



2021 Massachusetts Democratic Party Platform

2021 PLATFORM COMMITTEE CO-CHAIRS

Sheriff Steve Tompkins

Jay Gonzalez

Shannon Liss-Riordan

The proposed 2021 Massachusetts Democratic Party Platform was drafted by the Platform Committee with the input of hundreds of Democrats across the Commonwealth and was approved by the committee at their meeting on August 30, 2021. The proposed platform was amended and adopted by delegates ahead of the 2021 MassDems Platform Convention on September 25, 2021.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS	2
THE 2021 PLATFORM COMMITTEE	3
INTRODUCTION	4
SHARED VALUES AND CURRENT CONTEXT	5
CHILDREN AND FAMILIES	8
ECONOMIC JUSTICE AND GROWTH	9
EDUCATION	10
CLIMATE AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE	12
RACIAL JUSTICE, EQUAL RIGHTS, AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL	14
ETHICS AND TRANSPARENCY	15
HEALTHCARE AND HUMAN SERVICES	16
HOUSING	19
IMMIGRATION	20
LABOR AND WORKFORCE	21
PUBLIC SAFETY AND CRIMINAL LEGAL REFORM	22
REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH, FREEDOM, AND JUSTICE	24
TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE	25
VETERANS	26
VOTING AND DEMOCRACY	27
CONCLUSION	29

THE 2021 PLATFORM COMMITTEE

COMMITTEE CO-CHAIRS

Sheriff Steve Tompkins
Jay Gonzalez
Shannon Liss-Riordan

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Nazda Alam	Ossie Jordan
Colton Andrews	Shannon Liss-Riordan
Roger Brunelle	Darlene Lombos
John Businger	Veronica Martinez
Lezlie Campbell	Bob Massie
Jonathan Cohn	Paul McClory
Cheryl Cumings	Linda Monteiro
Senator Julian Cyr	Steve Moore
Dori Dean	Eric Nakajima
Emmanuel Dockter	Tanya Neslusan
Brian Dunn	Register Mary Olberding
Christina Eckert	Sheneal Parker
Senator Jamie Eldridge	Mary Richards
Mike Fenton	Ann Roosevelt
Jay Gonzalez	Marianne Rutter
Kristen Halbert	Marlene Silva
Becca Hart Holder	Tanisha Sullivan
Gillian Hinkson	Ben Tafoya
Speaker Pro Tempore Kate Hogan	Kannan Thiruvengadam
Darrin Howell	Sheriff Steve Tompkins
Martina Jackson	Marie Turley
Rani Jacobson	Parwez Wahid
Paul Jacques	Paul Yorkis

INTRODUCTION

Every four years, the Massachusetts Democratic Party convenes its delegates to adopt a new Party Platform. The Party Platform is the vehicle through which we come together and speak with one voice as Democrats in articulating our values, beliefs, and aspirations for a stronger, more inclusive, more equitable, and more progressive Massachusetts and America. It is the vehicle through which we express and commit to our common cause.

Now, as we, the delegates to the 2021 Massachusetts Democratic Party convention, convene on September 25, 2021, it is time for us to adopt a new Party Platform. While our process for doing so has been standard and ordinary, we are mindful that the times in which we do so are not.

These are extraordinary times. In developing our 2021 Party Platform, we are influenced and inspired not only by our values and beliefs but also by the context in which we have been living and the urgency of the moment. Specifically, we make the following declarations of Massachusetts Democratic Party values and beliefs and noteworthy observations about the state of our nation and our Commonwealth, all of which inform our development of the 2021 Party Platform.

SHARED VALUES AND CURRENT CONTEXT

WHEREAS, we are proud Bay Staters and Americans, and we remain committed to continuing our work to form a stronger Commonwealth and a more perfect union that live up to their potential and the ideals on which they were founded; and

WHEREAS, we believe deeply in the core principles upon which the United States and our Commonwealth were founded, that all people are created equal, that they are endowed with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, and that to secure these rights, governments must be instituted by the people and derive their just powers from the consent of the governed; and

WHEREAS, to secure these unalienable rights for people, we believe government must ensure that every person has access to the necessities of life—a good home; healthy food; high-quality health care; a comprehensive education; a good job with a living wage and benefits; a clean, safe and healthy environment; safe and efficient transportation; clean water and other basic infrastructure; reproductive freedom; high-quality childcare; public safety; and the opportunity to realize one’s full potential; and

WHEREAS, we believe government must also ensure that these rights are secured for all people, regardless of race, ethnicity, national origin, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, age, or ability; and

WHEREAS, we believe that to secure these rights for all people, the government must protect against discrimination of any kind against anyone based on who they are, and, where systemic racism and other forms of discrimination by the government and other institutions have persisted to deny people equal access to these rights and to create deep disparities within our nation and our Commonwealth, the government must take affirmative steps to eliminate such discrimination and disparities; and

WHEREAS, we believe that for government to secure these rights for all people, it must truly be instituted by the people and derive its power from the consent of the governed; and

WHEREAS, this can only be achieved through free and fair elections where everyone’s right to vote is unencumbered and the electoral process is free from political interference; there is no opportunity for the wealthy, powerful, and privileged to exercise undue influence in our political process; our political process and governments are open and transparent to the public and subject to scrutiny from a strong and independent media; our governments and their leaders make decisions in the best interests of those who are governed rather than their self-interest; the decisions of government leaders are based on a good faith understanding of facts, history, science

and the powers and responsibilities of government; and government and its leaders act ethically and with integrity; and

WHEREAS, the United States armed forces have been misused in conflicts that have caused the unnecessary loss of life of Americans, the deaths of innocent populations and large scale migrations of refugees from invaded countries, we strongly support the repeal of the Authorization for Use of Military Force of September 2001, also known as the “blank check” to prevent future military adventurism; and

