

MARIA'S LIST

Maria Jobin-Leeds
DEMOCRACY & EDUCATION

2018 MA General Election

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DONATE to NATALIE

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Natalie Higgins

Re-election State Representative, 4th Worcester
General Election — Tuesday, November 6th

A 2016 Maria's List endorsee in her first run, **Natalie** is running for her second term as Leominster's state representative. Her dad has a 9th grade education and worked his way up from mechanic to owner of the family auto-part store. Her mom worked various jobs, including as a school lunch lady and at the local plastic factory, before she had to leave to take care of **Natalie's** grandparents, who both died of cancer. Fighting for paid family leave was one of the reasons she ran for this seat. "For my family, our experience was that government is not where you go for help, it's where they close the door."

Starting in college, **Natalie** became a dogged advocate for victims of sexual and domestic violence, from serving as a teen counselor at a rape crisis center to Legal Fellow with the Governor's Council to Address Sexual and Domestic Violence. In her first term as State Representative for Leominster, she has brought that same strong commitment to women's rights to her legislative work, from championing comprehensive healthcare to the elimination of all forms of gender discrimination and violence.

A graduate of UMass Amherst and Northeastern Law School, **Natalie** is the first in her family to graduate college and law school. Before she was elected, **Natalie** was the founding Executive Director of PHENOM (Public Higher Education Network of Massachusetts), where she worked to fight the privatization of public higher education.

On the Issues

- **Passed policy to create a tracking system for sexual assault kits** - She was the lead filer of legislation that got passed as part of CORI reform. It's the last step in rape reform. This new policy allows survivors to call a hotline and locate their rape kit.

In her maiden speech on the House floor, **Natalie** shared that she was sexually assaulted during law school. She knew to go to the hospital within 24 hours and get a rape kit done but shared that she chose not to report it to the police because it wasn't the right option for her at the time. "I needed to make sure I was safe and healthy and I needed to refocus on finishing law school which I did and that's why I feel passionately about rape kit tracking. ...[The new policy] gives survivors the peace of mind of knowing where their kit is if/when they report their sexual assault to the police. The tracking system is a crucial way we can make sure the law works for survivors and helps them begin to put their lives back together and being to heal. It will also give us important data to use in future legislation."

- **Introduced the Student Loan Bill of Rights** - Passed in a dozen states so far, the legislation provides all student loan borrowers in Massachusetts with basic consumer protections. The bill also cuts through the red tape created by student loan servicers and creates a Student Loan Ombudsman, a single office under the Attorney General where borrowers can get the information they need about their loans. The bill aims to give the state, through the Attorney General, more tools to hold loan servicers accountable when the federal government isn't. Servicers would have to get a state license and if they behave badly - harassing borrowers or engaging in deceptive practices, the Attorney General can bar them from operating in Massachusetts.

- **Mental Health Care Access** - An initiative led by students from Leominster, **Natalie's** legislation mandates a mental health curriculum be folded in to existing health education. Last session, a weaker version of the bill passed the Senate but the House wanted the legislation to do more, so she is pushing a mandate next legislative session.

- **Developing a Plan/Mechanism for Debt-free Public Higher Education** - Ideas include an endowment tax that Democratic gubernatorial candidate Jay Gonzalez is proposing or the legislature putting the fair share tax on the ballot (instead of it being a citizen ballot initiative which the Supreme Judicial Court recently ruled unconstitutional). Because the legislature can appropriate money, this kind of ballot initiative serves to tie the legislature's own hands and scuttles the constitutionality issue. We need the revenue to fix transit and schools.

- **Accessibility to Government** - Leominster residents don't feel comfortable going to most social service agencies. **Natalie** has worked to increase access to her office and help troubleshoot constituent issues before they become dire, which is often when constituents finally find their way to her. She holds early morning and evening office hours and has also set up Monday hours in the high school because students had requested more access. Last year, **Natalie** organized four issues-based forums on education, healthcare, economy and environment to get people to come together, brainstorm solutions to these issues and also help residents feel comfortable reaching out to her. **Natalie** door knocked to make sure residents knew about the forums.

Status of Seat: Incumbent being challenged by Trump Republican Rich Palmieri.

Dynamics of Race: **Natalie** is facing Republican Rich Palmieri who is running the Trump playbook. He is attacking her on her vote for legislative pay raises and her support of the Safe Communities Act. Republicans are more organized than Democrats in her district. Mass Fiscal Alliance has spent over \$60k sending five attack mailers against her over the course of the last year. Elizabeth Warren lost badly to Scott Brown there though Hillary Clinton beat Donald Trump. Demographics are shifting in Leominster.

