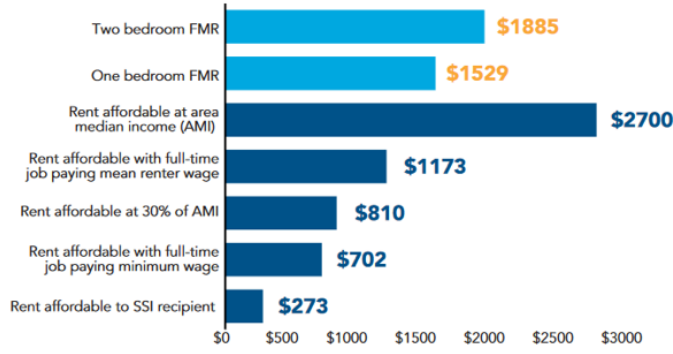
*What we saw during the course of the shutdown was, essentially, governance by one person and his hand-picked board. The elected members of the legislature and local elected officials were largely shut out of the process, thereby denying a voice to constituents. This resulted in a failed vaccine rollout with marginalized populations being overlooked, countless unnecessary hardships and loss of life for too many families across our Commonwealth.*

*In the future, we must have a plan in place to allow quick passage of emergency measures while ensuring that elected representatives are able to represent their constituents with a seat at the table before – not after – decisions have been made by the administration. That is why I filed legislation that would allow the legislature to keep the administration in check during future states of emergency. Absolute power corrupts absolutely, and we do our best work when we amplify the voices of those most impacted by policy. Since the bill I filed as a Senator has been denied passage, as Auditor, I will shine a light on how COVID-19 emergency responses could have been improved to better, more equitably, and more justly serve our communities in the generations to come.*

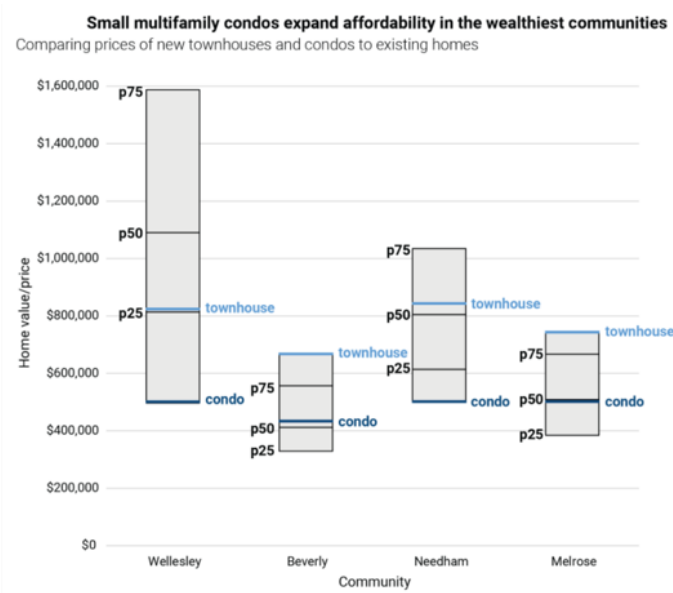
## **E. Housing**

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 #40 in housing affordability (and #47 in cost of living). A worker earning minimum wage in Massachusetts would have to work [87 hours a week](#) to afford a modest one-bedroom rental home at market rate (and 107 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.

