



**Chris Dempsey for State Auditor  
Massachusetts Teachers Association  
Questionnaire Responses**

Submitted: May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2022

**Discuss why you are running for Auditor. What are the major issues that you are most interested in working on if elected?**

My parents met while teaching at the Martin Luther King School in Boston in 1970. They were placed in adjoining classrooms and fell in love. My little sister, Alison, and her wife, Beatrice, are both public school teachers in New York City public schools. Throughout their careers, I saw my parents digging into their own pockets to pay for school supplies for their students, as MTA members across the Commonwealth do to this day. My father had a poster in his office from the late 1960s that read, "It will be a great day when our schools get all the money they need and the Air Force has to hold a bake sale to buy a bomber." So I know first-hand how we underfund critical needs like PreK-12 public education and public higher education, and I have fought to ensure that we prioritize education in public spending. Public education is a sacred obligation of the Commonwealth, and we need more leaders who are willing to fight to fund it properly.

I also know that hard-fought gains made through organizing and collective bargaining helped support my family so we could be secure in the middle class. Unions empower workers, improve the lives of their families, and make our economy and our democracy stronger. That is true of my family, and it is true of hundreds of thousands of other families in the Commonwealth. This has never been more clear during the pandemic, when the health, safety, and needs of frontline workers, including teachers and educators, were often an afterthought.

I am running for Auditor because I believe deeply in public service and the power of government to improve peoples' lives. My campaign is driven by the desire to make state government work better for the residents, taxpayers, and workers of the Commonwealth. I have also seen that when decisions in state government are made with a lack of public accountability and transparency that they often benefit special interests in the business community at the expense of the common good.

As the co-founder of No Boston Olympics, I fought back to protect the public interest and preserve our public resources for more important civic priorities than a Boston 2024 bid which put billions of public dollars at risk in service of a three week sporting event. I was named "[Bostonian of the Year](#)" by the Boston Globe Magazine in 2015 for my volunteer work leading that grassroots campaign, which succeeded despite being outspent 1,500-1 by some of the most powerful business interests in the state.

I have also worked in the executive branch of state government -- which is the focus of the Auditor's office -- and I am the only candidate in the race with such experience. I served as Assistant Secretary of Transportation for Governor Deval Patrick, where I co-founded [the MassDOT open-data program](#), which launched [smartphone applications](#) that tell transit riders when their bus or train is going to arrive, [saving taxpayers and farepayers millions compared with more costly and cumbersome alternatives](#). These solutions have been especially valuable for bus riders, who are too-often forgotten in our transportation system statewide. I will be an Auditor who will ensure a fair, efficient, effective, and equitable state government both for those who serve in state government and those who rely on state government services.

My experience in public service has always been about finding ways to make government more effective while ensuring we are serving those who are often forgotten or who bear the brunt of inefficient or inequitable government. I have experience building grassroots coalitions, tackling complex financial problems, and standing up for our most important priorities, and I will bring that experience with me to the Auditor's Office.

The State Auditor plays a unique role within state government, with a special focus on holding the executive branch accountable to state law and finding ways to make state government work better. I bring a proven track record of reforming the executive branch of state government and standing up to protect the public interest. I firmly believe I have what it takes to be the Commonwealth's next Chief Accountability Officer and a watchdog to ensure that government is working fairly and effectively for residents, taxpayers, workers, and other stakeholders.

I live with my fiancée, Anna, in the first floor of a triple-decker a few blocks from where I grew up and where my public-school-teacher parents still live. Anna and I are looking forward to starting a family together, and we want to do that in a Massachusetts that is the best that it can be. That means making Massachusetts *state government* the best that it can be. That's why I'm running for State Auditor.

Massachusetts residents face a number of pressing challenges, from the high cost of housing, to a broken transportation system, to health care that is neither cost effective nor accessible, to an education system that produces vastly different outcomes for students depending on their zip code. The State Auditor's Office can help improve all of these areas of public policy and more. Our campaign was the first in this race to issue policy plans for how we wanted to approach the office. Our first three policy papers addressed these three topics:

**1. [Auditing the American Rescue Plan Act \(ARPA\) funding](#):** ARPA funds are a once-in-a-generation opportunity to make our Commonwealth stronger than it was before the pandemic; but that will only happen if we ensure these dollars are spent well. ARPA provided \$5.3 billion for the state government and \$3.4 billion to municipalities and counties. These billions that will be allocated and spent between now and 2026 present a monumental opportunity, but it also comes with significant risks. Without oversight, this unique chance to invest in the people of Massachusetts and strengthen our economy could be squandered on inefficient programs, slow bureaucratic processes, and fraud and abuse. But if these discretionary and state/local agency dollars are spent well, they can transform our communities, reduce inequities in health and education, improve our environment, and leave a lasting legacy for future generations. One of my top priorities is to work with state agencies and others receiving stimulus funds to ensure these resources are used to advance equity and help the Commonwealth build back better.