Analysis of Race: **Natalie** won her race in 2016 as a rare, first-time candidate because of her superior grassroots operation. This year is no different. Additionally, our candidate giving framework prioritizes candidates active in practicing deep democracy, and **Natalie's** natural inclination is towards Deep Democracy. **Natalie** is coordinating canvasses with all three progressive ballot initiatives (Yes on 1, 2 and 3), promoting them and handing out their literature when her team is door knocking. On her local Leominster TV show, Natalie has also brought representatives from Yes on 1, 2 and 3 on to educate voters. Investment in her campaign will help her get out three mailings needed to combat outside mailings from Mass Fiscal Alliance and support her GOTV efforts.

[Candidates](#)

DONATE to TRAM

WEBSITE



Tram Nguyen
State Representative, 18th Essex
General Election – Tuesday, November 6th

When she was five years old, **Tram** came to the United States with her family as political refugees escaping the Vietnamese communist regime. In Vietnam, her father served in the South Vietnamese military alongside American soldiers. After the war, her father was forced into re-education camps for over eight years.

Tram's family came to the US with \$100 to their name. They lived in Section 8 housing and were on food stamps. Throughout her childhood, her parents took English classes while working two to three odd jobs with little job security and job protection. "I understand the struggles of working families because I've seen firsthand what it took for my parents to provide for us."

Tram is the first in her family to attend college and then law school. She is now a legal aid attorney at Greater Boston Legal Services, where she works primarily with survivors of domestic violence in immigration and family law and with workers to ensure they are fairly compensated.

On the Issues

- **Safe and Healthy Families** - Working to ensure families are safe and healthy encompasses everything from women's reproductive rights to commonsense gun safety laws to affordable and accessible

healthcare. Investments in schools and infrastructure are crucial. Workers' rights are a priority. **Tram** has worked and pushed for paid family leave and earned income tax credits so people can move into the middle class and stay there.

- **Opioid Crisis** - Prevention and treatment programs are crucial. We shouldn't be forcing those suffering from addiction into civil detainment and we shouldn't be penalizing addiction; we should be treating it. Rep. Jim Lyons' two solutions to the opioid crisis are civil detainment and increasing penalties for drug traffickers.

Status of Seat: Challenging incumbent Republican State Rep. Jim Lyons.

Dynamics of Race: **Tram** is challenging incumbent Tea Party Republican Jim Lyons. They couldn't be more different. He is anti-choice, a charter proponent, and has a 93% rating with the NRA (and a 100% rating with Gun Owners of Massachusetts). Rep. Lyons is one of the co-sponsors of legislation to repeal the trans public accommodations law and was one of only 5 votes against the recent criminal justice reform bill signed into law. Meanwhile, **Tram** has earned the endorsement of organizations championing labor (Mass AFL-CIO), women's reproductive rights (Planned Parenthood and NARAL), LGBTQ+ rights (MassEquality) and the environment (Sierra Club). She's also garnered support from progressive stalwarts like MassAlliance, the Working Families Party, and most recently President Barack Obama.

Turnout and field will be key. In 2010, State Senator Barbara L'Italien held and lost this seat to Jim Lyons in a year when Tea Party Republicans had momentum nationally. This year, **Tram** stands to be part of a national electoral blue wave that is also being deemed "the year of the woman." With a strong grassroots team and strong campaign that has blown past its fundraising goals, **Tram** is running the kind of campaign that could take out this four-term Republican incumbent.

[Candidates](#)

DONATE to TANYA



Tanya Neslusan
State Representative, 1st Hampden
General Election – Tuesday, November 6th

Tanya comes from a family of immigrants and veterans. On her mother's side, her grandfather is from India and her grandmother was a Mayflower descendant. On her father's side, her grandfather, her father, her brother and her wife are all veterans. She grew up believing in the US and in serving your country.

She graduated from college in 1996 when there weren't women in office let alone WOC or queer WOC. She went into health IT to make a difference, believing that if she did her job properly, she could make sure health insurance claims were paid.

Becoming a single mother during her 20's made her evaluate her life and look at the kind of world she wanted to leave her son. In 2016, her state representative was on the ballot uncontested. Again. He voted against trans protections and against maintaining birth control under the state version of the ACA. He voted for the constitutional amendment banning equal marriage. As a soccer coach, **Tanya** often tells her players: "Don't come complaining if you don't have a suggestion." She decided to take her own advice.

Rep. Smola is one of the legislators who voted against the public accommodations law. It's one of the reasons she's running. It's not just about bathrooms, as opponents like to say. It's also about things like medical care.

Tanya has a long history of social justice activism in her community. She has co-produced The Vagina Monologues in Worcester for several years. She's on the leadership team for Showing up for Racial Justice in Worcester where they do stand-outs for the Muslim community, racial justice rallies, and also work with mayor's office and city council in Worcester to develop better policy.

