



**Chris Dempsey for State Auditor
Massachusetts AFL-CIO
Questionnaire Responses**

Submitted: May 12th, 2022

- 1. The right of workers to organize into unions to bargain collectively for wages, benefits, working conditions and a voice at work is a fundamental human right which built the middle class. But all too often employers violate these rights without consequences. We expect our elected leaders to stand up for the right of workers to organize into unions and to collectively bargain over their wages, benefits, working conditions and a voice at work. This right is what built the middle class, and is the only way to ensure fairness in the workplace. Along with the right to organize, elected officials must defend collective bargaining rights and stand with workers – both in the public and private sector – to resist any weakening of these rights.**

Please discuss your position on the right of workers to organize into unions, and the right of workers to collectively bargain with their employer. Please include efforts you have made to support workers seeking to organize a union, advocate for high-road, union-built and union-operated development, or during a strike or other collective action - to secure a fair contract from their employers:

I strongly support the rights of workers to organize and collectively bargain with employers. I support strong wages, benefits, advancement opportunities, and conditions for all workers, and know that unions helped make these conditions possible. I grew up in a union household and understand the importance and benefits that unions bring to workers and their families in building the middle class. As Auditor, I will use my audits to make sure that state government works better and that audits are not used as weapons to tear down government agencies or unionized workers. I will use the office to assist state agencies and work with union membership implementing innovative and productive ideas that assist workers around the Commonwealth.

- 2. Wages, benefits (including health care and pension/retirement benefits) and working conditions are included as right, proper and legally protected subjects of collective bargaining under M.G.L. Chapters 150A and 150E for both public and private sector employees. Yet over the last two decades public workers have seen these rights eroded. Please explain your position on these rights, and how you plan to change or protect them if elected.**

I am strongly in favor of protecting workers rights to proper wages, benefits, and working conditions under collective bargaining. As Auditor, I would protect these rights by auditing governmental agencies and boards to bring transparency to their decisions that impact workers and their benefits. I will bring accountability for workers and the protection of their rights by directing attention towards the agencies specifically responsible for writing labor regulations and investigating and inspecting labor violations, assisting workers in their fight for fair and just conditions and treatment.

- 3. More Massachusetts workers would have good paying jobs with strong benefits if our federal and state governments had not relied so heavily on budget cutting when the economy had still not recovered from the Great Recession. This issue has been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic and the disproportionate impact it has had on working people. Investments in infrastructure, public transit, education, and the energy sector with strong community standards attached would help state and local governments avoid layoffs of teachers and first responders, and create thousands of good jobs that cannot be sent overseas, while also laying the foundations for long-term economic growth. Rebuilding our manufacturing base by supporting American-made goods is also key.**

If elected, what will you do to create good jobs for Massachusetts workers? What will you do to stop the practice of outsourcing manufacturing and call center jobs to out of state or out of country locations?

The Auditor has the ability to review the books and records of vendors to state government to conduct its audits. As Auditor, I will use my office to ensure that workers inside of state government and in the private sector are treated fairly. Within the public sector, the Taxpayer Protection Act is an important tool for protecting against unnecessary privatization, and the State Auditor plays an essential, safeguarding role and defending taxpayers against initiatives that deliver profits to private companies, often at the expense of unionized workers. As Auditor, I will bring a keen eye to these decisions, with an understanding that the law intends and requires the Auditor to reject any proposal that does not clear a high bar on both cost and quality. I will take this responsibility seriously and commit to rejecting any proposal that does not meet this bar.

Improvements in our standards of living for all will come through high-quality infrastructure, life-long education and training opportunities, a level playing field created by firm but fair regulations, a social safety net to come to the rescue when disaster strikes, and a social environment that welcomes and values diversity. All of these go hand-in-hand with a strong labor movement.

- 4. Wages have not kept pace with increases in worker productivity, executive compensation or business profits. More and more middle and working class families are falling into poverty as the rich keep getting richer. The issue of economic inequality has never been on display more than during the COVID-19 pandemic. Aside from increased unionization, the best way to rebuild the middle class and stimulate spending in the economy is for government to protect and adopt laws that protect and encourage the payment of family-sustaining minimum wages and protect against misclassification or workers.**

Please explain how you will use your power if elected to protect and strengthen our state's wage laws, help bring people out of poverty and grow the middle and working class.