**With rental increases far outpacing wage increases, many are left with housing instability.**



**The overreliance of single-family housing in suburban development, as opposed to denser or multi-family housing, makes communities unaffordable.**



Source: Existing home values taken from the Census Bureau's American Community Survey 2014-2018. Prices for new townhouses and condos from Crump, Mattos, Schuetz and Schuster (2020). **B** Metropolitan Policy Program at BROOKINGS

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

*Growing up housing insecure in Lawrence and Methuen taught me that housing is one of the most basic, fundamental needs that distinguishes between families that easily succeed and those that struggle. My mom and I were lucky to have loved ones who could take us in to provide some stability in difficult times. Growing up, I was able to stay with friends or family by “couch surfing” or taking a spare room, depending on availability in their homes. My story is not that different from the stories of many other people here in Massachusetts who are currently struggling just to find a basic, affordable place to live. We are in a housing crisis and far too many families are facing these challenges. As State Auditor, I will fight to increase housing opportunities that are affordable - as detailed in my [Social Justice and Equity Audit Plan](#).*

*As an elected official, I have secured funding for Citizens’ Housing & Planning Association (CHAPA), the Residential Assistance for Families in Transition (RAFT) program, HomeBASE initiatives, and many others, to help overcome homelessness and ensure that those who need housing have access. For my community, I’ve been a proud legislative supporter of increased funding for Lawrence Community Works, YWCA housing, and the substance-use recovery housing of Link House, Pegasus House, and Haven of Hope.*

- 2. Reducing Homelessness.** Would your office commit to compiling existing research and auditing current initiatives on reducing homelessness in order to promote data-backed best practices?

YES

- 3. Public Housing.** Massachusetts has underfunded state-assisted public housing for years and has sought to reduce the overall quantity of state public housing units. What role do you see for the Office of the Auditor in improving and expanding public housing, especially relating to the disposition of state-owned land for housing?

*As Auditor, I will work to identify the most cost-effective approaches of producing affordable housing. That will include: converting existing housing stock to affordable; preserving existing housing that is already affordable to residents; and significantly expanding transit-oriented development. I will analyze the cost-effectiveness of building new affordable housing compared to purchasing existing properties and converting them into affordable housing. Communities that fail to comply with affordable housing laws such as 40B are not eligible for funding under the Housing Choice Initiative, Local Capital Projects Fund or MassWorks Infrastructure Fund. I will report on whether or not the Commonwealth is actually enforcing these requirements. I will also study and report on the opportunity to increase housing opportunities, affordable to working families, on State land and on land owned by other public authorities such as MassPort and regional transit agencies – and push for action if we are not meeting our goals.*

4. **Rental Relief.** Would your office commit to auditing current rental relief programs to ensure that struggling renters are able to receive the funding available and not turned away by inaccessible paperwork? (Y/N)

YES

5. **Tenant Protections.** Would you support providing 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? (Y/N)

YES

6. **Eviction Sealing.** Eviction records create lasting stigma, are prone to error and impair access to stable housing. Would you support legislation to seal eviction records so that both tenants and landlords can move on with their lives? (Y/N)

YES. I am a proud co-sponsor of the [HOMES Act](#), legislation to promote housing opportunity and mobility through eviction sealing.

7. **Zoning Reform.** The Department of Housing & Community Development recently released guidelines for the 175 MBTA communities to have a zoning ordinance or bylaw that provides for at least one district of reasonable size near public transit in which multifamily housing is permitted as of right. What role do you see for the Office of the Auditor in the implementation of such reforms and in encouraging greater production of affordable housing across the Commonwealth?

*I support zoning reform, particularly for transit-oriented housing. I will work to identify the most cost-effective approaches to produce affordable housing, which include: converting existing housing stock to affordable; preserving existing housing that is already affordable to residents; and significantly expanding transit-oriented development.*

*We need to enable more housing for our tax subsidies and to produce more housing that's available for families in genuine need. I will analyze the cost effectiveness of building new affordable housing as compared to purchasing existing properties and converting them into affordable housing.*