On the Issues

- **Infrastructure** - Creating an East/West rail line is a priority. In her district, the average commute to work is 45 minutes. When you hit Sturbridge, the Pike goes down to two lanes, there are no lights and it's 20 miles between Sturbridge and the next exit. It's important to improve rail transportation because that increases economic opportunity. Adding a rail line in Worcester has had a huge beneficial impact and brought in new businesses. The 1st Hampden district needs that kind of growth.
- **Healthcare**
 - **Tanya** wants to start moving towards single payer by implementing single payer preventative care. The lack of preventative care is what sends people to emergency care, and that's the biggest cost in healthcare. Single payer preventative care would be a smaller investment that puts healthcare on everyone's personal radar and builds the cultural shift you need for full single payer healthcare.
 - There's a severe provider shortage, not only in primary care but in mental healthcare and addiction services, that is critical for the single payer preventative care model she is championing. As with teachers, **Tanya** believes there should be loan forgiveness for those working in high-need communities. She envisions a co-op program with UMass Medical.
- **Opioid Epidemic** - It's important that we promote access to Narcan and have adequate mental healthcare in our communities, including enough beds. We also need to decriminalize opioid use and approach it as a health issue. Additionally, with the economic desolation of the area, it's important

to make sure that there are things for people to do, especially for kids. If you have no job and nothing to do all day, idle hands are a devil's playground.

Status of Seat: Challenging sitting Republican State Rep. Todd Smola

Analysis of Race: **Tanya** has a tough race ahead of her but this is the year for Democrats to be taking on Republicans. The district voted for Trump, but, reflecting the national trend, Democrats in the area are energized in this post-Trump era. She is working hard and focused on running a grassroots campaign. The district is spread out among seven towns, making fundraising and infrastructure more important than in other state representative races. Investing in her campaign financially will make a big difference.

[Candidates](#)

DONATE to JAY

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Jay Gonzalez

Governor

General Election — Tuesday, November 6th

Jay Gonzalez was the former Secretary of Administration and Finance under Governor Deval Patrick during the Great Recession. While in the Administration, he also served as Chairman of the Board of the Massachusetts Health Connector, where he oversaw implementation of Massachusetts' health care reform, and he co-chaired the Massachusetts Life Sciences Center. Afterwards, **Gonzalez** was chair of the Massachusetts Board of Early Education and Care and, most recently, was President and CEO of CeltiCare Health and New Hampshire Healthy Families, leading the turn-around of an ailing health insurance provider that serves low-income people in Massachusetts and New Hampshire.

On the Issues

- Single-payer healthcare.
- Fixing our broken transportation system by ending Governor Baker's practice of outsourcing key functions of our transportation system, making the necessary investments in transportation, and expanding public transportation across the Commonwealth.
- Ensuring Massachusetts has the highest quality early education and childcare system in the country and that it is available and affordable to all.
- To pay for investments in transit and education, **Gonzalez** has proposed a 1.6% tax on nonprofit college and university endowments over \$1 billion, which so far would apply to nine schools including Harvard University and MIT.

Status of Seat: Challenging incumbent Governor Charlie Baker.

Analysis of Race/Campaign: Undoubtedly, **Jay** faces an uphill battle. Incumbent Republican Charlie Baker remains the most popular governor in the country; according to a July 2018 Morning Consult poll, Governor Baker has a 69% approval rating. A separate June 2018 WBUR poll found that Governor Baker is more popular among Democrats (65%) and Independents (69%) than even Republicans (64%). Jay also struggles to contend with Governor Baker's \$4.5 million war chest. Jay has less than \$700k on hand in a race where money matters to get your message across the state.

Nonetheless, as progressive State Senator Pat Jehlen lays out in her most recent [newsletter](#), defeating Governor Baker is crucial. [T]he Supreme Judicial Court voted 5-2 in June to keep [the Fair Share constitutional amendment] off the ballot. Four of the five justices who voted against the amendment were appointed by Gov. Baker. In the next two years, another justice will have to retire (mandatory retirement for Mass. judges is 70). If Gov. Baker is re-elected, he will be able to appoint 6 out of 7 justices. The first Republican appointee to retire will be in 2029, so there'll be a solid Baker super-majority for at least a decade. With potential lawsuits heading to the SJC like the fair school funding suit Brockton and Worcester are exploring, the make-up of the SJC couldn't be more important.

What makes **Jay** a strong candidate is his extensive experience in government, healthcare and education, his bold proposals like the endowment tax and his level of detail when talking about policy. His resume actually resembles Charlie Baker's; both were budget chiefs and led health insurers, which has allowed **Jay** to go head-to-head with Governor Baker without Baker being able to cite experience and know-how as differentiators. Though defeating Baker seems challenging, if we can turn out our voters – non-traditional, community of color voters - across the state in this untraditional year, we can make great progressive gains with another progressive Governor leading our state.