Wage theft is a serious problem facing many workers. The laws on the books aren't strong enough, and those that are on the books aren't well enforced. I will be an ally to workers seeking higher wages, better working conditions, and improved benefits. I grew up in a middle-class, union family, and I know that for too many families in Massachusetts this quality of life is increasingly out of reach. I will use the office to focus on the efficacy of our Wage and Hour laws as well as labor law enforcement mechanisms, helping to ensure our workers get a fair deal from employers.

- 5. Public construction constitutes a significant portion of the construction market in which our members work. The Massachusetts AFL-CIO strongly supports the prevailing wage law and competitive public bid laws that allow all contractors to compete fairly on public construction projects without slashing wages or cheating on unemployment insurance, workers' compensation, payroll and other taxes, but more funding is needed to enforce these laws. Wage and benefit packages in the union sector of the building and construction trades include wages, health insurance, pensions, annuities, and contributions to state of the art, industry-leading apprenticeship training and recruitment programs. These programs ensure that unionized construction workers are the most highly trained, safest, and inclusive in the industry, with the economic security to invest in their local communities. Project Labor Agreements (PLAs) are jointly negotiated between labor and management. They standardize a wide variety of working conditions on construction projects. PLAs also provide a mechanism to address specific project issues and community concerns, as well as ensuring the employment of a local area's workforce.**

Please explain your position on the prevailing wage, competitive bid laws, and PLAs.

I support prevailing wage laws and competitive bid laws, and I support labor and management negotiating PLAs that protect workers, wage, and benefits.

- 6. The next frontiers of health care reform should focus on cost containment, improving the quality of care, increasing access to affordable care, preventing burnout of our dedicated healthcare professionals, and treating those who cared for the public during the pandemic with dignity. On the subject of quality and burnout, too often health care providers, especially nurses and other front-line health care workers are spread too thin during their shifts because management too often prioritizes their bottom line over the needs of patients. The result is an inevitable and dangerous decline in the amount of attention and time dedicated to the care of each patient. Our healthcare professionals need support and workers need greater representation in health care – from greater access to quality care to a larger voice on the Group Insurance Commission.**

If elected, how will you help more people have access to high quality, affordable health care, and what will you do to ensure workers' voices are a part of this conversation?

Our healthcare system is too complex, too expensive, and far too inequitable. There's a lot we need to change to provide better, more cost-effective care, and to look out for the needs of all stakeholders in the system: patients, providers, healthcare workers, taxpayers, employers, and others. The focus of the Office of State Auditor is on public expenditures, and the largest slice of the state's budget is the Mass Health program. We must ensure that Mass Health is providing comprehensive and rigorous coverage and that provider fraud is minimized so that the resources available for Mass Health benefit patients. As Auditor, my focus will be on ensuring Mass Health is the best program that it can be for those who rely on it, including roughly 40% of all children and 60% of all people with disabilities in Massachusetts. Beyond that focus, as Auditor I will use the platform of the office to advance conversations on health equity and on needed reforms to the private portions of our healthcare system. We need further reform of our healthcare system that ensures that healthcare workers are treated and paid fairly, that patients receive care that is appropriately staffed, that costs are reasonable, and that everyone in the Commonwealth has access to high-quality care.

- 7. One of the fundamental aspects of the American quality of life is the ability to retire with dignity. In order to do this, workers need adequate resources to accommodate the inevitable rise in the cost of food, health care, housing and other essentials. Unfortunately, public policies in recent years have jeopardized a secure retirement for many public workers. Too many employers have abandoned their responsibility to help provide retirement security to their workers by doing away with defined benefit pensions. The shift from defined benefit pensions to 401(k) and other defined contribution plans is a shift from a secure retirement to an insecure retirement that puts workers' retirement savings into the Wall Street casino that crashed our economy in 2008, taking many workers' pensions with it. It is vital to the Massachusetts AFL-CIO that elected representatives stand up for pensions and retirement security for working families by supporting policies that strengthen all aspects of retirement.**

If elected, how will you protect defined benefit pensions for public workers as prescribed under M.G.L. Chapter 32; and advocate for a dignified retirement for all of our Commonwealth's workers – both public and private sector?