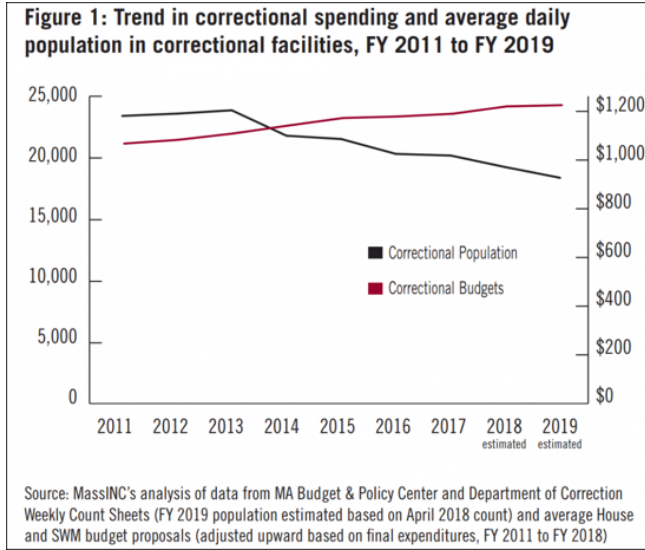
## **F. Racial and Social Justice**

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, especially on the systemic and institutional level.

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 a person 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.

Immigrants make up 16% of Massachusetts’s population; however, demagoguery against, or indifference to, immigrant populations has historically been a mainstay of Massachusetts politics. Even though the administration in Washington has changed, we have seen a deportation agenda from both Democratic and Republican presidents, and 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.

**The correctional population in Massachusetts has declined, yet the state continues to increase the Department of Corrections budget.**



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

Imprisonment by Race/Ethnicity (2019)	
White imprisonment rate (per 100,000)	63
Black imprisonment rate (per 100,000)	466
Hispanic imprisonment rate (per 100,000)	260
Racial/Ethnic Disparity in Imprisonment (2019)	
Black : white ratio	7.4
Hispanic : white ratio	4.1
Juveniles in Custody (2015)	
Total juveniles in custody	309
Committed	168
Detained	135
Diverted	0
Juvenile custody rate (per 100,000)	0
White custody rate (per 100,000)	18
Black custody rate (per 100,000)	166
Latino custody rate (per 100,000)	117
American Indian custody rate (per 100,000)	0
Asian custody rate	0

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

*I know we have far to go in living our values to ensure that criminal justice is truly restorative justice. As a legislator, I supported the Criminal Justice Reform Act of 2018 and the Police Accountability Bill of 2020. I am also a current co-sponsor of Sen. Comerford's bill (S.2030) to put a moratorium on the new construction of prisons.*

*As it stands, our jails and prisons are operating at 50 to 60% capacity. We have the space we require. The best use of our resources would be through investment in reducing recidivism, providing pathways to education, and opening doors for job training.*

*As a six-year member of the Committee on Mental Health and Substance Abuse, I also worked hard to ensure the proper mental health services for incarcerated women at MCI-Framingham by relocating them to other facilities. We cannot provide our incarcerated populations with second-class care.*

2. **Social Cost of Overpolicing and Mass Incarceration.** Would you commit to conducting a full audit of the social and economic costs of overpolicing and mass incarceration? (Y/N)

*As Senator, I voted in favor of the Police Accountability Bill of 2020. As part of my Audit Plan, I will report on the Massachusetts Police Training Commission's (MPTC) implementation of implicit bias training. The MPTC is responsible for the development, delivery, and enforcement of training standards of Massachusetts law enforcement personnel. This includes municipal, state, MBTA, environmental, UMass campus police officers, and deputy sheriffs who perform police duties. As Auditor, I will report on whether the measures we voted for in those bills are being implemented appropriately, starting with implicit bias training for all law enforcement trainees. This is a social justice issue, and it's why I included it in my Social Justice and Equity Audit Plan.*

3. **Police Accountability.** The 2020 police accountability legislation passed by the Massachusetts Legislature contained a number of steps forward, but important measures were left out. Would you support legislation to do the following?
  1. Eliminating qualified immunity for state and local police and correctional officers so that individuals whose constitutional rights are violated can have their fair day in court? (Y/N)