[Candidates](#)

DONATE to AYANNA

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VIDEO BIO

Ayanna Pressley

MA-07

General Election — Tuesday, November 6th

Ayanna Pressley is an advocate, a policy-maker, an activist, and survivor. Raised in Chicago, as the only child of an activist mother who instilled the value of civic participation, **Ayanna** understands the role that government should play in helping to lift up communities that are in need of the most help. Her focus as a City

Councilor - stabilizing families and communities, reducing and preventing violence and trauma, combating poverty, and addressing issues that disproportionately impact women and girls - is a reflection of her 25 years in public service.

On the Issues

1. **Economic Growth and Opportunity for All** — despite a growing economy across the region, income inequality is a persistent problem that is pushing out longtime residents. **Councilor Pressley** wants to focus on creating fair economic policies that give tax relief to lower and middle-income workers, not the wealthy and big corporations. She supports expanding the earned income tax credit, social security, improving infrastructure, reforming Wall Street, supporting small business and aspiring entrepreneurs, empowering women to succeed, seeking fair and comprehensive immigration policies or fighting for family paid leave and LGBTQ right. She also wants to create good-paying jobs, that's why she supports increasing the minimum wage to \$15, major investments in workforce training, including apprenticeships and vocational education in advanced manufacturing and technology to help young people find careers.
2. **Education** — to build a more inclusive and sustainable 21st century economy, **Councilor Pressley** will prioritize improving public schools by guaranteeing universal pre-kindergarten, debt free college, investing in school buildings, school food programs and in life-oriented education program. She believes that if we're going to arm our teachers it's with well-rounded support staff, students who are ready to learn, an environment that enables focus, the tools to teach and the salary that honors their craft
3. **Health Care and Public Safety** — protecting the Affordable Care Act and push further by-passing Medicare for all. **Councilor Pressley** will continue her fight for women's reproductive justice health, lead on ending the addiction crisis, and enabling health systems to succeed whether it addressing the mental health component of gun violence or streamlining patient data for better treatment. Unlike her opponent, she will go further on public safety by demanding gun control, improving local law enforcement, and eliminating human trafficking.

Status of Race: District is located in Greater Boston and includes two-thirds of the City of Boston, all of Everett, Chelsea, Randolph, and Somerville, as well as half of Cambridge and a few precincts in Milton. This is a safely held Democratic seat and the primary will determine winner.

Dynamics of Race: Head to head Democratic Primary against 18-year incumbent, Michael Capuano, who is generally well-liked by the establishment. Recent polls show a competitive race between **Ayanna Pressley** and Mike Capuano even though a large swath of voters have not yet heard of Ayanna. She already leads Capuano among those who know her, and we can expect her support to continue to expand as more voters become familiar with her and her story. The current political environment will also boost **Ayanna**, as Democrats are fed up with Congress and hungry for change. This sentiment is especially strong among women, younger voters and voters of color, all core constituencies for **Ayanna**. Capuano's support is below 50%, a concerning sign for any incumbent, especially in a change environment like this one. His only real election was in 1998, in a crowded field, where he earned only 23% of the vote. Her legislative

achievements resulted in her being the top vote getter in three consecutive elections, making her the first woman in 30 years to achieve this distinction and the first person of color to top the ticket.

Pressley's Campaign: Pressley has launched a bold and aggressive multi-ethnic communications, grassroots, and fundraising program led by leading local and DC strategists, who raised \$100,000 one week after the campaign's launch and a total of \$364,000 by the end of first quarter. With a tough primary ahead, **Councilor Pressley** faces an incumbent, who closed out 2017 with \$700,000, therefore fundraising is the biggest challenge she faces. Her second challenge is that as a well-liked former mayor and Congressman, Capuano retains a solid reservoir of goodwill and institutional support. Explaining how **AP's** vision for the office—and what role a Congresswoman can and should play in today's politics—will be vital to winning this primary.

[Candidates](#)

DONATE to RACHAEL

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Rachael Rollins
Suffolk County District Attorney
General Election — Tuesday, November 6th

Rachael is the oldest of five children in a working-class, multi-cultural family. She attended Buckingham Browne and Nichols on a full scholarship and received a Division I scholarship to attend the University of Massachusetts at Amherst. She has a law degree from Northeastern, and a

Master of Laws from Georgetown University.

Rachael's brother is currently in jail. She is also a foster mother to two of her young nieces (ages 5 and 9) whose parents are incarcerated due to mental health and addiction issues. If **Rachael** had not taken custody of her nieces, they would have gone into the DCF system.