WHEREAS, over the last 18 months, the world has dealt with the devastating effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, and it will continue to do so for the foreseeable future, resulting in the loss of thousands of lives and jobs right here in the Commonwealth; adverse health impacts for hundreds of thousands of our residents; disruption to our economy, our schools and our lives; and the further exposure of the untenable disparities and inequities that exist among us; and

WHEREAS, the United States Capitol was besieged by an insurrectionist mob on January 6th, 2021 at the express instigation and incitement of the twice-impeached, former President, Donald J. Trump. Sitting members of Congress and Senators may have incited, aided, and abetted said insurrection. The United States Constitution provides in Section Three of the Fourteenth Amendment that insurrectionists or those giving them aid or comfort are permanently disqualified from ever again serving as officers of the United States or any of its states again in any capacity. Massachusetts Democrats elected to office shall use any and all legal procedures available to them to challenge and block the unconstitutional seating of insurrectionists and their enablers in any office of profit or honor at the federal, state, or local levels in the United States. Insurrectionist members of Congress and Senators specifically shall not be seated in future Congresses regardless of election results; and

WHEREAS, in the wake of the murder of George Floyd, our nation’s reckoning with systemic racism has intensified, and discrimination and disparities in wealth, health, income, criminal justice, environmental justice, and opportunity continue to persist and demand redress; and

WHEREAS, everyone must have the right to be free of the scourge of gun violence; we must demand that the Second Amendment be revised to allow for meaningful and strong gun control measures; and

WHEREAS, as reflected in the recent report of the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, the impacts of climate change are worse than previously thought, the time to act to mitigate and adapt to the impacts is shorter, and the need to do so is much more urgent; now, therefore:

WE, THE MEMBERS OF THE MASSACHUSETTS DEMOCRATIC PARTY RESOLVE

- That everyone has access to safe and affordable housing.
- That everyone has access to high-quality, affordable health care.
- That everyone has access to healthy, affordable food.
- That everyone has access to a comprehensive education, from early education through higher education.
- That everyone has the opportunity to have a good job with a living wage, good benefits, and form and join unions.
- That everyone lives in a clean, safe and healthy environment.
- That everyone has access to safe, efficient, and affordable transportation; clean water; parks; broadband; and other basic infrastructure to support daily life.
- That everyone has the freedom to decide if and when to have a child.
- That everyone has access to high-quality childcare.
- That everyone is protected from all forms of discrimination.
- That affirmative steps be taken to eliminate and redress disparities and inequities that have resulted from structural racism and other systemic forms of discrimination.
- That everyone's right to vote and the integrity of our electoral process be protected.
- That our political process, government, and public officials be free of undue influence, be open and accessible to the public, transparent, and held accountable to act in good faith in furtherance of our interests as described herein.
- That we are well-prepared and take the necessary steps to protect our public health.
- That we act with the boldness and urgency necessary to address and adapt to climate change.
- That we foster Democratic grassroots activism.

And, in furtherance of these resolutions and to build a stronger, more inclusive, more equitable, and more progressive Commonwealth consistent with our values and the challenges we currently face, **we, the members of the Massachusetts Democratic Party, hereby support, propose, and promote that the government take the following actions in the following areas.**

CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

We owe it to our children and families to support, protect and empower them. We commit to doing so, from ensuring that pregnant people have access to the full spectrum of care, to access to high-quality and affordable childcare for all, to safety and security at home.

MASSACHUSETTS DEMOCRATS WILL FIGHT FOR:

- High-quality, affordable childcare for all to support early development and improve school readiness and educational outcomes in historically underserved communities.
- An end to racial disparities in maternal health and ensuring that all have access to full-spectrum family planning and pregnancy care, including contraception, abortion, miscarriage management, prenatal care, childbirth, and postpartum care, including treatment for depression and access to doulas, midwives, and/or obstetricians as each individual prefers.
- Reform of the child support system by ensuring that all dollars collected go to the child rather than to the government and applying reasonable standards to wage garnishment and punitive practices to ensure that parents can continue to work and accrue income.
- Strong intervention and child abuse prevention programs and services for youth and at-risk individuals.
- Strong preventative measures to address domestic abuse and sexual assault, including age-appropriate anti-violence education.
- Strong state laws and enforcement against child abuse, domestic violence, elder abuse, sexual abuse, and abuse against those with disabilities.
- Protections for children from the chronic and acute consequences of climate change.
- Legislation and programs that ensure children have a healthy diet and adequate food supply so that no child goes to school or bed hungry.
- Programs that address the education, healthcare, employment, and housing needs of youth that age out of the state's foster care system and students that age out of the state's special education system.

ECONOMIC JUSTICE AND GROWTH

Building an economy that works for middle-class and working families, and not just the wealthy and well connected, is one of the most pressing issues facing our Commonwealth and country. We believe that prosperity should be broadly shared, in a progressive tax structure that levels the playing field, and in growing an equitable, just, and sustainable 21st-century economy through investments in workers and their families.

MASSACHUSETTS DEMOCRATS WILL FIGHT FOR:

- Pay equity for all, regardless of gender, race, or ability, and the elimination of wealth disparities based on these factors.
- A strong focus on innovation, including the clean energy sector and biotech sector.
- Investments in the long-term industries our economy was built on, including agriculture, fishing, tourism, healthcare, higher education, financial services, and manufacturing.
- Workforce education programs, including investments in vocational technical education and training programs, and pre-apprenticeship programs for all individuals interested in entering skilled trades, technical, or other hands-on careers.
- The arts as major employers and industries in the Commonwealth and recognizing the important contributions by workers in the creative economy.
- Sustainable green jobs and 21st-century green technologies, the creation of good-paying, union jobs in the transition to a green economy, and recruitment and training efforts for this workforce in environmental justice communities.
- Programs that help support opportunities in business for women, people of color, indigenous people, people with disabilities, and young people.
- A tax code that sets different rates according to corporate ownership structure, creating preferences for businesses that generate community growth and participation.
- Strong oversight regulation of big banks and other financial institutions.
- Access to jobs that provide them with a living wage for all.
- Overcoming problems of economic stagnation, economic insecurity, and loss of confidence in prospects for a prosperous future.
- Strong community workforce agreements to promote workers' rights, fair hiring practices, and responsible energy use.
- Economic prosperity that is broadly shared and closing persisting inequalities between low and middle-income people and our wealthiest residents.
- A just, equitable, and comprehensive economic recovery from COVID-19 that prioritizes residents and communities most affected by the virus.
- Fair, equitable corporate and personal taxes and fees, which provide sustainable and predictable revenue streams and do not unduly burden low-income families.

