



Dear Democrats,

On Saturday, June 3, 2017, thousands of delegates convened in Worcester to debate, vote, and collectively decide the key issues that represent who we are as a Party. The swell of unprecedented activism we've seen in the wake of the Trump Administration helped turn this convention into our largest Platform convention yet.

Leading up to the Convention, the Party hosted 11 public hearings and solicited testimony from hundreds of local Democrats, activists, and officials to help our Platform Committee draft an updated Party Platform, which serves as a statement of our values and ideas as Massachusetts Democrats.

Members of the Platform Committee, spearheaded by Former Lieutenant Governor Evelyn Murphy, former Bernie Sanders State Director Paul Feeney, and Suffolk County Sheriff Steve Tompkins, dedicated a great deal of time and effort to make this a Platform that truly reflects the principles and concerns of Democrats from every corner of the Commonwealth.

After a robust debate and the adoption of various amendments, delegates voted to approve the 2017 Massachusetts Democratic Party Platform, our Party's most progressive Platform to date.

This Platform helps mold the vision we have for the Commonwealth. The Party remains committed to channeling the energy we are seeing in cities and towns throughout Massachusetts to help move the Party and our state forward.

Through this forward-thinking, progressive agenda, we will demonstrate that Massachusetts is a leading alternative to President Trump's vision of America.

As Chair of the Massachusetts Democratic Party, I look forward to working with each and every one of you to actively organize and mobilize, fight for our democracy, for the common good, and for all residents of the Commonwealth.

Sincerely,

Gus Bickford  
Chair, Massachusetts Democratic Party

## MANY VOICES | SHARED VALUES

Massachusetts Democrats believe that every person has the right to live a full, meaningful life with equal access to opportunity, security, and inclusion. We believe that our government exists to empower people by providing high-quality public education, ensuring universal access to healthcare, protecting our environment, reducing income inequality, and guaranteeing equal rights and opportunity for all.

We believe that we are all stronger when our economy works for everyone, and that the extreme level of income and wealth inequality in Massachusetts and the nation makes our communities poorer, poisons our politics, and endangers our future. We believe that when we empower people to organize their local communities, we can change our Commonwealth and our country for the better.

As a united Democratic Party, we will fight for our democracy, for the common good, and for the working families of the Commonwealth. We will grow and strengthen our Party through grassroots organizing and elect Democratic candidates up and down the ticket with strong progressive values. We will fight the regressive Republican agenda at home and in Washington, and will pursue a forward-thinking, progressive agenda of our own to demonstrate that Massachusetts is a leading alternative to President Trump's vision of America.

A healthy democracy is a precursor to achieving all elements of the Massachusetts Democratic Platform, yet the Executive Branch of our national government is exhibiting authoritarian tendencies. Massachusetts Democrats will resist these tendencies and support and protect our democratic institutions to prevent the erosion of our democracy.

This platform is our statement of principles and positions. As Democratic activists, party leaders, and elected officials, we commit ourselves to achieving the goals we set forth in this party platform.

## WE DEMAND

- That all people be treated equal, no matter their race, religion, national origin, gender identity, or sexual orientation;
- A more equitable economy with broadly shared economic growth;
- Free, high-quality public education from preschool through college, including vocational education and training programs, for every person, no matter their zip code, ethnicity, or socio-economic background;
- Equal treatment for women and people of color in the workplace and an increased effort to recruit Democratic women, people of color, and millennial candidates to seek elected office;
- Good paying jobs, improved transportation systems and infrastructure, and a world-class public education through investments that grow our economy from the bottom up;