Rachael served as a state Assistant District Attorney and a federal Assistant U.S. Attorney, prosecuting cases involving civil rights violations, fraud, sexual predators, narcotics, violence and weapons. She was also the first woman general counsel for the MBTA and the first person of color to be general counsel for MassDOT. In those roles, she managed over 150 employees. She later served as chief legal counsel for the Massachusetts Port Authority.

Rachael was appointed by Attorney General Maura Healey to serve on her Advisory Council on Racial Justice and Equity. Additionally, she was a former Governor Deval Patrick appointee to the Commonwealth's Judicial Nominating Commission, was former President of the Massachusetts Black Lawyers Association, and was elected by her peers to serve on the Boston Bar Association Council.

On the Issues

- **Transparency** – “On the campaign trail, so many voters don’t know what the DA does and don’t know it’s an elected position. With the opioid crisis, people are interacting with the DA’s office who don’t normally interact with the DA’s office. They think of the DA’s office as dealing with crime and violent crime, but the opioid crisis is a health crisis that is touching people regardless of socio-economic status. We need to make sure that people know what we do. People need to know that when your loved one is high on drugs, absent a significant violent crime, we are going to try and divert them to the services they need.” We need a holistic reform approach and we need to be transparent and give people access to the office. She plans to have quarterly meetings in the community to report on the state of the DA’s office. “This idea is unfortunately revolutionary given what the current DA is doing.”
- **Inclusion and Reform** - She would be the first woman and woman of color to be the DA in Suffolk County. She will pursue a different approach to being DA, like leaving the physical DA’s office to go out into the community more. Additionally, there are currently no women in upper level management. “It can’t be that white men continue to be the only voice and opinion by which we look at things.” She has supervised groups of 150 people and knows for sure that having different opinions at the table makes you a better leader. She will also ensure that all residents can access the office irrespective of the language they speak, including having the website available in multiple languages.
- **Other policy stances**
 - **Juvenile Justice**
Rachael is a strong believer in the brain science that brains don’t stop developing until someone is in their mid-20s. Middlesex County has a unit for youthful offenders, ages 18-24, which she thinks is a good model. Kids in DYS oftentimes feed into the criminal justice system. Instead, Rachael believes that we should get these kids the services they need so that can move back into society.

In the current DA’s office, there is not enough written policy and procedures. It’s not fair that if you live in West Roxbury and are white that you get a lesser punishment. With policies and procedures, we can wipe out the inequity that usually happens with juveniles.

- **Mandatory Minimums**
 “Judges are there so they can use their discretion in judging mitigating factors. Are you going to jail? Yes, but mandatory minimums at the front end [by the prosecutor] don’t work. There is no structure or process to say, ‘that seems excessive.’ The decision to charge is unappealable. If you are charged with crimes that have mandatory minimums, that decision is made by a young, inexperienced Assistant District Attorney who has very little experience and is not from the communities they are

prosecuting. At the backend of the process, there's a jury of peers that probably doesn't look like me or have similar life experiences. With mandatory minimums, judges can't do anything. In this state, the qualifications to become a judge are extensive and candidates are heavily screened. Mandatory minimums take away judges' discretion and give it to the Assistant District Attorneys"

- **Safe Communities Act**
"Even if a city is not a sanctuary city, I will not be turning people over to the federal government"

Status of Seat: Open seat.

Dynamics of Race: With five people in the race and multiple progressives running, there has been strong concern that progressives will split the votes, allowing the more conservative candidate in the field, Greg Henning, to win. In a first-of-its-kind effort in this state, Justice for Mass, a coalition of 30+ local progressive organizations, is combating that by coming together to collectively endorse district attorney candidates in Massachusetts, including Rachael for Suffolk County DA. With the grassroots firepower and field campaign behind this endorsement, **Rachael** has become the progressive in the strongest position to win.

Our candidate endorsement framework ([Framework for Giving](#)) prioritizes campaigns promoting deep democracy. Because we strongly support the community-powered organizations behind Justice for Mass and the first-of-its-kind work they are doing together, we support their candidate for Suffolk County DA, **Rachael Rollins**.

[Candidates](#)

DONATE to ANDREA

WEBSITE



Andrea Harrington
Berkshire County District Attorney
Preliminary Election - September 26th

Growing up the daughter of a carpenter and housekeeper in Western Massachusetts, **Andrea** remembers, in the third grade, cleaning houses with her teen mom because they couldn't afford childcare. She was the first in her family to go to college, and the first to go to law school. She spent her years right after law school fighting death penalty convictions in Florida and came back to Western Massachusetts to start a family and worked to defend poor defendants in the criminal justice system.