**2. [Climate and Environmental Justice](#):** Climate change presents a future with potentially intense, disruptive, and tragic impacts on lives across the Commonwealth: reducing carbon emissions and preparing the Commonwealth for climate change must be a priority of our next Auditor. Massachusetts residents deserve a state government that is working efficiently and effectively to prepare the Commonwealth for the inevitable impacts of climate change, and to ensure that resources are delivered to the neighborhoods and residents that already bear the brunt of pollution and more severe weather. A top priority of mine will be incorporating a climate and environmental justice lens into audits of key state agencies and programs. By including representatives of environmental-justice communities in the auditing review process, the Auditor's Office will ensure that recommendations incorporate the voices of those most impacted by pollution and climate change. We simply cannot wait any longer to take strong and decisive action.

**3. [Reforming the State Police](#):** A top priority of mine is helping to rebuild trust in government through transparency, and the Massachusetts State Police (MSP) will be included in that effort. As State Auditor, my office will conduct a targeted audit with 15 key areas of evaluation and review including, but not limited to, reviews of supervision and accountability systems, administrative controls in payroll and human resources management, assessments of training and promotion criteria and systems, and inquiry into organizational support for the physical, mental, and emotional health of personnel. Being a State Police Trooper is a difficult job, and troopers put their lives on the line to keep the Commonwealth safe. I honor and respect their service. But the agency as a whole has developed deeply rooted problems that cannot be ignored; it has lost the public's trust. Furthermore, the MSP has long been the subject of numerous lawsuits alleging discrimination on the

basis of race, gender, and sexual orientation. Government cannot function well while employees are being mistreated and do not feel comfortable in the workplace. A top priority of mine is helping to rebuild trust in government through transparency, and the MSP will be included in that effort.

## **STRENGTHENING OUR PUBLIC SCHOOLS, COLLEGES, AND UNIVERSITIES TO MAXIMIZE STUDENT LEARNING**

**1. The passage of the *Student Opportunity Act*, which was signed into law in November 2019, was a major victory for students, for educators, for communities and for racial and economic justice. When the new law is fully phased in, it will increase annual state funding for public education by \$1.5 billion over inflation. Much of that money will go to low-income districts — disproportionately communities of color — that have been left behind by our Commonwealth’s outdated and inequitable funding system.**

**A. The MTA is committed to ensuring that the new funding is fully phased in by the Legislature as of fiscal year 2027, in accordance with provisions of the *Student Opportunity Act*.**

Agree with MTA position    ( ) Disagree with MTA position

**B. The MTA strongly believes that local educators, parents, school committee members and administrators — not state education officials — must play the central role in determining how the new funding will be spent in their districts.**

Agree with MTA position    ( ) Disagree with MTA position

**2. Public higher education promotes student success and is essential to economic growth and job creation. To maintain and improve our competitive position in Massachusetts, we must have a first-rate system of affordable and accessible public higher education. State financial support for higher education has plummeted. When adjusted for inflation, per-student state spending on public higher education has been cut by 31 percent since FY 2001. As state funding has declined, tuition and fees have continued to increase to make up for state cuts to public higher education, resulting in the burden of student debt increasing for students and their families. At a time when student debt is at an all-time high, additional state funding is needed to preserve access to higher education and relieve the untenable financial pressures facing students.**

**A. The MTA supports increasing funding to our public colleges and universities, in line with the goals of the proposed *Cherish Act*, for public higher education.**

Agree with MTA position    ( ) Disagree with MTA position

**B. The MTA supports legislation to guarantee debt-free public higher education as a right for all residents by creating a state grant program to pay the equivalent of tuition and mandatory fees to an eligible student attending any Massachusetts public college or university or certificate, vocational or training program at a public institution, up to the equivalent of four years of public college or university.**

C.