- The Taxpayer Protection Act, which ensures that public dollars are wisely spent by prohibiting reckless privatization of public services.
- Increased local aid and other forms of assistance to help cities and towns meet their needs.
- Tax expenditures that are strategically targeted toward lasting investments and job creation.
- A progressive tax structure that ensures the wealthy and corporations pay their fair share, including amending the Massachusetts Constitution to create an additional tax of four percentage points on annual income above one million dollars, investing the revenue in transportation and public education.
- The Community Development Block Grants Program to support sustained funding for all communities.
- An independent Consumer Financial Protection Bureau to aggressively protect consumers from confusing and predatory financial services and practices.
- Investments that are regionally sensitive to the best available scientific information on climate change.
- A just transition that leads to a socially responsible, circular, regenerative, local-focused, ecologically sensitive economy.

EDUCATION

Massachusetts residents have the right to a high-quality, public education from birth through adulthood. Our educators deserve the same respect as any other professional and we recognize the role they play in shaping our children, the future of the Commonwealth, and the quality of our democracy.

MASSACHUSETTS DEMOCRATS WILL FIGHT FOR:

- Public education that is fully funded and free to all, including high-quality early education, full-day kindergarten, vocational technical education, and higher education, because education is a human right.
- Adequate resources, instruction, and support to ensure that all students can read proficiently by the third grade.
- Closing opportunity gaps that disproportionately affect students of color, indigenous students, low-income students, ELL, students with disabilities, and students in the Commonwealth's Gateway Cities.
- Increased Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics (STEAM) curriculum in our schools.
- An end to the state's punitive use of high-stakes testing.

- Access to relevant and quality professional development programs for public educators.
- Differentiated learning environments, extended learning time, and more learning opportunities beyond the traditional school day and year, including high-quality after school and summer enrichment programs.
- A well-rounded curriculum that includes civic education; a full and complete history of the United States; physical education; the arts and humanities; climate education, including a green, circular, and solidarity economy and ecosystems preservation and restoration; health, including reproductive health and justice; social-emotional learning; and life skills, including financial literacy and critical thinking.
- Preventing charter schools from taking away funding from traditional public schools and calling for increased oversight of these schools by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.
- The equal treatment of all students, regardless of ability, including full support for students with disabilities and adequate funding that supports their learning, teachers, mental and physical health, and emotional wellbeing.
- Strong higher education programs to encourage the recruitment and retention of a diverse pool of high-quality teachers in all school districts, in all disciplines, at all levels.
- Sustaining public vocational and higher education by increasing state funding commitments, college affordability, and need-based financial aid for residents.
- More pathways to college and career readiness in a high skills/high knowledge economy, including at our vocational-technical schools and community colleges.
- Guaranteeing that all Massachusetts residents can attend any public college or university debt-free, and funding loan forgiveness for past graduates.
- Investing in programs that support Adult Basic Education and services for English Language Learners.
- Refinancing existing student debt at a lower rate.
- Strong oversight and regulation of for-profit colleges, which saddle vulnerable students with enormous debt.
- Strong anti-bullying policies and a safe, supportive, and inclusive learning environment for all students and teachers.
- A comprehensive, anti-racist, and inclusive education in literature; history, including labor history and women's history; civics, government, and voting rights; and other social sciences so that students develop the analytical tools to understand our nation's complex past and participate actively in our democracy.
- High-quality, affordable childcare for all to support early development and improve school readiness and educational outcomes in historically underserved communities.
- A diverse and inclusive curriculum across all subjects for all learning abilities that celebrates difference and uplifts the achievements, contributions, and struggles of those historically underrepresented.
- Student access to trained counselors, mental health professionals, and nurses.

- Ensuring that Education Support Professionals and adjunct faculty are paid a living wage, enjoy safety in the worksite and job security, receive affordable healthcare and paid family medical leave and pension benefits, are recognized as educators, and have the ability to strengthen their careers.
- Recognition of the crucial role all educators, including adjuncts, teaching assistants in higher education, and Education Support Professionals, play in shaping the future of our Commonwealth, ensuring they receive comparable pay and benefits to other professionals with similar education and experience.
- Ensuring that every public school student has access to sexual health education that is comprehensive, medically accurate, LGBTQ+ inclusive, and includes a focus on consent and healthy relationships.

CLIMATE AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

A livable future is a human right. Given the increased speed and destruction witnessed in the last year, we must increase our sense of urgency and take action to prevent the worst effects of climate change. Safeguarding the health of our citizens, protecting natural ecosystems, and promoting green economic growth is imperative. To fully protect the environment, we support clean-energy technologies, conservation, and energy efficiency. We recognize the role we play in the climate crisis, which cannot be ignored and needs direct attention and action at all levels of government. We must prioritize those who are impacted and will be impacted the most by environmental and climate injustice.

MASSACHUSETTS DEMOCRATS WILL FIGHT FOR:

- The realization of bold and necessary emissions goals to achieve net-zero emissions by 2040 and net negative emissions by 2050.
- Necessary steps to protect our air, water, forests, farmland, and food and expanding our access to open space.
- The preservation of our biodiversity by protecting threatened and endangered plant and animal species, and conserving natural green spaces, bodies of water, and wetlands in the state, including making and preserving the room for the change such spaces may have to go through in response to climate change.
- Environmental justice for low-income residents and communities of color.
- Clean, reliable, and renewable energy, and investing in the development of these technologies.
- Increased support for recycling and composting in all communities and increased access to recycling and safe disposal facilities for hazardous materials.