*I support strong reforms to qualified immunity to make sure it's not abused. I was proud to vote for the Police Accountability Bill of 2020 and, through it, the creation of a Peace Officers Standard and Training (POST) Commission. The Commission brings a new and important level of oversight in regards to certification of law enforcement officers, the investigation of misconduct, and the reigning in of qualified immunity claims for actions that result in decertification by the Commission.*

2. Supporting strict regulations on government use of face surveillance like those initially enacted by the House and Senate in 2020, before Governor Baker rejected them? (Y/N)

YES

3. Requiring a vote by a local legislative body (city council, town meeting) before a municipality can acquire military or surveillance equipment? (Y/N)



YES

4. Directing an independent investigation of the Massachusetts State Police Commonwealth Fusion Center, to determine whether it has engaged in investigations of protected First Amendment activity or otherwise improperly collected, accessed, or shared information about people not suspected of engaging in criminal activity? (Y/N)

YES

5. Reforming the law regarding the Civil Service Commission so it no longer has power over the hiring or firing of police officers in Massachusetts? (Y/N)

*In the Police Accountability Bill of 2020, the legislature passed a provision to promote accountability on this issue, and I look forward to reviewing their recommendations.*

4. **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. Do you support the following reforms?

1. Eliminating mandatory minimums for all drug offenses? (Y/N)

*I voted for a bill making major changes to the state’s criminal justice system including repealing mandatory minimum sentences for low-level drug offenders.*

2. 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? (Y/N)

*I was a supporter of UTEC’s juvenile expungement provision. It was ultimately included in the Criminal Justice Reform Bill. I am open to considering this proposal when I see it in its final form.*

3. Decriminalizing consensual sexual activity between adolescents, by creating an exception to the statutory rape law for youth close in age? (Y/N)

*I would like to review the actual language of this proposal. Speaking in theory, without specifics, it is difficult to assess its impact.*

4. Eliminating the sentence of life without parole, which is costly and has been shown to be racist in its application? (Y/N)

*I am open to consideration on this topic.*

5. **State Police Overtime [1] Abuse.** Recent scandals regarding overtime fraud in the state police show a significant lack of accountability and oversight. What do you see as the role of the Office of the Auditor in curbing such abuse?

*Fraud and abuse is unacceptable. Period. I commit to following through with the Inspector General's recommendations to ensure accountability.*

6. **Police Militarization.** The U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) 1033 Program permits the Secretary of Defense to transfer excess supplies and equipment to state and local law enforcement agencies. Would you commit to auditing the acquisition and use of such military weaponry by Massachusetts law enforcement? (Y/N)

YES

7. **Prison Profiteering—Part I.** 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. What role do you see for the Office of the Auditor in combating such price gouging?

*The Auditor's Office absolutely must shine a light on these practices. As a Senator, I took on multiple price-gouging entities such as third-party delivering companies, which ultimately went to the Attorney General's office. I also took on pharmaceutical companies such as the manufacturers of EpiPen for their price-gouging of life-saving drugs. I know what it takes to take on powerful special interests regarding price-gouging.*

8. **Prison Profiteering—Part II.** The cost of phone calls can be as high as \$4-\$5 (or more) for 15 minutes of phone time for incarcerated individuals in some parts of Massachusetts.

1. Do you support making phone calls free for incarcerated individuals? (Y/N)

*YES. We need to ensure funding for those programs. I was a cosponsor of S.1559 to make phone calls for incarcerated individuals free.*

2. What role do you see for the Office of the Auditor in combating such price gouging?

*As Auditor, I will use the bully pulpit to continue to fight for incarcerated individuals to maintain connections to their loved ones. We cannot profit off of the families of the incarcerated.*

9. **DOC Spending.** Although the incarcerated population in Massachusetts has fallen, the Department of Corrections budget keeps rising. At the same time, investments in programs and services proven to reduce recidivism have not increased. Additionally, people inside the state's facilities are held in unsanitary conditions and are systematically denied basic medical and mental health care. What role do you see for the Office of the Auditor in addressing this?