My parents are retired public-school teachers who rely on a pension for dignity and security. As Auditor, I will protect the hard-earned retirements of workers. I understand the impacts to current and future workers of the erosion of these benefits and the risks of a shift from defined benefit to defined contribution plans, including market risks borne by workers.

8. Public education started in this Commonwealth and organized labor has been central to the struggle to maintain a quality public school system for our members and their children. It is incredibly important to us that our elected officials consider our viewpoints and seek out our input during all debates on education. The public school system in Massachusetts is one of the most heavily unionized in the nation. It is no coincidence that our public school students have topped many national rankings of educational assessments for years. In contrast, states with low union density in their education system constantly rank near the bottom in national rankings of education assessments. Still, the Commonwealth's educational challenges include: strengthening academic standards without placing unfair burdens on teachers in classrooms with far too little resources; closing the achievement gap and implementing a strong support system for teachers and students in the classroom; and providing workers at early education centers with fair wages, benefits, and training opportunities, so that the vitally important job of caring for and educating our children is properly compensated. Educators and school employees and staff have been on the frontlines of the COVID-19 pandemic and we must give them the proper resources, equipment, and support to safely and effectively do their jobs. Commonwealth charter schools and education "reforms" have disproportionately impacted underserved communities, penalizing teachers working in chronically underfunded schools and causing further fiscal strain on their public-school budgets. This problem has only been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic and the challenges it has presented. The formula to pay for charters does not require the state to fully or even adequately fund them. Therefore, the local school districts are burdened by added costs that take away resources from traditional public school budgets. In higher education, Massachusetts is supposed to be among, if not the, best in the nation. Yet our Commonwealth currently is not a national leader when it comes to spending on public higher education as a share of state spending. It is very important to us that we invest more in higher education so that more students and workers are able to afford enrolling in our state schools and community colleges.

If elected, how will you work to improve public schools for our Commonwealth's students (early education, K-12 and higher education) without placing the burden on the backs of our teachers, many of whom are teaching in chronically underfunded schools and worked on the frontlines during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic?

I am a proud graduate of public schools in Massachusetts and a child of and brother to public school educators. I have witnessed firsthand the dedication and commitment of teachers to their craft, to the value of learning, and to the inner workings of the lives of their students. The Massachusetts public education system is one of the finest state public education systems in this country. The performance of Massachusetts eighth graders on international math and science assessments demonstrate that Massachusetts students are competitive with students in the most educationally advanced countries of the world, even as our nation as a whole

trails many of these countries. Massachusetts has a high performing system that reflects well on the educators that lead these schools and classrooms.

However, there is more work needed to ensure that all students across the state have access to world class education, regardless of zip code or community resources. The Auditor's Office plays a role in that work by auditing outcomes, funding, and success measures to ensure all students in the Commonwealth are receiving the education they deserve, and the public resources are being used for public schools.

As Auditor, I will push for more transparency and accountability for public funds that are provided to third-parties, including charter schools. I support keeping the cap on charter schools. I also support The Fair Share Amendment to provide additional funding to education.

What makes Massachusetts so special is its people, who are some of the best educated, most talented, and hardest-working people on the planet. We must increase our investment in education to ensure that everyone who grows up in Massachusetts has an opportunity to achieve their full potential and to thrive. Our State Constitution guarantees equal access to education, but we know the system we have today fails that standard. As State Auditor, I will ensure that education remains a top priority for state policymakers. I will work to shine a light on areas that aren't working for students, parents, educators, and taxpayers.

9. **Perhaps the contributions of the Labor Movement most taken for granted are the accomplishments we have achieved by fighting for occupational safety and health. Each year in April the Massachusetts AFL-CIO commemorates the lives of workers who died on the job on Workers Memorial Day. Losing any worker to a preventable accident is unacceptable in this day and age. Too often these deaths are the result of a lack of training, a lack of precaution, and unreasonable productivity demands that sacrifice safety. In addition to these tragic and preventable deaths, thousands more workers are exposed to toxic chemicals and other hazards that have negative effects on workers' health. Occupational exposure to unsafe conditions causes many chronic diseases that ultimately take the lives of workers and carry with them an incredibly high cost of treatment. Elected leaders must stand with working families on the most critical issues of occupational safety and health.**

If elected, how will you use the power of your office to make the Commonwealth a safer place for people to work, particularly in light of the recent COVID-19 pandemic?