- Local, sustainable, and regenerative agriculture to help grow rural communities and protect open spaces and the environment.
- Divesting public pensions, trusts, and other financial instruments from producers of non-renewable energy sources in favor of green and clean renewable energy producers.
- Preparing for the anticipated impacts of climate change and communicating with the public about the realities of those impacts.
- Safe, reliable, accessible, and equitable transportation solutions that reduce greenhouse gases and increase reliance on electric and non-emitting vehicles, enhanced biking infrastructure, and a safe, reliable, and sustainable public transit system.
- Reducing fossil fuel consumption, divesting taxpayer funds from programs and policies that subsidize fossil fuel production by eliminating all tax breaks, financial assistance, royalty relief, direct federal research and development and other loopholes that benefit the fossil fuel industry and opposing efforts to force ratepayers to fund the construction of new gas pipelines.
- A fair and effective economy-wide price on carbon pollution, including the strengthening of the existing cap and trade system in the electricity sector.
- An investment in wind, solar, and other clean renewable energy sources to replace fossil fuels and will oppose any attempt to consider Biomass a renewable energy source.
- The acceleration of weatherization and other programs to help individuals and businesses reduce the net amount of carbon entering the atmosphere.
- “Energy Democracy” policies that support working families and marginalized communities to build wealth by owning and controlling clean energy infrastructure.
- Doubling our commitment to clean renewable energy by increasing the Massachusetts renewable portfolio standard to 100 percent by 2030.
- Access to clean air, water, and land, and safety from fire, flood, storm, and drought are human rights, and we must take prompt and aggressive action to curb the worst effects of climate change.
- Clean energy jobs that are good-paying, union jobs with recruitment and training efforts targeted at communities facing the worst effects of climate change, including low-income communities and communities of color.
- Commercial buildings, residential housing stock, and government buildings that meet energy efficiency and emissions standards to achieve net-zero emissions by 2040.
- An investment in protecting and preserving natural spaces.
- An end to commercial logging on public lands.
- Affirming our commitment to climate justice by refusing contributions from the fossil fuel industry. For purposes of this platform, the fossil fuel industry includes oil, gas, coal, pipeline companies, plus any other energy provider that actively advocates for new fossil fuel infrastructure within Massachusetts.
- The protection and expansion of urban tree canopies, especially in areas currently lacking adequate tree canopy.

RACIAL JUSTICE, EQUAL RIGHTS, AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL

We support full equality—regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, religion, age, ability, or national origin—and recognize that discrimination in all its forms is a pervasive problem in our society. We seek to eliminate discrimination to ensure equal opportunity and are committed to fighting for equal justice for all. We believe in dismantling historic inequities with bold measures to promote justice in the workplace, in healthcare, in education, under the law, and in every aspect of life.

MASSACHUSETTS DEMOCRATS WILL FIGHT FOR:

- Equal opportunities for employment, education, healthcare, and housing regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, age, ability, religion, or socioeconomic status.
- The right to choose, ensuring comprehensive reproductive care across the lifespan, and universal access to emergency contraception.
- Programs that increase economic security for women, communities of color, indigenous communities, and people with disabilities.
- Gender and racial balance on corporate boards, non-profit boards, and executive and judicial branches of government.
- Mentoring and training programs to recruit and support Democratic female candidates Democratic candidates of color, and LGBTQ+ Democratic candidates.
- Refusing to let being a woman be a pre-existing condition by providing full access to comprehensive healthcare, including reproductive healthcare and women's cancer prevention, screening, and treatment.
- Programs that increase Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math (STEAM) education and employment targeted towards women and communities of color.
- Services and training to increase business training and opportunities for women, people of color, indigenous people, and people with disabilities.
- Access to gender-affirming healthcare through MassHealth and private insurance coverage.
- An end to racial and religious profiling.
- Recognition of the role our government plays in protecting individual civil rights and civil liberties.
- Vigilant support of marriage equality.
- The protection and promotion of equal rights for all LGBTQ+ people, especially transgender women of color and LGBTQ+ youth, and advocating for greater protections in the workplace, education, housing, healthcare, and criminal justice.

- The protection of the rights of LGBTQ+ youth athletes, particularly transgender and nonbinary athletes, to afford them the full rights, access, and privileges their cisgender counterparts have in youth athletics.
- Ensuring that all transgender and nonbinary people can obtain state identification that accurately reflects their gender identity.
- The inclusion of people with disabilities on all matters pertaining to their welfare, including housing, employment, healthcare, and civil liberties.
- The eradication of white supremacy and ending ethnically, racially, and religiously motivated and gender-based violence.
- A clear, explicit, and unambiguous condemnation of antisemitism in whatever form and from whatever source.
- The protection and affirmation of the rights of transgender people and ensuring their safety, particularly that of trans youth.
- The elimination of indigenous mascots, and the removal of the picture of the Native American with a sword over his head from the state flag.
- Community-based services that allow people with disabilities to live fully and completely in their communities.
- The end of the use of the graduated electronic decelerator on people with disabilities.

ETHICS AND TRANSPARENCY

Public officials must be held to the highest standards of integrity and accountability. A good government is open and inclusive. The future of our democracy hinges on preserving the public's trust in government and our elected officials.

MASSACHUSETTS DEMOCRATS WILL FIGHT FOR:

- Opportunities for citizens to participate in the legislative process by keeping public hearings and lobby days accessible, continuing to stream them online, maintaining an online testimony option, and scheduling them far enough in advance that working people can testify on legislation that would directly affect their lives.
- Accessible technologies that allow citizens to directly interface with government and public services.
- Public access to all open job positions and hires in the public sector.
- Public financing of partisan elections to reduce the influence corporate special interests have on candidates and elected officials, and to increase the opportunity for every citizen to run for public office.