Andrea is running because Berkshire County is stuck in the past. The DA's office is stuck on the 1980's war on drugs. Meanwhile, there's been a sharp increase in opioid deaths in the last seven months. They have high crime rates; North Adams has the highest crime rate per capita and higher rates of domestic violence than

anywhere else in the state. From her experiences in the courtroom and representing people on death row, she knows the criminal justice system fails people of color and poor people. This DA's office only has a myopic view of criminal justice and operates with a law enforcement mentality.

On the Issues

- **Start diversion programs** – Berkshire County is the only county in the state without a diversion program which enables people with mental health and substance abuse issues to get help instead of being sent to jail. Instead of going in front of a judge, juveniles that commit non-violent crimes are taken out of the courtroom and connected with social workers and programs. The DA's office could apply for grants and bring in additional resources for treatment like Hampshire County but the Berkshire County DA has actually turned down offers.
- **Sexual assault** – The current DA's office has been accused of not bringing charges in sexual assault cases where there was probable cause. **Andrea** pledges to re-open every sexual assault case from the last 15 years – the statute of limitations - where there was no indictment.
- **Accountability and transparency** - We know that people of color, low-income people and LGBTQ+ are over-represented in the criminal justice system but the DA's office doesn't track that data. The median bail for POC is five times higher than for white people. Who is being charged? What are they being charged with? She will start a citizens advisory board to analyze this data to treat people more fairly
- **Create a special unit for young people ages 19-25** – Anyone 18 years old and younger is still put in juvenile court. **Andrea** represented someone on death row who was 17 years old when he committed a crime and successfully argued for a life sentence because of his age. She wants to create a special unit that deals only with young people ages 19-25, focused on identifying good candidates for rehabilitation. 19-25 year olds in the criminal justice system are missing out on an important developmental time in their lives and are not learning the life skills that they need.

Status of Seat: Challenging incumbent DA Paul Caccaviello, who was appointed by Gov. Charlie Baker in March 2018 after long-time DA David Capeless retired.

Dynamics of Race: DA Caccaviello was former DA David Capeless' 1st Deputy DA, who stepped down halfway through his final year in office and asked Gov. Baker to appoint Caccaviello to the seat. Caccaviello was a registered independent and switched his party registration to Democrat in February before he was appointed. A Supreme Judicial Court ruling found that Caccaviello violated a defendant's civil rights by removing the one POC from the jury because of race. Perennial candidate Judy Knight is also running against Caccaviello in the primary.

Maria's List endorsed **Andrea's** first run for State Senate two years ago. As with the other DA races, **Andrea's** endorsement by the Justice for Mass coalition was a big boon that continues her momentum. She has a great shot to win.

DONATE to NIKA

WEBSITE



Nika Elugardo
State Representative, 15th Suffolk
General Election – Tuesday, November 6th

The oldest of seven kids, **Nika** grew up in Columbus, Ohio in poverty. Her father was a construction worker who dealt drugs when he couldn't find construction work, bringing **Nika** with him from Columbus to Miami on drug deals when she was a child. Growing up, her family was oftentimes evicted from their home or had to move because of her dad's dangerous lifestyle.

Nika changed schools nine times until she got a scholarship to attend the Columbus School for Girls. It changed the trajectory of her life. She went to MIT for college, got a master's degree from Harvard's Kennedy School and graduated from BU Law School. Along the way, she trained leaders across the country to fight foreclosures at the National Consumer Law Center's Foreclosure Prevention Project and worked on gender justice, community health and youth development at the Emmanuel Gospel Center. After law school, she served as a Senior Advisor for Policy and Planning for State Senator Sonia Chang-Diaz, was the founding director of MassSaves.org where she worked to promote asset development and economic justice in low-income communities, and then returned to work at Emmanuel Gospel.

On the Issues

- **Quality and Fully Funded Education for All, from Pre-K Through Higher Education, Including Trade Apprenticeships and Boot Camps**
 - For our youngest community members, that means universal access to early education. For pre-K-12 students it means access to high-quality in-class instruction. It means ending racial disparities and replacing the so-called preschool to prison pipeline with a pre-school to career pipeline. In-school learning should include physical education, bilingual education and arts engagement. Students should have access to the supports that allow them to thrive — nurses, mental health counselors, clinicians, and safe, affordable out-of-school time programs. Additionally, she supports Planned Parenthood's call for medically-accurate, age-appropriate, LGBTQ+ inclusive sex and health education. College and career counseling should prepare students for life after high school; vocational education should be funded and focused on pathways that meet the needs of our communities. And, it means, investing in higher education. Students in state colleges and universities are seeing some of the nation's highest increases in tuition and fees while average student debt for public university students is growing. She will go to bat for funding pre-K to K-12 to higher education – education is the foundation of our economy and our civic life, and it is a

marker of equitable justice. It is vital for a healthy district and Commonwealth.