- Aggressive action to prevent and mitigate the effects of climate change and protect our environment;
- Transparent, ethical government that builds confidence in good government;
- A single-payer healthcare system that delivers healthcare as a basic human right, and fully-funded addiction prevention and recovery programs to combat the deadly opioid crisis;
- Affordable, high-quality housing for all;
- Fair and sensible immigration policies that prevent the exploitation of immigrants and refugees and ensure we remain a welcoming state;
- Equal justice under the law for all, and an end to discrimination;
- Living wages, benefits that support working families, and the right to organize and collectively bargain for all workers;
- Safe and crime-free communities along with comprehensive criminal justice reform to improve public safety and protect civil rights;
- A progressive tax system that asks the wealthy to pay their fair share;
- Essential investments in our roads, bridges, ports, and public transportation;
- Continued support for our veterans, who have made sacrifices on our behalf;
- Expansion and enforcement of the right to vote, especially among underrepresented communities including rural communities and communities of color;
- Stand with our immigrant, refugee, and minority communities;
- Protect journalists from intimidation and resist efforts by the administration to marginalize mainstream media;
- Protect judges from intimidation and resist efforts by the administration to marginalize the judiciary; and
- Work with the Democratic Party at the national level to resist the current administration's efforts to erode the fundamental institutions of our democracy.

## ECONOMIC JUSTICE AND GROWTH

*“I speak not for myself but those without a voice...those who have fought for their rights...their right to live in peace, their right to be treated with dignity, their right to equality of opportunity, their right to be educated.”*

*-Malala Yousafzai*

Growing our economy through job creation and economic opportunities is one of the most pressing issues facing the middle class and working families in our state. We support strengthening our economy through investments in infrastructure, transportation, and public education; creating a respectful business climate; and promoting public-private partnerships for the betterment of communities in every region of the Commonwealth.

### **MASSACHUSETTS DEMOCRATS WILL FIGHT FOR:**

- Ensuring pay equity for all, regardless of gender or race.
- Strengthening our focus on innovation, including the clean energy sector and biotech sector.
- Investing 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 for all individuals interested in entering skilled trades, technical, and other hands-on careers.
- High-speed broadband access for all citizens including historically underserved rural communities.
- Investment in sustainable green jobs and 21<sup>st</sup> Century green technologies.
- Promoting the arts as a major employer and industry in the Commonwealth and recognizing the important contributions by workers in the creative economy.
- Creating jobs in a sustainable economy and environment.
- Programs that help support opportunities in business for women, people of color, and millennials.
- 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.
- Ensuring all have access to jobs that provide them with a living wage.
- Overcoming problems of economic stagnation, economic insecurity, and loss of confidence in prospects for a prosperous future.

## EDUCATION

*“Education is our only political safety. Outside of this ark all is deluge.”*

*-Horace Mann*

All Massachusetts residents have the right to high-quality public education from early childhood through adulthood. Our teachers 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:**

- Free public education is a human right and, therefore, public education from high-quality, universal preschool and full-day kindergarten through higher education and vocational training should be free to residents.
- Fixing the public education funding formula to fully fund high-quality public education for all students.
- Ensuring that all students are reading proficiently by the third grade.
- Closing opportunity gaps that disproportionately affect students of color, low income students, English language learners, students with disabilities, and students in the Commonwealth's Gateway Cities.
- Increased Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics (STEAM) curriculum in our schools.
- Ending the state's punitive use of high-stakes testing.
- Providing our public educators with access to relevant and quality professional development programs.
- 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.
- Providing students with a well-rounded curriculum that includes civic education, financial literacy education, physical education, the arts and humanities, and health and social emotional learning.
- 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.
- Full support for students with disabilities and adequate funding to support their learning, special education programs, and teachers.
- Supporting strong higher education programs to encourage recruitment and retention of a diverse pool of high-quality teachers.
- Sustaining public vocational and higher education by increasing state funding commitments, college affordability, and needs-based financial aid for residents.
- Increasing the number of pathways to college and career readiness in a high skills/high knowledge economy, including at our vocational-technical schools and community colleges.
- Providing in-state tuition for all resident students admitted to Massachusetts public colleges and universities and exploring debt-free models of higher education.
- 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 and degrees or credentials of dubious value.
- Strengthening anti-bullying policies and providing all students and teachers with a safe, supportive, and inclusive learning environment.

- Opposing any “income cap” or “means test” to qualify for free public education, which is a human right, and funding loan forgiveness for all Massachusetts residents and Massachusetts residents who were classified as out-of-state residents while attending college outside of Massachusetts.
- The creative and performing arts are integral to a well-rounded education and should be provided to students at all grade levels.

## **ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE CHANGE, AND RENEWABLE ENERGY**

*“This is a wonderful planet, and it is being completely destroyed by people who have too much money and power and no empathy.”*

*-Alice Walker*

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.

