



August 21, 2019

Dear Legislator,

As you well know, Massachusetts desperately needs significant and lasting investments in quality public schools and colleges and in our roads, bridges, and public transportation systems across the state.

Community, labor, and faith groups in the Raise Up Massachusetts coalition have proposed the most progressive and sustainable way to raise substantial new revenue for those investments: the Fair Share Amendment, which would raise approximately \$2 billion each year in revenue for transportation and public education through a tax on annual incomes over \$1 million.

We thank the Legislature for your continued support of the Fair Share Amendment, most recently in June with a Constitutional Convention vote of 147 in favor to 48 opposed. **It is essential that the Legislature reaffirm its continued commitment to placing the Fair Share Amendment on the 2022 ballot during this fall's planned revenue debate.**

The Fair Share Amendment should be in effect today, generating an additional \$2 billion a year for spending on transportation and public education each year. But a corporate-financed lawsuit backed by over a million dollars in undisclosed donations, and led by five corporate lobbying organizations – Associated Industries of Massachusetts, the Massachusetts Competitive Partnership, the Massachusetts High Technology Council, the Massachusetts Taxpayers Foundation, and the National Federation of Independent Business – led to the prior version of the Fair Share Amendment being removed from the ballot on a technicality. **Our current transportation and public education funding crisis is their responsibility.**

Now, large, profitable corporations and their lobbyists are calling for working people to pay more, and they think they deserve a big round of applause for letting the rest of us pay higher taxes! Business organizations across the state are discussing transportation financing plans that would have road users pay even more, without taking any responsibility for businesses themselves to chip in.

In fact, business groups are actively organizing to avoid paying their fair share. The Massachusetts High Technology Council's latest newsletter began with a warning about the threat of "over taxation," while Associated Industries of Massachusetts said that now is "exactly the wrong time to place additional cost burdens on business." Is there ever a right time in their minds?

We need major new investments in transportation and public education, but we cannot continue to balance our budgets solely on the backs of low- and moderate-income people. Raise Up Massachusetts is concerned about the impact of regressive taxes and fees – those

where lower-income people pay a higher share of their incomes in these taxes and fees than higher-income people.

Large, profitable corporations benefit greatly from a well-educated workforce and a reliable transportation system, and it's time for them to contribute themselves to fund those investments, not just ask the rest of us to pay more. **The Massachusetts corporate community needs to explain just how businesses plan to do their part to fund our transportation and public education systems.**

Here's what we know:

The Massachusetts economy is working great for those at the top, but that prosperity is not reaching most of our people and communities. Many working families in our state are struggling with high costs of living, lengthy commutes, and a lack of opportunity. In order for our economy to work for everyone, workers, residents, and businesses all need modern, reliable transportation systems, and all students need well-rounded public schools and affordable public colleges.

As we face this need to invest, our state tax system is upside down: Low- and moderate-income households pay a larger share of their income in taxes than households with higher incomes do. And too many big, profitable corporations pay only minimal taxes in Massachusetts, because they exploit loopholes, tax breaks, and offshore tax havens.

While corporate lobbyists are content to let working people pay, we believe that any near-term revenue proposals must meet the following standards:

- **Must include a continued commitment to moving the Fair Share Amendment through the legislative process and onto the 2022 ballot.**
- **Fair:** Must be economically progressive, to bring the share of income paid by higher-income people more in line with that paid by lower-income people.
- **Sustainable:** Must be supported by the public and capable of surviving attempted repeal, so that we can count on the revenue to make necessary investments.
- **Adequate:** Must raise enough revenue to meet the Commonwealth's needs.

We look forward to working with you to pass the Fair Share Amendment in 2022 and to raise additional state revenue in a way that asks large corporations to do their part, making our tax system more fair to low- and moderate-income people who are struggling to get by.

Sincerely,

Raise Up Massachusetts

Raise Up Massachusetts is a coalition of community organizations, religious groups, and labor unions committed to building an economy that invests in families, gives everyone the opportunity to succeed, and creates broadly shared prosperity. Since our coalition came together in 2013, we have nearly doubled wages for hundreds of thousands of working people by winning two increases in the state's minimum wage, won best-in-the-nation earned sick time and paid family and medical leave benefits for workers and their families, led the campaign for the Fair Share Amendment to invest in transportation and public education, and started to build an economy that works for all of us, not just those at the top. Our coalition includes the following members:

COMMUNITY

350 Massachusetts for a Better Future	Massachusetts Coalition for Adult Education
Alliance for Business Leadership	Massachusetts Commission on Status of Women
Boston Asian YES	Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Coalition
Boston Education Justice Alliance	Massachusetts Jobs with Justice
Boston Mobilization/YMORE	Massachusetts Law Reform Institute
Boston Workers Alliance	Massachusetts NOW (National Organization for Women)
Business for a Fair Minimum Wage	Massachusetts Peace Action
Chelsea Collaborative	Massachusetts Senior Action Council
Chinese Progressive Political Action	Massachusetts Voter Education Network
City Life Vida Urbana	Merrimack Valley Project
Coalition For Social Justice	NARAL Pro-Choice MA
College Democrats of MA	Neighbor to Neighbor Massachusetts
Dorchester Bay Youth Force	Our Revolution Massachusetts
Empathy Ways	Parenting Journey
English for New Bostonians	Progressive Democrats of Massachusetts
Ex-Prisoners and Prisoners Organizing for Community Advancement (EPOCA)	Progressive Massachusetts
Grace Team	Project Right
Greater Boston Legal Services	Public Higher Education Network of Massachusetts
Irish International Immigrant Center	Restaurant Opportunities Center Boston
Jamaica Plain Progressives	Rosie's Place
La Comunidad, Inc.	Rowe Resources
Massachusetts Alliance of HUD Tenants	

Somerville Community Corporation
United for a Fair Economy
Worcester Community Labor Coalition
Youth Jobs Coalition

FAITH

Brockton Interfaith Community
Coop Metro Ministries
Episcopal City Mission
Essex County Community Organization
GBIO/Fourth Presbyterian
Jewish Alliance for Law and Social Action
Jewish Community Relations Council
Mass Council of Churches
Mass Council of Rabbis
Massachusetts Communities Action
Network
Massachusetts Interfaith Worker Justice
Moishe Kavod House
New England Jewish Labor Committee
Pioneer Valley Project
Temple Sinai Brookline
Unitarian Universalist Massachusetts Action
Unitarian Universalist Service Committee
United Interfaith Action of New Bedford
and Fall River
Worcester Interfaith

LABOR

American Federation of State, County and
Municipal Employees

American Federation of Teachers
Massachusetts
Boston Teacher's Union
Labor Guild
Mass Alliance
Massachusetts AFL-CIO
Massachusetts Nurses Association
Massachusetts Teachers Association
National Association of Social Workers –
MA
North Shore Labor Council
1199 SEIU
SEIU 32BJ District 615
SEIU 509
SEIU 888
SEIU Community Action
SHARE Worcester/HUCTW
Sheet Metal Workers Local 17
United Auto Workers
United Food and Commercial Workers Local
1445