- She supports the education bill to update our 25-year-old Foundation Budget education funding formula. We're now underestimating statewide education costs by \$1-2 billion every year. These reforms are a critical part of closing the achievement gap and ending classroom cuts facing schools across our state year after year.
- **Healthcare for All/Single-payer** — She is excited to work on single payer healthcare legislation that is truly inclusive. Health care is a right. She's ready to take on the large systems change work that means that every single one of us have healthcare regardless of how much money we have, who our employer is, or who we are married to. When she says "healthcare," she includes dental care, mental health care, care for those with pre-existing conditions, and care for those who have substance use disorders.
- **Affordable Housing That Benefits All and Not Just Developers and High Earners** — The cost of housing is the number one concern many have in her district. We must stop the displacement. She wants the community members she's talked to during the campaign to still be in their homes on September 4th to vote for her. She will work with community members and advocates to maintain their residences and provide new homeownership opportunities. She pledges to pass a Homeless Bill of Rights.
- **Criminal Justice Reform, Including Increased Funding for Restorative Justice** — There is more to be done. If elected, she would propose bold moves towards restorative justice. This includes reforms such as further raising the age of juvenile to 21, abolishing solitary confinement, repealing mandatory minimum sentences for drug offenses, fully-funding reentry services, and abolishing cash bail.
- **Additional Stances**
 - **LGBTQ+ Rights - Nika** is a member of the evangelical church and has a long track record of speaking out against the church's anti-LGBTQ and pro-life stances. When the public accommodations bill was being debated in the legislature, **Nika** designed trainings to educate pastors on the bill and dispel myths about the trans community.
 - **Women's Reproductive Rights** - Nika is a firm believer in Roe v. Wade because "the right to choose is a human."

Status of Seat: Challenging incumbent State Rep. Jeffrey Sanchez.

Dynamics of Race: **Nika** is challenging incumbent State Rep. Jeffrey Sanchez, who as House Ways and Means Chair is the highest ranking Latinx in the state. Asked often why she's running against him, **Nika** says she took a look at his record. Last session, he had a B- rating on the Progressive Mass Scorecard. Since becoming House Ways and Means Chair, his rating has fallen to a C+. "We need progressive champions in the House," **Nika** says on the trail. "I'm challenging this incumbent

because I believe the ‘leadership team’ he belongs to – that of House Speaker Bob DeLeo – is the greatest obstacle to bold progressive change in Massachusetts.”

In a three-minute clip of a July 2018 debate circulating on social media, **Nika** and Rep. Sanchez are shown disagreeing on a number of key progressive issues. **Nika** supports independent review boards for police shootings, eliminating all mandatory minimums and raising the juvenile age beyond 18. Rep. Sanchez does not. **Nika** supports single payer healthcare. Rep. Sanchez does not. **Nika** supports same-day voter registration. Rep. Sanchez does not. Additionally, as House Ways and Means Chair, Rep. Sanchez was sharply criticized for passing a final budget this year that dropped the Senate-backed Safe Communities Act provision. “We just did not find consensus on those provisions,” he told reporters. “There are some issues where consensus should not be your measure of success,” **Nika** responded, arguing that we should never be “using our tax dollars to aid the terrorizing of our residents.”

Rep. Sanchez hasn’t had a primary since 2010.

Elugardo Campaign: Of the two campaigns, **Nika** has the momentum. Challenging a powerful, well-resourced incumbent is never easy, but **Nika** has been running an energizing, grassroots campaign on a bold, progressive platform that has effectively distinguished her as the progressive choice in the race.

[Candidates](#)

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Liz Miranda
State Representative, 5th Suffolk
General Election – Tuesday, November 6th

Liz grew up in the Dudley Triangle neighborhood of Boston, one of the poorest neighborhoods in Boston and a neighborhood that knows a lot about tragedy and transformation. **Liz's** mom was a teen mom; she was a junior at Madison Park High School and a new immigrant from Cape Verde when she gave birth to **Liz**. **Liz's** mom dropped out of high school to raise her and has worked as a cook at the Sheraton for over 30 years. **Liz** running for office has inspired her mom to become an activist; she recently picketed with other Marriott hotel workers to demand better pay and better working conditions.

Liz is one of 11 kids. She is the first in her family to graduate from high school and college. She credits early involvement in community organizations like Teen Empowerment and the Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative (DSNI), where she became one of their youngest board members at 13 years old, and early mentors for getting her to where she is now. Her mentors pushed her to apply to top tier schools like Wellesley, where she ultimately attended.