- Getting dark money out of elections by overturning the Citizens United ruling by adopting the multiple path strategy thoroughly studied and unanimously recommended by the August, 2020 Final Report of the Massachusetts Citizens Commission.
- Requiring disclosure of tax returns for presidential candidates to appear on the ballot in Massachusetts.
- A legislative process that provides fair opportunities for citizen engagement and ensures the public has convenient and financially reasonable access to all public documents and data at the executive, legislative, judicial, and local levels of government, including all votes cast by those who represent them.
- Systematic investments in rigorous research, including evaluations of new and existing government policies and programs to ensure that policies have their intended impact for their intended population.
- A legislative culture that empowers every member of the House of Representatives and the State Senate to have an equal voice in how decisions are made and provides staff with the compensation and support they deserve.
- The selection of committee members and committee leadership in the Massachusetts Legislature through democratic mechanisms.
- Stricter compliance with the Massachusetts Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) by state and local government entities.
- Subjecting the legislative branch to the Massachusetts Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), with appropriate exemptions.
- Ensuring legislators and the public have adequate time, ideally 72 but at least 48 hours, to review a substantive piece of legislation before a vote on the floor.
- All Committee votes in the Legislature to be made public by providing a list of those legislators voting yes and those legislators voting no.

HEALTHCARE AND HUMAN SERVICES

Every person has a right to high-quality healthcare, including mental health services, addiction recovery treatment, and good food and nutrition. We support policies that make healthcare more affordable and accessible for everyone, eliminating historic health disparities and ensuring that all people can get prompt and comprehensive care.

MASSACHUSETTS DEMOCRATS WILL FIGHT FOR:

- The elimination of racial, ethnic, regional, and sex-based health disparities.
- High-quality, accessible healthcare for all through a single-payer government-sponsored program, like Medicare, because healthcare is a human right. Towards achieving that goal, expanding Medicare by lowering the eligibility age, enabling 23 million additional

people to access the program; improving Medicare benefits to cover dental, vision, and hearing; and lowering the price of prescription drugs by empowering Medicare to negotiate drug prices for all Americans, saving more than \$450 billion over the next decade.

- The right to choose, ensuring access to comprehensive reproductive care across the reproductive lifespan, and universal access to emergency contraception.
- Patient safety in Massachusetts hospitals by addressing unnecessary readmission rates and setting a safe limit to the number of patients assigned to a registered nurse at one time without diminishing the staffing of the other members of the healthcare workforce.
- Services to promote individual choice and civil rights for people with disabilities.
- Investments in mental health, including community-based services and quality options at educational centers and state colleges and universities.
- Investments in proven addiction recovery services and prevention services to combat the state's deadly opioid crisis and offering immediate treatment to all who need it.
- Fully-funded substance use disorder prevention and recovery programs that treat the opioid epidemic like the public health crisis it is and not a moral failing.
- Using the revenue generated by legalized marijuana to help fund proven opioid prevention and recovery services.
- Support for medical research to advance preventative medicine and address chronic and debilitating diseases.
- Increased funding for veterans' health services.
- Access to wholesome, locally sourced (when available), properly labeled food, as good nutrition is an essential element of good health and as such, should be available to all in rural, urban, and suburban communities.
- Programs that help affirm the rights of all seniors to live with dignity in their own homes and communities.
- Protecting Medicaid to ensure all residents have access to healthcare, regardless of employment or income.
- Increased support for the training of primary care physicians.
- Healthcare information and public health guidance in multiple languages, as well as Braille and other accessible methods of communication for people with visual or auditory disabilities.
- Improving staffing and budgetary support for veterans' homes, including accountability measures to ensure leadership is qualified and capable.
- Strong, trusted, and fully funded local boards of health and regional collaboratives prepared to act during a public health crisis.
- Treating climate change and systemic racism as public health crises.
- Programs that protect or affirm the rights of LGBTQ+ people, including gender-affirming care, access to HIV/AIDS PrEP, and mental health services with a particular emphasis on suicide prevention.

- Securing broad and compassionate options for the end of life.

HOUSING

Housing is a fundamental human right and all members of a society have a right to a decent home and suitable living environment at a reasonable cost. With a housing crisis in many parts of the state, we must address the need for more low and moderate-income housing and housing that is affordable and accessible. We believe in policies that support all residents, protect tenants, landlords, and homeowners, and help those who are unhoused and those who cannot afford to rent or buy suitable housing.

MASSACHUSETTS DEMOCRATS WILL FIGHT FOR:

- Upgrading the existing rental housing supply and efforts at all levels of government to encourage the production of new affordable rental units.
- Remaining a right to shelter state, which guarantees emergency shelter for everyone in need, and increased funding for homeless assistance programs.
- Policies and projects focused on high-density, transit-oriented development.
- Increased affordable housing stock through increasing our investments in housing that is affordable in each community, removing zoning restrictions that prevent the creation of affordable units using state-approved union apprenticeship programs, and requiring the communities that adopt the Community Preservation Act to use the funding required for affordable housing.
- The creation of a comprehensive, statewide strategic plan for housing that is affordable and accessible.
- Funding for additional rental assistance and low-income housing opportunities statewide, especially those for seniors, people with disabilities, people on fixed incomes, and individuals returning to their communities after incarceration.
- The protection of homeowners and tenants, and prospective homeowners and tenants, against bias, discrimination, and unfair practices.
- Investment in public and private sector partnerships to support workforce housing ownership programs.
- Programs aimed at fighting the foreclosure crisis in all regions of the Commonwealth.
- Education and support, including tax-free First Time Homebuyer Saving Accounts, for first-time homebuyers, especially people of color, low-income people, and rural buyers.
- Ending the statewide ban on rent control and giving municipalities the ability to pass their own laws to stabilize rents, protect the rights of tenants, provide tenants the opportunity to purchase their building when it is being sold, and raise sustainable funds to promote housing that is affordable and encourage homeownership.
- Sealing eviction records for tenants who were evicted through no fault of their own, creating a process for the sealing of all other such records, and guaranteeing legal representation for low-income tenants in eviction proceedings.