Agree with MTA position     Disagree with MTA position

**3. The MTA supports policies that promote the success of quality public schools that serve all children. We believe that the expansion of Commonwealth charter schools in Massachusetts diverts critical resources from local schools and creates an education system that is separate and unequal. As evidenced by the overwhelming defeat of Question 2 on the November 2016 ballot, it is clear that the majority of Massachusetts voters agree with the MTA.**

**For the benefit of all students, the MTA supports the following charter school restrictions and reforms:**

- **Keeping the current cap on Commonwealth charter schools.**
- **Requiring local approval of any new Commonwealth charter schools.**
- **Requiring any new charter schools to be established and managed by a nonprofit organization or entity**
- **Requiring licensure of all teachers.**
- **Ensuring that charter schools adhere to the same administrative rules as public schools concerning public records, as well as open-meeting and procurement requirements concerning recruiting and retaining students to reflect the demographics of the community.**

Agree with MTA position     Disagree with MTA position

**4. Parents, students and educators across the Commonwealth are**

**pushing back against the high-stakes MCAS exams. Among the many serious concerns about the MCAS are the excessive amount of time and money spent on creating and implementing the tests and the high stakes attached to the results. In addition, research clearly shows that standardized tests such as the MCAS demonstrate and reinforce racial and economic inequities across school districts. The MTA supports the following changes to address the Commonwealth's current testing system:**

- **Eliminate the high-stakes nature of the MCAS test for high school graduation.**
- **Reduce the state's emphasis on standardized testing by changing education law to allow the use of alternative measures of academic success.**
- **Expand state support to local school districts to develop their own school accountability and assessment frameworks such as those currently being developed and piloted through Massachusetts Consortium for Innovative Education Assessment (MCIEA).**

Agree with MTA position       Disagree with MTA position

My sister teaches at a "Consortium" school in New York City. The Consortium, in its own words, "was founded two decades ago on the belief that there was a better way to assess student learning than dependence upon standardized testing. Instead of basing a student's future on a one-day (or two- or three-day) test, an assessment system should reflect a fuller picture of what students know and can do. The Consortium's system is based on in-depth literacy, mathematical problem-solving, application of the scientific method, social studies research, a span of mediums for exhibiting learning, and a chance for students to have a voice and proud ownership of their work." I support further exploration of alternative approaches to testing and measurement that allow us to better understand the quality of the education students are receiving and the progress and growth they are making as students. I do believe that measurement is essential, in-part to better understand racial and economic inequities across school districts, as written in the question. I look forward to a deeper conversation about how this can be accomplished in ways that support students and educators, while also holding accountable administrations and communities that may not be meeting their obligations for high-quality education for all students.

## **5. The MTA supports policies that shift focus in school and district**

**improvement efforts from penalization to collaborative, community-centered support that promotes involvement by parents, educators and community members while preserving collective bargaining rights for all educators working in these schools.**

Agree with MTA position     Disagree with MTA position

**6. The COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated to the public what educators, students and our communities have known for decades – that state disinvestment has left our public schools in a chronic state of disrepair, especially in working-class communities and communities of color. Even before the pandemic, ventilation systems in too many schools could not maintain healthy indoor air quality. The MTA is advocating for additional funding to the Massachusetts School Building Authority to start addressing the most urgent safety needs while establishing green, healthy and equitable building standards.**

Agree with MTA position     Disagree with MTA position

**7. The Massachusetts 2050 Decarbonization Roadmap calls for retrofitting buildings to reduce greenhouse gasses. The MTA strongly supports this goal, which is why we endorsed *An Act for healthy and green public schools*, which calls for the development of new standards to create healthy and green public school buildings. Specifically, the legislation charges the Commonwealth to take the following steps:**

- **Assess the extent to which school buildings provide students with a healthy environment that is conducive to learning while efficiently using energy and resources and limiting exposure to toxic building materials.**
- **Develop standards for healthy and green schools.**
- **Offer recommendations and a plan for all schools to equitably meet healthy and green school standards by 2050.**

Agree with MTA position     Disagree with MTA position

**8. Decades of disinvestment and deferred maintenance have left our**

**public colleges and universities in a state of disrepair. The COVID-19 pandemic has added to the urgency of addressing this infrastructure crisis, with many campuses having facilities that were unprepared to mitigate the spread of the virus and ensure healthy air flow. Infrastructure repairs have in recent years been taken on by campuses. The costs have then been passed onto students as campus fees, which in turn has contributed to the mounting burden of student debt. Campus buildings, which are state buildings, must be paid for by state dollars. The MTA is advocating for a substantial investment in public higher education infrastructure in order to better protect students and educators as well as the environment through green-building initiatives.**