To affirm our commitment to climate justice, neither Democratic candidates nor the Massachusetts Democratic Party shall accept 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.

### **MASSACHUSETTS DEMOCRATS WILL FIGHT FOR:**

- Taking necessary steps to protect our air, water, natural resources, and expanding our access to open space.
- Promoting environmental justice for low income residents and communities of color.
- Providing clean, reliable, and renewable energy, and investing in the development of these technologies.
- Increasing recycling in all communities and increasing access to recycling and safe disposal facilities for hazardous materials.
- Achieving the goals of the Massachusetts Global Warming Solutions Act to reduce emissions by at least 25 percent by 2020, at least 45 percent by 2030, and at least 80 percent by 2050.
- Supporting local and sustainable 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 renewable energy producers.
- Preparing for the anticipated impacts of climate change and communicating with the public about the realities of those impacts.
- Promoting transportation solutions aimed at reducing greenhouse gases.

- Reducing fossil fuel consumption, divesting taxpayer funds from programs and policies that subsidize fossil fuel production, and opposing efforts to force ratepayers to fund the construction of new gas pipelines.
- Putting a fair and effective economy-wide price on carbon pollution, including strengthening the existing cap and trade system in the electricity sector.
- Investing in wind, solar, and other renewable energy sources to replace fossil fuels.
- Accelerating 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 renewable energy by increasing the Massachusetts renewable portfolio standard to at least 50 percent by 2030.

## **ETHICS AND TRANSPARENCY**

*“In the frank expression of conflicting opinions lies the greatest promise of wisdom in governmental action.”*

*-Louis D. Brandeis*

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:**

- Public hearings and other opportunities for citizens to influence the legislative process.
- Developing accessible technologies to 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 *Citizen’s United* ruling.
- Requiring disclosure of tax returns for Presidential candidates to appear on the ballot in Massachusetts.
- Ensuring the public has convenient and financially reasonable access to all public documents and data at the executive, legislative, judicial, and local levels of government.
- Investing systematically 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.
- The Legislature should be an institution that empowers every member of the House of Representatives and the State Senate to have an equal voice in how decisions are made.

- In both the House of Representatives and the State Senate, the selection of committee members and committee leadership should occur through democratic mechanisms.

## **GENDER AND RACIAL EQUALITY**

*“I try to teach through my opinions, through my speeches, how wrong it is to judge people on the basis of what they look like, color of their skin, whether they’re men or women.”*

*-Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg*

We support full equality – regardless of gender or race – and recognize that discrimination against women and communities of color is a pervasive problem in our society. We seek to eliminate all forms of gender and racial discrimination to ensure equal opportunity for all.

### **MASSACHUSETTS DEMOCRATS WILL FIGHT FOR:**

- Gender and racial pay equity.
- Protection of a woman’s right to choose.
- Work support programs to increase economic security for women and communities of color.
- Increased gender and racial balance on corporate boards, non-profit boards, and executive and judicial branches of government.
- Recruiting and supporting Democratic female candidates and Democratic candidates of color through mentoring and training programs.
- 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.
- Addressing domestic abuse and sexual assault with strong preventative measures, include age appropriate anti-violence education.
- Relationship education as an active component of sex education curriculum to promote healthy relationships.
- Reforming 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.
- Supporting education and workforce development programs for women and communities of color.
- 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 and communities of color.



## **HEALTHCARE AND HUMAN SERVICES**

*“...and this is the cause of my life, new hope that we will break the old gridlock and guarantee that every American – North, South, East, West, young, old – will have decent, quality healthcare as a fundamental right and not a privilege.”*

*-Senator Edward M. Kennedy*

Every person has a right to high-quality healthcare and services. We support policies that make healthcare more affordable and accessible for all.

### **MASSACHUSETTS DEMOCRATS WILL FIGHT FOR:**

- Eliminating racial, ethnic, regional, and sex-based health disparities.
- High-quality, accessible healthcare for all through a single-payer government sponsored program, like Medicare.
- Protecting women’s reproductive rights and a woman’s right to choose.
- Supporting 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.
- Providing services to promote individual choice and civil rights for people with disabilities.
- Investment in community-based mental health services.
- Investment 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.
- 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.
- Ensuring 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.
- Support programs that help affirm the rights of all seniors to live with dignity in their own homes and communities.
- Protecting Medicaid and MassHealth to ensure all residents have access of healthcare, regardless of employment or income.
- Increased support for the training of primary care physicians.