I was proud to join labor leaders and the Western Mass Area Labor Federation in commemorating this year's Workers Memorial Day. All workers deserve safe working conditions. The shortcomings of our current labor practices were made clear in the pandemic. COVID-19 highlighted many of the longstanding faults in our system of health and safety, social services, and labor protections. A serious and thoughtful retrospective of these events will help us build back better a system that works for everyone as we emerge from the pandemic

10. Critical safety nets ensure that no one suffers catastrophic hardships when events out of their control make it impossible for them to reach their full earnings potential to support themselves and their family. The last couple years of a pandemic have taught us that these safety nets must be constantly maintained and updated to reflect modern challenges. The Massachusetts AFL-CIO fights to defend these key programs and seeks elected officials who will stand up for these critical safety nets that working families rely on. Two examples of these types of protections are workers compensation and unemployment insurance. Workers' Compensation was the first social insurance program passed in this country. Workers gave up the right to sue their employers when injured on the job in exchange for adequate medical care and wage replacement. Unemployment Insurance (UI) is our first line of economic defense in a recession and is designed to pay adequate weekly benefits so that jobless workers and their families can maintain essential family spending, thus automatically boosting our economy. It is important to the Massachusetts AFL-CIO that our elected officials work with us to strengthen the UI Trust Fund without decreasing eligibility, reducing benefits or the duration of UI for workers who may depend on it at some point.

Please describe how you will use the powers of your office if elected to create a stronger safety net for our Commonwealth's working families, while also improving those systems already in place, such as UI and workers' compensation.

Unemployment insurance and workers' compensation are essential parts of a strong social safety net, and a strong social safety net is essential for a healthy democracy and economy. That safety net let us down during the pandemic as workers who were owed Unemployment Benefits did not receive them. Other workers received larger benefits than they were owed, and are not being asked to repay those benefits to the system. These outcomes are harmful to working families and they erode public trust in our government.

As Auditor, I will work to identify these issues and problems before they arise. More broadly, I will be an ally in working to further strengthen the safety net for working families, including, but not limited to, Unemployment Insurance and workers' compensation.

As Auditor, my work will focus on understanding how best to help residents in need, while deemphasizing disproportionate concerns about "benefits fraud" which does a disservice to the people of Massachusetts who rely on public benefits to feed their families, to ensure a roof over their heads, to look for work, or to care for their children. Benefits fraud is rare (the Auditor's office identified 482 cases of fraud in Fiscal Year 2020 (the most recent full year report available) and 1,077 in 2019 (the most recent pre-Covid year). The entirety of benefits fraud across all benefits is approximately equivalent to the amount Accounts Receivable MassHealth had not collected as documented in an audit report in 2019.

The resources invested into and the stigma associated with investigations into public benefits fraud does not justify its share of budget or attention within the office compared to other sources of inefficiency uncovered by other teams in the Auditor's Office.

- 11. Unfortunately, our system of raising revenue is unfair and inadequate. In the 1990's, the Massachusetts state government passed over \$3 billion dollars in tax cuts, which disproportionately went to the wealthiest taxpayers and corporations. Individual taxpayers in working families took on the overwhelming brunt of the tax burden, while employers have renounced a large share of their responsibility and those wealthy taxpayers who can most afford to pay a fair share of taxes are not being asked to. The Massachusetts AFL-CIO takes the position that in order for us all to enjoy the strongest possible Commonwealth, we must all pay our fair share. The November ballot initiative known as the "Fair Share Amendment" will require those making over \$1 million per year in annual income to pay their fair share in order to fund public education and public infrastructure.**

Privatization is also a threat to the integrity of how our tax dollars are spent, as it puts taxpayer money into the hands of private entities that are out to make a profit for themselves, usually slashing services, employees and wages along the way. A landmark law called the "Taxpayer Protection Act" ensures that privatization efforts meet basic standards, and helps ensure that public dollars are wisely spent. This law has come under attack in recent years, the result of which has been wasted tax dollars on underperforming private entities.