*We need the legislature to ensure funding for this, and I will support efforts to invest here.*

10. **Sheriff's Departments.** Would you commit to conducting audits of individual sheriff's departments regarding use of funds (as in #9) and contracting? (Y/N)

YES.

11. **Re-Entry for Returning Citizens.** What role do you see for the Office of the Auditor in ensuring that funding for reentry services is achieving its purpose, and in promoting such programs?

*As Auditor, I will review the Department of Corrections and Sheriffs offices processes and procedures to identify gaps in social services that promote successful reentry, including but not limited to, education, job training, housing supports and employment partnerships with local businesses. We need to make sure that individuals are provided with the proper foundation to start their new life.*

12. **Violence Prevention.** What role do you see for the Office of the Auditor in ensuring that funding for violence prevention is achieving its purpose, and in promoting such programs?

*I used to work at the United Teen Equality Center in Lowell, which serves justice-involved young adults and supports them as they reject violence and poverty and work towards social and economic success. I worked closely with youth – many of whom were impacted by violence. As Auditor, I will be able to audit and investigate the use of state funds for violence prevention to ensure that they are sufficient and meeting needs.*

13. **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? (Y/N)

YES

14. **Work and Family Mobility Act.** Do you support removing immigration status as a barrier to applying for a license or learner's permit? (Y/N)

*YES. In fact, two years ago, I went toe to toe with Jim Lyons, the extreme right-wing chair of the MassGOP who attacked me for voicing support for the legislation. This year, I continue to push to bring this bill to the Senate floor for a vote again and am strongly advocating for this legislation to help all working families get to work.*

15. **Data Equity.** Do you support allowing state agencies to collect, organize, and assemble public data on major ethnic subgroups for all racial groups to create more visibility for the diverse experiences within communities and enable policymakers and community organizations to be more responsive to community needs? (Y/N)