**(X)** Agree with MTA position    **( )** Disagree with MTA position

**9. The Commonwealth's current educator licensure process is excluding talented and qualified candidates from diverse backgrounds by requiring that they pass the multi-part Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure (MTEL). Research clearly shows that candidates of color consistently have far lower passing rates on the tests than white candidates, thus making clear that they are a significant barrier to creating a more diverse educator workforce. The MTA supports efforts to recruit and retain educators of color, including through a statutory change to allow the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education to approve alternative measures of proficiency to the MTEL for candidates for educator licensure.**

**(X)** Agree with MTA position    **( )** Disagree with MTA position

Recruiting, hiring, training, promoting, and supporting educators of color should be a top priority for our public schools. A diverse workforce builds strength in any organization. But that may be especially true in education, where a diverse faculty and staff is essential for a better working environment and a better learning environment. I support efforts to recruit and retain educators of color. I need to learn more about proposed statutory changes that would allow the BESE to approve alternative measures of proficiency to the MTEL for candidates for educator licensure.

## **PUBLIC EMPLOYEES**

**1. Massachusetts is one of 15 states that has its own state pension plan for public employees and does not participate in the federal Social Security system. In 2011, the Commonwealth made changes to the state's public employee pension system. These changes required employees hired after April 2, 2012, to work longer, and some of their benefits were reduced.**

**The MTA supports the current defined-benefit pension system for all its members and opposes any changes in laws that diminish this pension benefit.**

Agree with MTA position     Disagree with MTA position

**2. The MTA supports the right of public employees — including retirees — to collectively bargain over health insurance and believes that no additional changes to the collective bargaining process are needed. Since the law modifying municipal health insurance bargaining went into effect, almost all of the hundreds of millions of dollars in savings has been paid for by public employees. The MTA believes that further health care savings must come from health care cost containment — not by eroding collective bargaining, reducing health insurance benefits for public employees, or increasing their share of health insurance costs.**

Agree with MTA position     Disagree with MTA position

**3. Currently, public employees are eligible for health insurance when they retire from one of the 104 contributory retirement systems for public employees in Massachusetts. Maintaining a robust system that will continue to attract and retain high-quality state and municipal career employees is vital.**

**The MTA's position is that we must fight efforts to weaken health insurance benefits for current and future public employees and retirees and there should be no change to retiree health insurance unless it — (1) protects current retirees from changes in post- retirement health benefits, (2) maintains the current retiree health benefit for long-serving public employees, and (3) protects current employees.**

Agree with MTA position     Disagree with MTA position

**4. The MTA believes that all retired Massachusetts public employees deserve a full cost-of-living increase each year to protect retirees'**

**pensions from the ravages of inflation. The MTA's position is that there should be an annual appropriation for a full COLA at least equal to the Social Security COLA provided for employees covered by that system.**

**(X)** Agree with MTA position    **( )** Disagree with MTA position

**5. In order to reduce costs, Massachusetts' public colleges and universities are relying more and more on adjunct faculty. Many of these faculty members work at several public colleges and universities and are therefore deemed to have more than one employer. Because of this, many fall short of the "part-time" employment status required to be eligible for health insurance or participate in the state pension system. The MTA's position is that state employee pension benefits and health insurance coverage should be extended to part-time higher education faculty who teach at least four three-credit courses per school/calendar year.**

**(X)** Agree with MTA position    **( )** Disagree with MTA position

**6. The MTA supports legislation to ensure that municipal employees are covered by the Commonwealth's minimum wage and paid family and medical leave laws. Currently, the state's minimum wage law does not apply to municipal workers, and municipal employers are required to adhere only to the federal minimum wage, which is just \$7.25 an hour compared to the current Massachusetts minimum wage of \$14.25 an hour. Regarding paid family and medical leave, municipalities currently have the option to include their employees in the program but are not required to do so as they would be under the MTA proposal.**

**(X)** Agree with MTA position    **( )** Disagree with MTA position

**7. Massachusetts public employees, including educators, are currently prohibited by law from engaging in a strike, regardless of their working conditions or whether their employer may have committed unfair labor practices. The MTA strongly believes that a ban on public employees striking is unjust and outdated and that it unfairly restricts the ability of public employees to take collective action in support of themselves and the communities they serve.**