## HOUSING

*“We believe that housing is a power platform to spark great opportunities in people’s lives and help them achieve the American dream.”*

*-Julian Castro*

Everyone has a right to a decent home and suitable living environment and it is crucial we address the need for more low and moderate income and affordable housing throughout the state. We believe in policies which support all residents, especially the homeless and those who cannot afford to rent or buy suitable housing. Increased investment in public-private partnerships is a necessary step to combat the growing housing challenges and income inequality we face.

### **MASSACHUSETTS DEMOCRATS WILL FIGHT FOR:**

- Upgrading the existing rental housing supply and efforts at all levels of government to encourage the production of new rental units.
- Remaining a right to shelter state, which guarantees emergency shelter for everyone in need.
- Supporting policies and projects focused on transit-oriented development.
- Supporting policies that create more market-rate housing.
- Increasing our state’s affordable housing stock.
- Funding for additional rental assistance and low-income housing opportunities statewide, especially those for the disabled and senior populations.
- Efforts to protect landlords 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.
- Increased funding for homeless assistance programs.

## IMMIGRATION

*“We are a nation founded as a rebuke to tyranny. A nation of revolutionaries who refused sovereign reign from afar. Hear me – we’re a nation that says give us your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free. A nation built on our differences, guided by the belief that we’re all created equal.”*

*-Michelle Obama*

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.

- Eliminating 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.
- Increasing access to linguistic and cultural services and fair policies for immigrants and refugees.
- Testing and providing drivers licenses to all of-age residents regardless of immigration status.
- 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.
- Providing post-settlement support services for refugees to promote self-sufficiency and integration into Massachusetts communities.

## **JUSTICE, CIVIL RIGHTS, AND CIVIL LIBERTIES**

*“I refuse to accept the view that mankind is so tragically bound to the starless midnight of racism and war that the bright daybreak of peace and brotherhood can never become a reality.”*

*-Martin Luther King, Jr.*

We are committed to fighting for equal justice under the law for all. We have a zero tolerance policy when it comes to discrimination based on race, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, age, national origin, or disability in our communities. As Democrats, we are committed to protecting our rights to freedom of speech, religion, press, and due process under the law.

### **MASSACHUSETTS DEMOCRATS WILL FIGHT FOR:**

- Ending racial and religious profiling.
- Investing in equal opportunities for employment, education, healthcare, and housing for all.
- Recognizing the role our government plays in protecting individual civil rights and civil liberties.
- Continuing to vigilantly support marriage equality.
- Continuing broad-range support for LGBTQ+ rights, including protecting the transgender civil rights law and opposing all forms of so-called “conversion therapy.”
- Remaining a death penalty free state.

## **LABOR AND WORKFORCE**

*“At times you feel like you’re the only voice speaking out to improve the working conditions of people, whether it’s to be able to collectively bargain, to get adequate pay, to know that you can come home safe...”*

*-Hilda Solis*

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. In order 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:**

- 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 state’s Prevailing Wage Law and Responsible Employer Ordinances.
- Strong laws to combat wage theft and the misclassification of workers.
- 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.
- Promotion of 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.
- Fighting for 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 are able to be their most productive in a safe work environment free from harassment.
- 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.

## **PUBLIC SAFETY AND CRIME PREVENTION**

*“Resting a person’s ability to achieve success when they leave the prison walls promotes public safety, builds our economy, and most importantly is the right thing to do.”*

*-Sally Yates*

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 jail diversion and reentry programs.