The Fair Share Amendment that is headed for the 2022 ballot would create an additional tax of four percentage points on the portion of a person's annual income above \$1 million. After decades of tax cuts and policies that benefit the ultra-wealthy, this ballot question would benefit the public good by investing approximately \$2 billion in quality public education and affordable public colleges and universities, and for the repair and maintenance of roads, bridges and public transportation. Please share your position on this important ballot question and thoughts on how you plan to amplify the issue during your campaign.

I support the Fair Share Amendment. When I served as Director of the Transportation for Massachusetts advocacy coalition, we championed the Fair Share Amendment as part of a broader conversation about state revenue and funding the services that Massachusetts needs. When it comes to supporting strong public services with sufficient tax revenue, there is a clear choice in this race. I am the only candidate in this race who has consistently opposed reducing the state sales tax.

12. Efforts to privatize in the name of larger corporate profits are a threat to the public services that working people rely on in our Commonwealth.

If elected, what will you do to protect public services and defend against privatization?

As noted above, Under the Taxpayer Protection Act (the Pacheco Law), I will use the office to defend taxpayers against initiatives that bring profits to private companies often at the expense of unionized by reviewing all proposals that seek to do this, making sure that they clear a high bar on both cost and quality.

As Auditor, I will bring a keen eye to these decisions, with an understanding that the law intends and requires the Auditor to reject any proposal that does not clear a high bar on both cost and quality. I will take this responsibility seriously and commit to rejecting any proposal that does not meet this bar.

13. Police, fire fighters, EMTs, and other first responders are proud union members that perform heroic, extraordinary and sometimes deadly work that keep our neighborhoods and communities safe. Too often their contributions are overlooked by anti-union, anti-public employee forces. It is important to the Massachusetts AFL-CIO that our elected officials understand and recognize the contributions made by unionized public safety workers and stand up for them once in office. In many cases safe staffing levels in public safety have been sacrificed in the name of “cost savings”. All too often fire fighters are forced to answer the call to deadly fires and other events without adequate numbers of personnel. These insufficient staffing levels result in far too many deaths and injuries for both fire fighters and the citizens they seek to save. Fire fighters and other public safety workers must be able to have a voice on the job with respect to safe staffing to ensure their safety and that of the citizens who are also endangered by short staffed fire departments.

If elected, what you will do to increase public safety while providing proper resources, equipment, and support to our brave first responders? What will you do to advocate for safe staffing levels in public safety?

I have a track record of working with public-safety unions, and am proud to have the support of Fire Fighters Local 950 in my hometown of Brookline. As Auditor, I will bring transparency to the use of government funds during the budget process and point out how it can or should be used more efficiently and effectively when going towards state departments and agencies. I will also identify times and places where staffing and funding across different agencies are insufficient to accomplish public safety. Fire, EMT, and other social services all play a huge role in public safety and as Auditor, I will make sure these agencies are running as efficiently and safely as possible with proper oversight and funding, highlighting how their work, both reactive and preventative, serves the public. Further, one of my most important policy plans is a 15-point audit of [the Massachusetts State Police](#), which involves increasing oversight in the MSP so as to improve the safety and effectiveness of the agency and a commitment to transparency and accountability for the benefit of the officers and the people they serve and protect.

14. The Massachusetts AFL-CIO believes that the Commonwealth cannot engage in “high road,” high quality economic development without including workforce development in all initiatives. Workers must constantly be trained, re-trained and up-skilled in order to survive in our fast-changing economy. There is a chronic skills gap between our labor force and our job market. In addition to providing our workforce with the tools they need to secure family sustaining and stable employment, it is vital that the Commonwealth pursue economic development policies that are fair, strategic and intent on ensuring the state’s economy receives all the benefits private employers should provide when given state assistance to grow their business. The state should demand high quality job standards from employers that benefit from state assistance. Additionally, the state must hold employers accountable for the promises and commitments that they make when they seek public assistance for their businesses.