**(X)** Agree with MTA position    **( )** Disagree with MTA position

**8. Current state law prohibits public employees from fundraising for their own political campaigns as well as for other political committees,**

**including political action committees organized by their unions. These limitations unfairly punish public employees, limiting their ability to successfully run for office themselves and preventing them from fully supporting political action committees that will advocate for their interests. The MTA strongly believes that the prohibition on public employee political fundraising should be amended to allow public employees to fundraise for themselves as well as for political action committees organized by their unions.**

Agree with MTA position       Disagree with MTA position

I have been a public employee, and I understand that the limitations of current state law can be frustrating, confusing, and counterproductive to our goals of engaging more people in civic life and grassroots politics. I am open to a conversation about how current state law can be reformed, refined, or updated to provide more flexibility to public employees while also protecting the public interest. My support of this proposal would depend on the specific language put forward. I do think it is essential for credibility in our government and our political system to draw bright lines between activities conducted in an "official" capacity vs. those conducted in a personal or political capacity, and I think we need to be cautious about eroding that line.

**1. The MTA supports increasing revenues to adequately fund public education and invest in our communities. The MTA is working as a coalition partner in the Raise Up Massachusetts campaign for a Fair Share Amendment to the Massachusetts Constitution that would raise revenue for education and transportation by asking those who annually earn more than \$1 million to pay 4 percentage points more on the amount over \$1 million.**

Agree with MTA position     Disagree with MTA position

**2. In addition to supporting the Fair Share Amendment, the MTA supports raising funds through the following progressive corporate revenue proposals:**

- **GILTI (Global Intangible Low-Taxed Income) – Many multinational corporations that do business in Massachusetts dodge taxes by using provisions of the federal tax code to shift their U.S. profits to offshore tax havens. Massachusetts should do the same as other states and federal law, taxing a portion of those offshore profits.**
- **Tiered Corporate Minimum Tax – This proposal would ensure that larger corporations pay a minimum corporate tax bill in proportion to the size of their business in the Commonwealth, while small businesses would continue paying the current corporate minimum excise tax of just \$456 per year.**
- **Corporate Disclosure – Research and informed policymaking to close corporate loopholes are made more difficult because of the lack of available information about how much taxes specific corporations pay. Corporate disclosure laws would help identify corporate bad actors, measure the effects of existing corporate tax loopholes, and generate additional future revenue by closing corporate tax loopholes.**

Agree with MTA position     Disagree with MTA position

**3. The MTA believes firmly that during an economic downturn or financial crisis, that the Commonwealth should enact progressive**

**revenue policies to meet its budgetary needs rather than implementing funding cuts to crucial public services such as preK-12 and higher education.**

Agree with MTA position     Disagree with MTA position

## **SHORT ANSWERS**

### **1. What is your assessment of our preK-12 public education system and how would you, as Auditor, use your office to support public education?**

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.

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.

### **2. What is your assessment of our public higher education system and**

**how would you, as Auditor, use your office to support public higher education?**

We should take the same pride in our public higher education system as we do in our PreK-12 system. But there is much more that our public higher education system can do to prepare students for an internationally competitive economy, to ensure they aren't burdened with high costs during school and debt loads after graduation, and to treat educators fairly.

As Auditor, I will work to ensure the public high education system is improved and supported with sufficient resources and policies that make our system more equitable and effective. I will conduct audits and reports that show the impacts of our higher education institutions. That includes the impacts on both educators and students of things like cost cutting measures at public institutions, adjunct faculty contracts, and housing costs for students. The public deserves to know how our public institutions are working to ensure the best possible education for students, and I will conduct audits with that goal in mind.

**3. As Auditor, you or your designee will be a member of the Massachusetts Teachers' Retirement System Board. How would you view the role of you or your designee on the board?**

My parents are retired public school teachers, and I understand the importance of retirement benefits being distributed in a timely and complete manner. Retired teachers should receive every penny they are owed when they are owed it. The Board plays an absolutely critical role in ensuring that nearly 70,000 retirees receive these benefits, and that contributions being made by active members are there for their retirements and are safely and professionally invested in the meantime.