When she started at Wellesley, all the men in her family -- her birth father, her stepfather, and her two oldest brothers --- were incarcerated at the same time. She talks about that disconnect and the pain she felt throughout college. She worked two to three jobs to put herself through school and what got her through was that she felt she was making something happen not just for herself but for her family and community as well. When she graduated, she worked at the Boston Foundation, ran youth networks but ultimately her heart was in working in youth development and out of school time, because she believes that's what saved her. She currently serves as the Executive Director of the Hawthorne Youth and Community Center (HYCC), a Roxbury nonprofit organization that provides quality affordable programming for low and moderate-income youth and families.

On the Issues

- **Public Safety** - Liz lost her youngest brother to gun violence over a year ago. She sees gun violence as a crisis of youth opportunity. How do we invest in opportunities for 18-24 year olds? Out of school time is essential.
- **Education** - ELL, SPED and social services are crucial priorities that must be better funded. There are 17 public schools in her district and she has visited over half of them.
- **Housing** - A mixed strategy is needed to address the housing crisis. More housing needs to be built but that is separate from eviction prevention services, which are also needed. She is using the power of role to hold convenings and generate new ideas on how to address this crisis.
- **Opioid Crisis** - Liz is partnering with ER doctor and newly elected Boston State Rep. Jon Santiago on this and they have a very different approach than others she's seen. Their focus is community vs. tactical.

Status of Seat: Democratic nominee for open seat facing soon-to-be Boston City Councillor Althea Garrison.

Analysis of Race: Liz opens September primary by ignoring traditional wisdom to only focus on supervoters. She also knew that she wasn't going to get people to vote by telling them to vote but rather by allowing them to see themselves as powerful in their own democracy. She was one of four black women, dubbed the Fantastic Four, elected on September 4th, including other Maria's List-endorsed candidates Congresswoman-Elect Ayanna Pressley, Suffolk County District Attorney-Elect Rachael Rollins and State Representative-Elect Nika Elugardo.

Liz faces perennial candidate Althea Garrison in the general election who is running as an independent progressive and who becomes Boston City Councillor At-Large when Ayanna Pressley steps down to join Congress. **Liz** is not taking the race for granted and has an aggressive door knocking, texting, robocall and mail plan. For the primary, through this same strategy, she touched the voters in her targeted universe seven to ten times, which included nontraditional voters. Most of her team are people of color. Active in Deep Democracy, **Liz** is helping Democratic gubernatorial nominee Jay Gonzalez and Rachael Rollins reach Cape

Verdean voters through nontraditional outreach based on her deep knowledge of this immigrant community.

[Candidates](#)

DONATE to MARIA

WEBSITE



Maria Robinson
State Representative, 6th Middlesex
General Election – Tuesday, November 6th

Maria is an Asian-American adoptee and is in the process of adopting her two foster children. She attended MIT where she met her husband. When they were deciding where to settle down with their family, they made spreadsheets (because they're engineers) and Framingham came out on top. It had everything they wanted: it was diverse, affordable, they could have a backyard. Last year, her parents moved from Philadelphia and moved in with them, in part because they couldn't find a place in Massachusetts to live that was affordable. It's clear to her that we're pricing seniors out of our state.

Maria has spent the last decade working in nonprofits focused on clean energy. She's worked on renewable energy and energy efficiency policy at the federal level and in 25 states.

On the Issues

- **Changing the Foundation Budget** – We have to change the funding formula for English Language Learners (ELL) and special education (SPED) students. Framingham has a disproportionate number of ELL and SPED students from the surrounding areas who are bused in. This requires additional costs that are not reflected in the current funding formula. The Foundation Budget Review Commission recommendations are the right way to move forward, but per usual, the House dropped the ball ([Boston Globe article](#).)
- **Public Transportation** - The bus system, run by the MetroWest Regional Transit Authority (MWRTA), doesn't run on Sundays or holidays, and information is only in English. The vast majority of people who take the bus don't speak English, and it's crucial to improve the system for our working folks who rely on it to get to work
- **Safe Communities Act** - We need to pass it, hands down. In a city that is over 40% POC, it's a priority. It's also a priority of Framingham's police chief who says that without it, a large part of Framingham's population doesn't feel comfortable reporting crime which endangers us all.

Status of Seat: Open seat following late Rep. Chris Walsh's passing; will be a write-in primary election

Dynamics of Race: Following the late Representative Chris Walsh's passing in mid-May, a write-in September 4th primary election is being held to determine

which Democrat will appear on the November ballot as the party's nominee. Including **Maria**, four people are running.

Robinson's Campaign: **Maria** has emerged as the progressive in the race and as the candidate running the strongest campaign. Progressive organizations (MassAlliance, Progressive Mass), LGBTQ+ rights organizations (MassEquality), women's reproductive rights organizations (NARAL and Planned Parenthood), labor (SEIU 1199, 509 and 32BJ), and teachers (MTA) have all endorsed her. She's raised the resources and is running the strong field program needed to win.

[Candidates](#)