If elected, how will you advance high quality, worker-focused economic development that modernizes our Commonwealth’s workforce and economy? How will you ensure that displaced workers will have job opportunities with comparable wages and benefits?

I will work to advance high quality economic development by driving focus away from corporate handouts and instead towards education and training, firm but fair regulations that create a level playing field, and a social safety net work workers across the Commonwealth.

The Auditor serves on the Tax Expenditure Review Commission, which was created under Chapter 207 of the Acts of 2018 to review each tax break (often known as tax expenditures) every five years and evaluate its purpose, intent, goal, and effectiveness. In the spring of 2021, the Commission issued its first report -- the most robust public analysis of these tax expenditures ever conducted in Massachusetts. Incumbent State Auditor Suzanne Bump has played a leadership role on the Commission, working with Senate Revenue Committee Chair Adam Hinds in calling for the creation of a cap on the cost of certain expenditures to make each tax break/expenditure more transparent. Auditor Bump’s efforts to bring more oversight to tax expenditures date back to her first year as State Auditor, and demonstrate the essential, independent role the office plays in the Commonwealth’s policy debates. Whether these tax breaks are succeeding or not, the public absolutely has the right to know who is receiving them so they too can draw their own conclusions.

As State Auditor, I will push for more accountability and transparency on corporate tax expenditures that favor well-connected industries and create an unequal playing field. The creation of a tax expenditure means prioritizing corporate benefits over public goods like public education, parks, and libraries. Massachusetts residents deserve a full and robust debate about whether we want to keep these tax breaks on the books or replace them with a fairer and more equitable tax code that supports strong and efficient public services.

As Auditor, I will seek the power from the Legislature to assess the financial statements of companies that benefit from tax expenditures. These companies are receiving a public benefit, and should face the same scrutiny from the Auditor's Office that they would if they received direct funding from state government.

15. **Big Tech Companies (Uber, Lyft, DoorDash, InstaCart, etc.) are engaging in an effort to create a second class of worker in Massachusetts. These Gig giants want to exempt their workers from receiving the basic protections that are afforded to all employees in Massachusetts, including minimum wage, sick time, and discrimination protection. Big Tech is pushing a "false choice" on flexibility, falsely claiming that drivers can only maintain scheduling flexibility by surrendering all other worker rights. These companies spent over \$200 million on a ballot question in California, and now they are targeting Massachusetts.**
 - o **App-based Worker Classification – Massachusetts has the strongest employment laws in the country. Big Gig companies are trying to exempt their employees from these laws and the protections that come with them. These companies are attempting to permanently create a "second class" status for drivers, delivery workers, and other "app-based" workers in Massachusetts. Tech giants would be allowed to pay workers less than minimum wage, make no contributions to unemployment or Social Security, and remove app-based workers from legal protections against workplace injuries, sexual harassment, and discrimination. According to national consumer experts, the language also includes a hidden "liability shield," designed to exempt gig companies from liability to customers and members of the public for car accidents, injuries, and assaults.**
 - o **Anti-Discrimination Protections – Big Tech companies are attempting to remove anti discrimination protections for app-based workers. Their proposed language would exempt Big Tech companies from the robust protections of Massachusetts Civil Rights Act, MGL c. 151B, and remove state agency enforcement for app-based workers.**
 - o **Minimum Wage - Proposed language from Big Gig companies would create extensive loopholes, which would allow for a sub-minimum wage for app-based workers: Far from what Big Tech falsely promises, labor economists found that the nearly identical Uber/Lyft ballot measure in California guaranteed just \$5.64 per hour after loopholes, far below the current minimum wage for workers in Massachusetts.**
 - o **Unemployment Insurance - Big Tech companies are engaged in an effort to cheat the state out of hundreds of millions of dollars in Unemployment Insurance. During the Coronavirus Pandemic, app-based workers were able to collect unemployment, despite tech giants not paying into the program. This allowed these companies to receive a free ride on a system paid for by law-abiding Massachusetts businesses. App-based employees deserve**

unemployment protections, like all other workers in Massachusetts. o Social Security - Big Tech companies are seeking a special exemption from paying into Social Security. This effort would deny workers basic dignity in retirement. These companies need to follow the rules like every other business in Massachusetts.