- Housing in low climate-risk areas with convenient and affordable public transportation options to current centers of economic activity.
- Climate-sensitive housing that does not adversely affect low-income families due to increasing utility costs or flood insurance.
- Subsidies or provisions for energy efficiency upgrades for low-income households, affordable housing units, and public housing units.

IMMIGRATION

Massachusetts must welcome all immigrants and refugees, who are integral parts of our community, social fabric, and economy.

MASSACHUSETTS DEMOCRATS WILL FIGHT FOR:

- Becoming a sanctuary state, where all immigrants and refugees feel welcome and safe in all communities of the Commonwealth.
- The elimination of policies that make local and state officials responsible for the enforcement of national immigration laws.
- A pathway to citizenship for all documented and undocumented immigrants that is fair and timely.
- Access to linguistic and cultural services and fair policies for immigrants and refugees.
- Testing and providing driver's licenses to all of-age residents regardless of immigration status.
- The enforcement of rules that prevent employers from exploiting immigrants.
- The DREAM Act and extending the same equal access to higher education to all residents.
- Visa programs that welcome immigrants with needed skills and enable immigrants who come here for their education to stay after graduation.
- Allowing and supporting the resettlement of refugees within Massachusetts borders.
- Post-settlement support services for refugees to promote self-sufficiency and integration into Massachusetts communities.
- Recognition that migration issues are likely to be exacerbated by climate change and taking early measures to keep our values intact while accommodating those who are fleeing unlivable conditions created by climate change, including those migrating within the US.
- An end to for-profit detention centers.

LABOR AND WORKFORCE

All workers—regardless of gender, ethnicity, age, race, religion, income, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, immigration, or refugee status—have the right to a quality, family-sustaining job that provides a living wage. To fully support our working families and help rebuild the middle-class, we must promote economic equality by encouraging collective bargaining, increased unionization, and shared and employee ownership.

MASSACHUSETTS DEMOCRATS WILL FIGHT FOR:

- Stopping efforts by app-based employers to misclassify gig economy workers as independent contractors, denying them workplace rights by justifying sub-minimum wage, unbenefitted jobs to many already marginalized workers, which would have a devastating impact on the future of work in our state.
- Strong enforcement of laws guaranteeing all workers the right to organize, bargain collectively, and strike.
- A decent living wage for all workers and a \$15 minimum wage that is increased and indexed for inflation.
- The elimination of all subminimum wages, whether for youth, people with disabilities, tipped workers, or any other group.
- The state's Prevailing Wage Law and Responsible Employer Ordinances.
- Strong laws to combat wage theft and protect mainly workers of color and workers with disabilities from more than \$1 billion in stolen wages each year.
- Protecting the use of Project Labor Agreements to ensure workers on taxpayer-funded projects receive a decent wage, healthcare, and retirement benefits.
- Paid family and medical leave insurance that allows all employees to take job-protected paid leave to recover from a serious illness or injury, to care for a seriously ill or injured family member, or to care for a new child, and prohibits employer retaliation against workers who take time off under these conditions.
- Protecting and expanding critical safety nets like unemployment insurance and workers' compensation, which ensure that no one suffers catastrophic hardships when events out of their control make it impossible for them to earn enough to support themselves and their families.
- A healthy and secure workplace for all workers through the strengthening, enforcement, and creation of Occupational Health and Safety Administration protections and other current and proposed laws and regulations.
- Anti-discrimination laws to make sure that employers do not take advantage of workers, employees receive fair compensation for their work, corporations obey the law, and employees can be their most productive in a safe work environment free from harassment.

- Fair scheduling for all workers, including the right to 14 days advance notice of hours, the right to request specific hours without retaliation from the employer, and the right to rest for 11 hours between shifts.
- Strengthening and enforcing laws prohibiting outsourcing Massachusetts jobs to states, countries, and for-profit companies with lower labor standards, and that ban the use of public funds to pay for the services of union avoidance consultants.
- Increased assistance for job training, workforce development, and job creation programs.
- A just transition to a green economy that trains workers in the gas and oil industries to begin new careers in clean energy or provides workers with the ability to find new career paths.

PUBLIC SAFETY AND CRIMINAL LEGAL REFORM

We need evidence-based solutions that promote public safety and reduce crime to help build strong, safe foundations for our communities and protect the civil rights of our residents. We encourage investment in strategies that best support the efforts of law enforcement while also supporting victims, and incarceration diversion and reentry programs.

MASSACHUSETTS DEMOCRATS WILL FIGHT FOR:

- Comprehensive criminal justice reform that includes the removal of mandatory minimum sentences for all crimes, giving the judge discretion with the sentencing in all cases.
- Gun violence prevention through universal background checks and a ban on assault weapons, high-capacity magazines, ghost guns, and 3D-printed guns.
- Access to mental health, addiction treatment, and rehabilitation services to people who are involved with the courts or are incarcerated.
- Programs that support community-based policing.
- Strengthening victims' rights and victims' advocacy services.
- Better resources to support law enforcement, including corrections officers, and to support firefighters, and additional first responders.
- Proven opioid treatment and recovery programs to limit the number of those struggling with addiction from entering the prison system.
- Strong state laws and enforcement against hate crimes, child abuse, domestic violence, elder abuse, sexual abuse, and abuse against those with disabilities.
- Strong intervention and child abuse prevention programs and services for youth and at-risk individuals.
- Expanding and properly investing in community-based correctional services, like targeted reentry programs focused on ending the cycle of criminal behavior and lowering the rate of re-incarceration.