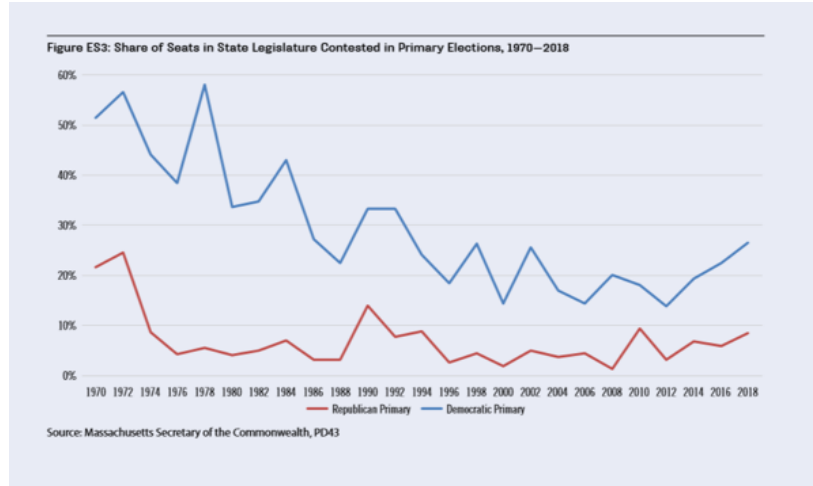
YES

## **G. Good Government and Strong Democracy**

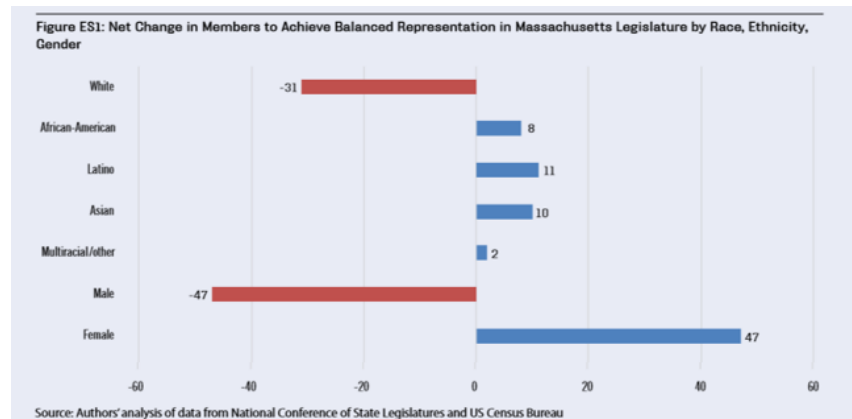
A strong democracy depends on a transparent and representative government and an engaged public. Too often, however, we see centralized, unaccountable power and barriers to participation. An undemocratic, centralized power structure on Beacon Hill makes it easier for lobbyists to target the top and undermine 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 relative to this issue, and what work you personally have done to advance them (legislation, community work, published writings, etc.).

*As a state legislator for the last decade, rather than trying to work within the rules of the powerful Beacon Hill establishment, I have taken it on – fighting for increased transparency, equity, accountability and accessibility for all. I've supported legislation to: make committee votes public; give legislators at least 72 hours to read a bill before voting on it; and hold candidates accountable if they don't [disclose donor information](#). I was also the lead sponsor of the most recent [OCPF reform bill](#) that requires all legislative candidates to produce regular financial reports rather than waiting until the end of the election year.*

*Right now, Massachusetts continues to be ranked by good government groups as the least transparent state government in the nation. We're not subject to open meeting laws, we're exempt to public records laws, committee votes are not public, taxpayer-funded non-disclosure agreements continue to silence government workers, and power is centralized into the hands of a few. That's why during our last rules debate I filed 21 amendments to increase transparency and accountability in the legislative process. While I*

*was successful in passing several of these amendments there remains much work to be done. I am the only candidate in this race who has committed to using the authority of the auditor's office to shine a light on these transparency gaps in the state legislature.*

*Beacon Hill's policies currently feed a self-sustaining status quo where people with generational access to power prosper, their friends who look and sound like them are rewarded, and the most vulnerable people are pushed aside and marginalized. I will be an Auditor who opens state government to everyone and shifts the balance of power back to the people.*

2. **Public Records Law.** Massachusetts is the only state where the Governor's Office, the Legislature, and the Judiciary claim full exemptions from the public records laws. Would you support eliminating these exemptions? (Y/N)

*YES. I support eliminating these exemptions to include the executive, legislative and judicial branches. It is an embarrassment that a state that prides itself on progressive leadership consistently gets an F when it comes to transparency.*

3. **Open Data.** What would you do to promote greater data transparency in order to help external partners in academia better research state programs?

*Accountability and transparency are my top priorities, and I will work hard to ensure that academic institutions – and the public at large – obtain the data they need.*

4. **Voting Access.** Massachusetts lags behind other states in making voting accessible for all. Do you support eliminating Massachusetts's arbitrary and exclusionary 20-day voter registration cutoff and allowing voters to register or update their registration at the polls on Election Day and during the early voting period? (Y/N)

*YES. I am a proud co-sponsor of the [VOTES Act](#). In fact, I believe we should go a step further and enact automatic voter registration, and I've supported efforts to do so.*

5. **Voting Rights Restoration.** Would you support restoring the franchise to incarcerated individuals serving time for felony convictions (Their right to vote was taken away by ballot twenty years ago)? (Y/N)

YES

6. **Removing Barriers to Running.** The cost of child care can prove prohibitive to parents seeking to run for office. Would you support legislation to explicitly allow parents running for office to use campaign funds to pay for child care? (Y/N)