### **MASSACHUSETTS DEMOCRATS WILL FIGHT FOR:**

- Comprehensive criminal justice reform that includes the removal of mandatory minimum sentences for non-violent crimes, giving the judge discretion with the sentencing in these cases.
- Preventing gun violence through universal background checks and a ban on assault weapons and high-capacity magazines.
- Increasing 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), firefighters, and additional first responders.
- Investing in 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.
- Expanding and investing in targeted re-entry programs focused ending the cycle of criminal behavior and lowering the rate of re-incarceration.
- Investing in high school dropout prevention programs to work towards eliminating the school to prison pipeline.
- Ensuring adequate resources for our state court systems and public defenders.
- Reforming the bail system, which disproportionately impacts those who cannot afford bail, to provide low-level offenders and people who are not a risk to flee or further harm society an opportunity to pay bail according to their income.
- Ending the militarization of police.
- Funding and expanding programs to combat human trafficking and assist victims.
- Investment in correctional education programs.
- Defending an independent Consumer Financial Protection Bureau to aggressively protect consumers from confusing and predatory financial services and practices.

- Accountability and clear consequences for use of excessive force and unnecessary brutality by enforcement officers and others, especially against targeted ethnic groups.
- A gradual reallocation of state and local funds from policing and incarceration to long-term safety strategies such as education, local restorative justice services, and employment programs.
- 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.

## REVENUE AND EXPENDITURES

*“When there is an income tax, the just man will pay more and the unjust less on the same amount of income.”*

*-Plato*

We believe fiscal responsibility and continued investments in our businesses, services, and communities help us grow and support the Commonwealth for years to come. We believe in progressive taxation and that taxes and fees should be fairly distributed and reasonably assessed.

### **MASSACHUSETTS DEMOCRATS WILL FIGHT FOR:**

- Fair, equitable corporate and personal taxes and fees, which do not unduly burden low income families.
- Sustainable and predictable state revenue streams.
- 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.
- Strategically targeting tax expenditures toward lasting investments and job creation.
- 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.
- Supporting the Community Development Block Grants Program to support sustained funding for all communities.

## TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

*“Everywhere I go, I see incredible examples of communities that have a vision for transportation and how it will impact the quality of life, mobility, economics, and opportunity.”*

*-Anthony Foxx*

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 need drastic

upgrades to 21<sup>st</sup> 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:**

- Developing and investing in the 21<sup>st</sup> 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.
- Building 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.
- Investing in roads and bridges to address decades of neglect.
- Investing in the state's Regional Transit Authorities.
- Supporting programs like the RIDE, which our seniors and those with disabilities rely on.
- Investment in transportation infrastructure that links communities to each other and to jobs across the Commonwealth, including: increasing the expansion of capacity and reach of the MBTA, including the Green Line Expansion; the construction of the North-South Rail Link to unify north-side and south-side commuter rail systems and to extend 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.

## **VETERANS**

*“President Obama has made it his mission that we welcome our troops home with care and concern and the respect they deserve. That is how an exceptional nation says thank you to its most exceptional men and women.”*

*-John F. Kerry*

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.
- Fighting to eliminate homelessness among the state’s veteran population through “Housing First” and harm-reduction models and investing in programs to create affordable housing options for veterans in all areas of the Commonwealth.
- Increasing access to improved healthcare 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 and Vietnam-Era Veterans are honored for their service and given full support and access to benefits they earned and deserve.
- Creating better coordination between the Massachusetts Department of Veterans Services, municipal veterans service officers, and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.
- Establishing a more comprehensive program to support economic development and access to capital and technology for veteran-owned small businesses.
- Recruiting and supporting Democratic veteran candidates for political office through mentoring and training programs.
- 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.
- Investing in programs to assist veterans with post-deployment integration.
- Establishing a veterans treatment court through the Massachusetts court system.
- Increasing availability to mediation systems to veterans and their families to relieve the burdens of expensive attorney fees.

## **VOTING AND DEMOCRACY**

*“The ignorance of one voter in a democracy impairs the security of all.”*

*-John F. Kennedy*

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 resident 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.



- Offering same day voter registration and automatic voter registration.
- Ensuring early voting in all elections.
- An end to gerrymandering. Transferring authority over redistricting to an independent, fully transparent commission that must follow strict Increasing 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 unnecessary requirements 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.
- Recruiting and supporting Democratic candidates of color through mentoring and training programs.
- 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.
- The abolition of Massachusetts superdelegates.
- Ensure that incarceration does not impact an individual's right to vote.