- Investments in high school dropout prevention programs to work towards the elimination of the school to prison pipeline and the creation of a cradle to career pipeline.
- Adequate resources for our state court systems and fair pay for public defenders.
- The elimination of cash bail, which disproportionately impacts those who cannot afford bail.
- An end to the militarization of police.
- A ban on the use of facial recognition and biometric surveillance by law enforcement, which undermines the right to privacy and has proven both racially discriminatory and inaccurate.
- A ban on tear gas, rubber bullets, attack dogs, and other forms of crowd control that escalate a situation and put protesters' health and lives at risk.
- Funding and expanding programs to combat human trafficking and assist victims.
- Investments in correctional education programs.
- Accountability and clear consequences for use of excessive force and unnecessary brutality by enforcement officers and others, especially against targeted ethnic groups.
- The creation of new revenue streams to fund long-term health and safety strategies such as education, local restorative justice services, and employment programs for those incarcerated
- Divesting state funds from any holdings in private prisons.
- An end to for-profit prisons.
- Education of law enforcement officers in implicit bias and de-escalation training as well as clear consequences for violating these principles.
- A requirement that law enforcement officers have a minimum bachelor's degree with required coursework in sociology and psychology, bias and anti-racist thought, a professional license issued by a state agency, and employer paid liability insurance.
- The elimination of qualified immunity protections for police officers to ensure that victims of police brutality have their fair day in court.
- Increased reliance on mental health professionals, social workers, and other unarmed responders during emergencies.
- A pause on new jail and prison construction to allow for the opportunity to consider community practices and decrease the number of people incarcerated.
- Access to high-quality mental health services for incarcerated individuals.
- Ensuring that incarceration does not negatively impact an individual's right to vote, protecting and expanding the voting rights of those already incarcerated, and ensuring that incarcerated people have access to polling locations.
- Resources for law enforcement officers on de-escalating and resolving conflicts involving people with disabilities and people experiencing mental health emergencies.
- Remaining a death penalty free state.
- Measures to protect those made more unsafe by climate change.

- Free communication including phone calls, video visits, and email and tablets for incarcerated people.
- Abolish Civil Asset Forfeiture which allows the confiscation of all assets from individuals whether or not charged or convicted of any crime with no required accounting by law enforcement and no due process protections to those whose assets are appropriated.

REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH, FREEDOM, AND JUSTICE

Reproductive rights, access, and freedom are under attack across the country. Anti-choice state legislators are working to dismantle abortion rights and make it impossible for BIPOC and low-income individuals to access the reproductive and sexual health care they need and are legally entitled to. We are committed to advancing reproductive freedom, improving access and outcomes for people who give birth, children, and families, and combatting the racial disparities that put reproductive care, including abortion, out of reach for so many.

MASSACHUSETTS DEMOCRATS WILL FIGHT FOR:

- The right to choose when and whether or not to bear children, ensuring comprehensive reproductive care across the lifespan, and universal access to routine contraception, emergency contraception, and abortion.
- An end to racial disparities in reproductive health and pregnancy care so that Black birthing people no longer die at twice the rate of white birthing people by ensuring patients have access to doulas, midwives, and/or obstetricians as well as treatment for postpartum depression and anxiety.
- Access to full-spectrum pregnancy care for all--including abortion, miscarriage management, prenatal care, childbirth, postpartum care, and lactation consulting--that is fully covered by all health insurance without cost-sharing or copays for patients.
- No-cost access to menstrual products in prisons, homeless shelters, and public schools.
- Medication abortion available at all public college and university health centers to prevent students from traveling long distances to obtain an early abortion.
- Sexual health education taught in all public schools that is comprehensive, medically accurate, LGBTQ+ inclusive, includes consent, healthy relationships, and effective use of contraceptives.

TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

The Commonwealth's transportation and infrastructure systems are a public responsibility and common good. Our system of roads, bridges, ports, airports, rail, transit, bike paths, and walkways needs drastic upgrades to 21st-century standards. Our economy and society are dependent on transportation and infrastructure systems that are well-maintained, connect workers with jobs, and knit together communities throughout the Commonwealth. We believe that transportation investments should promote the creation of housing and employment opportunities while reducing greenhouse gas emissions and preserving our natural and cultural landscapes.

MASSACHUSETTS DEMOCRATS WILL FIGHT FOR:

- A 21st-century multi-modal transportation system our residents, communities, and businesses deserve, including affordable public transportation options, bicycles and other person-powered vehicles, and electric vehicles, so that by 2060, 90 percent of the Massachusetts population can travel to their destinations without using personal fossil-fueled vehicles.
- A transportation system and other infrastructure systems that are environmentally conscious, lower our dependence on foreign and environmentally destructive sources of energy, seek to minimize climate change, and are protected against the effects of climate change and rising sea levels.
- Equitably distributing the infrastructure and costs of building, operating, and maintaining our transportation system.
- Investments in roads and bridges to address decades of neglect.
- Fully funding the MBTA and Regional Transit Authorities across the Commonwealth to ensure that all have access to safe and dependable public transit.
- Programs like the RIDE, which our seniors and those with disabilities rely on.
- Investments in transportation infrastructure in the Commonwealth, including the construction of the North/South Station Rail Link to unify the northside and southside commuter rail systems, creating a regional commuter rail system stitching together our Gateway Cities, and the extension and completion of the Northeast Corridor, building high-speed rail along the East/West route between Springfield, Worcester and Boston, and construction of the South Coast Rail Project.
- Fare-free public transit for all because mobility is a human right.
- A transition to an electrified fleet of buses, trolleys, and trains, including high-speed rail.
- Ensuring state buildings and public transportation comply with the standards set in the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- High-speed broadband access for all citizens including historically underserved rural communities.