Will you reject the false choice being forced onto Massachusetts voters and lawmakers and oppose efforts by Big Gig companies (Uber, Lyft, etc.) to rewrite long-standing Massachusetts law to exclude hundreds of thousands of workers— disproportionately Black, brown, and immigrant workers—from fundamental rights and protections afforded to employees? Please share your position on this important potential ballot question and thoughts on how you plan to amplify the issue during your campaign.

I oppose this ballot question, and I am concerned that this legislation was written by corporate interests who are spending ten of millions to help it pass.

Legislation and enforcement often has difficulty keeping up with rapid changes in society and technology. The gig economy has presented some people with valuable opportunities to supplement their income, to set their own schedules, or to find the mix of employment that works for them. Unfortunately, those same flexibilities have allowed some companies to exploit these technological tools and regulatory gaps to avoid playing their part in society and in an economy based on mutual benefit to their customers and workers. Many of these gig jobs are full-time roles, but without the benefits and stability that allow employees to support a family, or even make ends meet.

As Auditor, I will find opportunities to highlight both when gig economy companies are violating existing regulations laws and to identify places where our laws and regulations need to be revised to account for services delivered in ways our laws did not expect.

16. Climate change continues to be a persistent threat across the globe, and it is critical that we move our infrastructure and economy into a new and sustainable future. As we make this transition, it is also vital that we ensure workers in the energy sector are not left behind in the move to clean energy. Energy workers must be given resources to be retrained in a new industry with a living wage and quality benefits, and have access to the jobs replacing their previous careers. In addition, we need to ensure that clean energy projects are held to the highest standards of workplace safety, prevailing wage, community standards, and employer accountability. While the move to green energy is critical to the future of our Commonwealth, it must be done with fair and safe workplace standards. If elected, will you advocate for and support legislation that will ensure clean energy development projects that receive a state subsidy be covered by prevailing wage and public bidding statutes?

Will you support the establishment of an Office of Just Transition and a Just Transition Advisory Committee within the Executive Office of Labor & Workforce Development to create a safety net for workers who may lose jobs during the shift to renewable energy; ensuring displaced workers employed in the energy sector have immediate access to employment and training opportunities in the clean energy sector and related fields?

We must not underestimate or understate the importance of addressing climate change in the coming years. I released a [policy paper on climate change](#) nearly a full year before the election because I believe the climate crisis and environmental justice must be a top priority for elected leaders in every position and all levels.

The threat of climate change presents an opportunity to help right some historic wrongs and ensure that the new skills, technologies, and industries that will rise out of meeting this challenge will not, once again, leave behind communities of color. The legislature has provided clear standards for diversity and inclusion in our energy programs. As noted in my Climate Policy Paper, I will use the power of my office to ensure programs like offshore wind meet the diversity standards and I will support efforts to further strengthen these standards as well.

17. As much as The Massachusetts AFL-CIO strives to better the lives of all working people through our day-to-day advocacy; charitable giving and community involvement has always been a central component of our mission as well. Having surpassed our organizational goal by raising more than \$6 million for the Cancer Treatment Center at UMass Memorial Medical Center in Worcester, we discussed new goals and the future direction for the State Federation's charitable giving and advocacy and ultimately created a charitable 501-C 3 wing of the State Federation for the purpose of raising money and assisting members and their families who are struggling with various types of addiction. Unions have been at the forefront of addressing the alcohol, prescription drug and opiate epidemic, having established Members Assistance Programs in the 1990s, installing Narcan on all fire trucks, and providing trained professionals and resources to their members during times of struggle. We are passionate advocates of better public policies around the issue of addiction, including increasing the resources and access to treatment for people seeking help for their addiction.

If elected, how will you address the addiction problem devastating our Commonwealth, especially because of the availability of deadly and highly addictive opiates?

In the Commonwealth and across the nation, the drug opioid epidemic is one of our most dangerous public health crises. My family has been touched by this crisis, as have far too many families in Massachusetts. As State Auditor, I will use targeted audits of state programs for drug enforcement and treatment to better understand where and how we are spending government funds to help the public. With this information we can target our policies where we get the best public and personal health benefits with the funds we have available.