YES

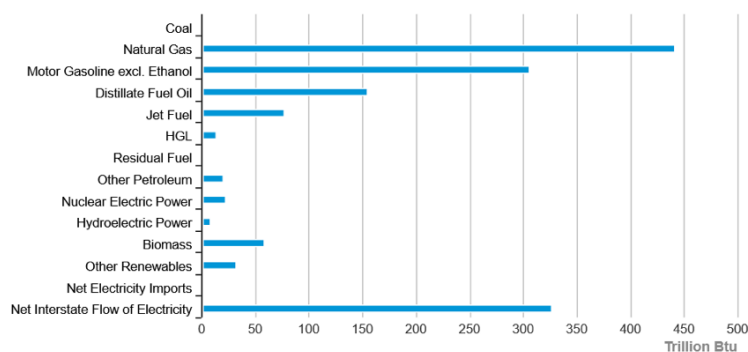
## H. Sustainable Infrastructure and Environmental Protection

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, and affluent countries and states must go further. 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.

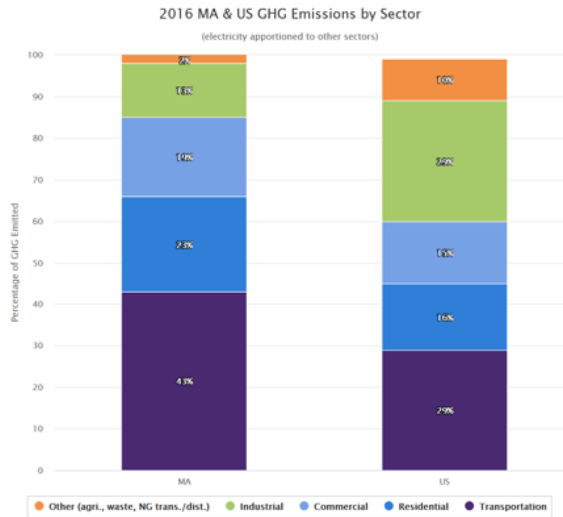
### Despite recent progress, Massachusetts is still overwhelmingly dependent on fossil fuels.

Massachusetts Energy Consumption Estimates, 2019



Source: Energy Information Administration, State Energy Data System

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



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

*I am proud of the votes and actions I have taken as a legislator to further our efforts to combat climate change broadly while fighting for environmental justice in the communities I represent. Whether it is my enthusiastic support of Senate Bill 9 - An Act Creating a Next Generation Roadmap for Massachusetts Climate Policy, taking on Columbia Gas after the devastating Merrimack Valley Gas explosion, or fighting against a new natural gas plant in my hometown of Methuen, I have backed up my words with actions that have made a difference. In addition, I strongly support investments in public transportation, walking, and biking infrastructure, which will not only reduce emissions, but also improve public health and safety. I also filed a bill to prevent the disposal of hydraulic fracturing wastewater.*

*I am the lead sponsor of An Act to update the Massachusetts rideshare program, which requires that the Department of Environmental Protection revise the regulations governing the rideshare program. Under my proposed legislation, The Department of Environmental Protection shall consolidate reports on the ridesharing program and release to the public, at a minimum, the following information: the statewide drive-alone rate, the percentage of affected facilities that have drive-alone rates below 75%. It is imperative that we work to not just count carbon but forcefully advocate to reduce it.*

*My commitment to supporting the clean-up of the Merrimack River enabled me to see first-hand how important it is for state agencies to have sufficient resources to protect the environment. In a multi-year effort, I successfully led efforts to secure funding for Greater [Lawrence Sanitary District](#) to prevent sewage discharges during power outages and create a pilot program to implement a pre-notification alert system for CSOs in the Merrimack River – leading to [successfully passed legislation](#) and the creation of the [Merrimack River District Commission](#). The Commission brought together a variety of stakeholders along the*



river – including environmentalists and elected officials to address issues around pollution of the river, advise on next steps and develop a plan to clean and maintain the river moving forward. This work eventually became a statewide model for the Combined Sewage Overflow (CSO) Notification Bill that I was proud to champion alongside my colleagues in the legislature. I was invited to speak at the [bill signing](#) for my work on this bill's passage. We have a long way to go to realize infrastructure updates and ensure our mission of clean rivers across the Commonwealth. That's why, as your State Auditor, I am committed to auditing ARPA and making sure that our recovery funds are spent the way they were intended and our policies are being fully implemented by relevant state agencies.