VETERANS

We are a great Commonwealth and nation because of the sacrifices made by the men and women of our military and their families. We stand in lock-step with our veterans and will continue to be a strong voice for them and their families, especially those Gold Star Families who have made the ultimate sacrifice for this great nation. We remain committed to supporting our military while in service and ensuring that all returning veterans receive the world-class services they deserve.

MASSACHUSETTS DEMOCRATS WILL FIGHT FOR:

- Addressing critical issues facing our veterans, including Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder; Agent Orange, Burn Pits, and other health issues related to exposure to toxins; mental health and suicide risk; Military Sexual Trauma; employment discrimination; and delays in receiving services and benefits.
- The elimination of homelessness among the state's veteran population through "Housing First" and harm-reduction models and investing in programs to create housing that is affordable and accessible for veterans in all areas of the Commonwealth.
- Access to improved healthcare services, including mental health services, for veterans and their families.
- Supporting our women veterans by improving gender-sensitive healthcare, employment opportunities, and access to services and resources.
- Ensuring that our Vietnam Veterans are honored for their service and given full support and access to benefits they earned and deserve.
- Better coordination between the Massachusetts Department of Veterans Services, municipal veterans service officers, and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.
- A more comprehensive program to support economic development and access to capital and technology for veteran-owned small businesses.
- Mentoring and training programs to recruit and support Democratic veteran candidates for political office.
- Ensuring the state's higher education system is fully supportive and welcoming to student veterans and their families on all campuses and in all classrooms.
- Supporting the Veterans' Preference Status within the Civil Service and State Governmental Hiring Systems.
- Programs to assist veterans with post-deployment integration.
- A veterans treatment court through the Massachusetts court system.
- Availability of mediation systems to veterans and their families to relieve the burdens of expensive attorney fees.

- Governance and oversight reforms to prevent the spread of an infectious disease of the magnitude of the COVID-19 outbreak at two state veterans' homes.
- State resources to help veterans secure employment and housing, prevent homelessness, and apply for state and federal benefits.
- A reduction of employment barriers and enhance career opportunities for military spouses with expanded interstate occupational license recognition options.

VOTING AND DEMOCRACY

Voting is a right. Voter registration should be made as easy as possible, polls should be safe and accessible, the process should be quick and efficient, and no eligible voter should be denied access to the polls.

MASSACHUSETTS DEMOCRATS WILL FIGHT FOR:

- Efforts to increase voter participation among underrepresented communities, including rural communities and communities of color.
- Statewide outreach to register, educate, mobilize, and turnout voters of all ages.
- Same-day voter registration and automatic voter registration.
- Early voting in all elections, including in-person early voting and no-excuse voting by mail with ample and accessible drop boxes for ballots.
- Methods to vote privately, independently, and with verification for people with disabilities.
- An end to gerrymandering. Transferring authority over redistricting to an independent, fully transparent commission to increase fairness in the redistricting process and the assignment of poll locations in communities.
- Ensuring deployed service members and all overseas Massachusetts voters will receive and be capable of casting a valid and effective ballot in any election.
- Removing barriers for limited English-speaking voters.
- Refusing to accept efforts to impose barriers to voting, such as voter ID laws that especially disenfranchise communities of color, low-income, disabled, elderly, and new voters.
- Voting systems that guarantee every ballot is counted and secure and provide an auditable paper trail.
- Mentoring and training programs to recruit and support Democratic candidates of color.
- Declaring Election Day a state holiday to encourage maximum participation.
- Ranked choice voting, which better reflects the aggregate will of the voting population and ensures that no candidate is elected without a true majority of support from their constituents, encourages a field of candidates diverse in background and opinion, and

allows voters to choose the candidate who most closely aligns with their beliefs rather than the candidate with the greatest chance of winning.

- Ensuring that incarceration does not negatively impact an individual's right to vote, protecting and expanding the voting rights of those already incarcerated, and ensuring that incarcerated people have access to polling locations.
- Working towards full voter turnout in all elections by investing in timely outreach, education, and mobilization of voters.
- Ensuring resiliency of the election process itself by increasing its immunity to unexpected weather conditions that can reduce turnout and the participation of the most vulnerable.
- Maximizing opportunities for residents 16 years of age and older to participate in governance, no matter their immigration status or voter registration status.
- Allowing all citizens 16 years of age and older to vote in local elections.
- Allowing all immigrants of legal status to vote in local elections.
- Ensuring that Democratic proposals get passed in the U.S. Senate by eliminating the filibuster.

CONCLUSION

Consistent with the history of the Massachusetts Democratic Party, this Party Platform represents our continuing commitment to progress, to not being satisfied with the status quo, and to leaning forward. We are aiming high to take on the big challenges we face, make a meaningful difference in people's lives and stand up for every single person. We recognize that the policies and proposals reflected in this platform are ambitious. We know that achieving the goals of this platform will not be easy. But, we also know that we must, and we do not and will not accept the status quo just because it is easier. We adopt this platform with a sense of urgency and a commitment to do all we can as Democrats to make it a reality for a stronger, more inclusive, more equitable, and more progressive Commonwealth.

We also recognize that our Party is composed of a broad range of people, from a wide variety of backgrounds, and with many different interests and perspectives. We know that there are Democrats who may not agree with every single proposal made in this platform. But, we also know that we all share the values espoused and reflected in this platform, and we recognize that this is the one time when we, as Democrats, come together to speak with one voice in furtherance of a common agenda. Therefore, we all commit to giving life to this agenda by using this platform to measure our progress toward achieving our goals as a Party and to hold Democratic elected officials, candidates, and ourselves accountable for doing all we can to support its implementation.

Let us join our President, Vice President, public officials, and all others of goodwill to move the United States forward. We must correct the failures of the past, we must confront the challenges of the present, and we must intensify our commitment to "liberty and justice for all" far into the future. If we do, we will come closer than ever to the America we want, we need, and we deserve.