**4. Currently, teachers with past membership in another public**

**retirement system are required to “elect” into RetirementPlus (R+) within the Massachusetts Teachers Retirement System (MTRS), but all other new teachers are automatically enrolled in R+. This has created confusion with some teachers being told they are in R+ only to be told later they are not. Currently, these cases go through a lengthy and costly appeals process that will continue until the issue is addressed by the Legislature. The MTA has worked closely with the MTRS on legislation to fix this issue (H.19 in the 2021-2022 session). The proposal does not represent a new benefit but rather it is a clarification of R+ membership status that may impact approximately 2,000 MTRS members. Importantly, the proposed bill does not add additional liability to the pension system. As Auditor, would you commit to working with the MTA, MTRS and legislative leaders to enact legislation to address to this issue?**

Yes, I look forward to working with the MTA and other stakeholders on fixing this issue.

**5. State law requires independent audits of charter schools that must be submitted to the Auditor, and it also gives the Auditor the authority to investigate the budgets and finances of charter schools. If elected, what steps would you take to ensure that charter schools, which are publicly-funded but privately-operated, are subject to robust financial oversight?**

As Auditor, I will go above and beyond the state law requirements to ensure charter schools are subject to robust financial oversight. Like all other state programs, we must ensure we have clear goals and metrics for funds directed at charter schools to measure our progress against these goals. The responsibility to set these goals rests with the State, and in my role as Auditor I will ensure the metrics are being properly measured. Charter schools that fail to meet those goals, like any other private recipient of government funds, should be held accountable when they fail to deliver the promised public benefits.

**6. State law requires that state departments, including the Department**

**of Elementary and Secondary of Education, be subject to an audit at least once every 3 years, or as often as the Auditor determines it necessary. If elected, would you commit to ensuring that the next audit of the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education include a review of the current and former contracts between the department and vendors hired to develop and/or administer standardized assessments such as MCAS?**

Yes. I am committed to including a review of current and former contracts with testing vendors. We must review these contracts not just from a financial compliance perspective but from an accountability perspective, i.e., are these vendors delivering the results that we expect that allow us to take action to improve education in the Commonwealth?

**7. The Commonwealth has received billions of dollars in federal aid to support the state's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. How will you, as Auditor, ensure that federal funds, including those allocated specifically for public preK-12 and higher education, are being spent in accordance with state and federal guidelines?**

I am proud that our campaign was the first in this race to release a policy proposal detailing our plans to audit federal funding. Our first paper was on oversight of ARPA funds, and that will be a Day 1 priority in office. Please review our [complete policy paper](#) on ARPA funding priorities on our website.

The plan includes, but is not limited to: 1) Monitoring and tracking ARPA funds in real time, 2) Adopting many of the recommendations of the Racial Equity Scorecard that was developed by the NAACP, the Black Economic Council, the Massachusetts Public Health Association, and many other groups, and 3) Working with state and local partners to ensure comprehensive oversight. I strongly encourage progressive voters to read the full paper on our website, as it leaves no doubt that our agenda for oversight of federal stimulus funding is the strongest, most comprehensive, and most equitable in the race.

That vision applies to my approach for all federal funds, including those allocated specifically for public pre-k to 12 and high education. Every federal dollar must be accounted for and put to effective use, and that is especially true for all dollars going to our students' education.

**8. The MTA firmly believes that the ability to organize strong unions and**

**to collectively bargain are essential rights that enable workers to build better lives for themselves, their families and our communities. In public education, students benefit from educators' unions because educators' working conditions are students' learning conditions. This has never been clearer than during the COVID-19 pandemic when educators, through their unions, negotiated for critical health and safety measures at public schools and colleges. Do you agree with the MTA's position and would you publicly support educators' unions fighting for fair contracts and working conditions, including by meeting with union members and participating in union-organized actions?**

I agree with the MTA's position because my family has benefited from those very rights and the wage, working conditions, and benefits for which MTA has fought for over a century. I believe that the ability to organize strong unions and to collectively bargain are essential rights. These rights improve the lives of union families, and make our economy and our democracy stronger.

I look forward to meeting with union members and leadership and to joining you on the front lines of union-organized actions.

**9. How would you make yourself available to the MTA to discuss questions or concerns that affect our members?**

I look forward to active engagement and partnership with MTA as the Commonwealth's next State Auditor. I commit to more than just an "open door" policy, but to proactive engagement with MTA members on issues that matter most. Public education is a sacred obligation of our Commonwealth. We need to sustain and improve on our quality public schools, while also ensuring a high-quality education is provided to every student no matter their community or zip code. We'll only get that when educators have a seat at the table and are listened to. I'll be a State Auditor who listens, learns, engages, and joins educators across the state in this important shared work.