2. **Next Generation Roadmap.** At the start of this legislative session, the Legislature passed a bill that requires emissions reductions of 50% from 1990 levels by 2030, 75% by 2040, and at least 85% by 2050. What role do you see for the Office of the Auditor in ensuring that the state achieves—or exceeds—these goals?

*As a member of the State Senate, I was proud to override Governor Baker's vetoes to pass the historic Act Creating a Next Generation Roadmap for Massachusetts Climate Policy. As Auditor, I am committed to holding the state accountable for meeting these critical climate goals. I will audit relevant state agencies such as the Department of Public Utilities to shine a light on where we are, or are not, meeting our commitments. I included this in my 14-point Social Justice and Equity Audit Plan.*

3. **Fossil Fuel Infrastructure.** Do you oppose the expansion of fossil fuel infrastructure in the state? (Y/N) If so, what steps would you take to do so?

*YES. In fact, in 2014, LS Power Group planned a new \$400 million, 451 MW gas power plant in my hometown of Methuen. As a state representative, I fought against this proposal, and working with concerned citizens and local elected officials the project was stopped and ultimately abandoned. In addition, following the Merrimack Valley gas explosions in Lawrence and North Andover in 2018, I worked to [hold Columbia Gas accountable](#) for the disaster they created in the Merrimack Valley both inside and outside my legislative district.*

4. **MBTA Board.** Would you commit to auditing the MBTA Board to assess whether it is meeting its stated goals? (Y/N)

*YES. My demands of increased oversight as a Senator and commitment to auditing the MBTA has earned me the endorsement of the MBTA Inspectors Union in my campaign for State Auditor.*

5. **MBTA Contracts.** Would you commit to conducting a thorough audit of the MBTA's contracts with Keolis and Cubic, which have been plagued by insufficient transparency? (Y/N)

YES

6. **Decarbonizing Public Transit.** The MBTA is replacing clean trolley electric buses with electric battery buses that also have to run on diesel to keep the heat functioning in cold months, replacing a clean tech with a hybrid tech and working against the state's emissions goals. Would you commit to auditing the MBTA's approach to reducing carbon emissions? (Y/N)

YES

7. **Transit Fares.** Would you commit to auditing the total cost of installing the new "AFC2" fare collection system for buses in order to determine whether or not it would be more cost effective to simply not collect fares and not pay for the costs of fare collection? (Y/N)

YES

8. **Free Public Transit.** Do you support making public transit in the Commonwealth fare-free? (Y/N) If so, what role do you see for the Office of the Auditor in making the case for it?

*YES. Transit should be accessible for all, and I will be vocal in my support. It's one of the reasons why I am so supportive of the Fair Share Amendment, and I will continue to take this public stance.*

9. **Infrastructure Spending.** Massachusetts is expected to receive \$9 billion from President Biden's infrastructure bill.
1. Would you advocate for using funds for measures like bike infrastructure, pedestrian crossings, bus rapid transit, and other measures to reduce reliance on automotive transit? (Y/N)

YES

2. What would be your priorities in ensuring the equitable and climate-conscious use of such funds?

*We need to ensure that underserved communities are being seen and lifted up, and we are*

*meeting our climate goals, with these once-in-a-generation infrastructure funds. We must focus on supporting the environmental justice communities hardest-hit by failed policies of the past. I will use the Auditor's role to help track and report on the use of these funds, ensuring a bright spotlight on issues of environmental justice.*

**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.