



EDWARD PACHECO

STATE REPRESENTATIVE

2026 BALLOT QUESTION RESPONSES

9th Bristol District • Dartmouth & New Bedford

PachecoForThePeople.com

Q1 Expanding the Public Records Law

This proposal, backed by Massachusetts Auditor Diana DiZoglio, would make most records held by the governor's office and Legislature subject to the state's public records law.

I believe that transparency is essential to building trust between government and the people it serves. It is one of my pledges as State Representative and why I will be hosting monthly meetings in both New Bedford and Dartmouth. When government operates openly, I believe that it leads to better decisions, stronger accountability, and greater public confidence. As your State Representative, I will support policies that promote:

Open and accessible government records.

Clear communication about legislation, spending, and decision-making.

Accountability for how taxpayer dollars are spent.

Ethical leadership that puts people before politics.

An open and transparent government doesn't just inform the public, it creates better policies by ensuring every voice has the opportunity to be heard.

Q2 Collective bargaining for CPCS employees

This proposal would allow employees of the Committee for Public Counsel Services to form a union.

I recognize that public employees have the right to seek union representation if they choose, while emphasizing that any collective bargaining framework should preserve the agency's ability to provide timely, high-quality legal services and remain accountable to taxpayers. The ultimate goals of supporting this measure should be in support of the following:

Improving recruitment and retention: Union representation may help negotiate competitive wages and benefits, making it easier to attract and retain experienced attorneys and support staff.

Reducing turnover: Lower turnover can provide greater continuity for clients and reduce hiring and training costs.

We also need to recognize that we have an obligation to be sure we are Balancing Public Interest: Any agreement must ensure that taxpayer resources are used responsibly while maintaining the agency's ability to fulfill its mission of providing legal representation.

Q3 State Primary Elections

This proposal would make Massachusetts' state elections, starting in 2028, like Boston's: Candidates of all parties would be on a single ballot in the primary, with the top-two finishers advancing to the general elections. These are sometimes known as "jungle primaries."

I believe Massachusetts should continue looking for ways to make our elections more open, competitive, and representative of the people we serve.

I also believe we should be careful about replacing our current primary system with a "jungle primary" without fully understanding the consequences. A single primary ballot could give voters more choices, but it could also fundamentally change how political parties nominate candidates and how voters organize around the issues and values they believe in. Massachusetts already allows every registered voter to participate in a party primary.

Unenrolled voters can choose either the Democratic or Republican ballot without becoming members of that party.

For me, this isn't about protecting the political establishment or preserving the status quo. It's about making sure any changes to our election system actually strengthen voter participation, competition, transparency, and accountability.

I'm open to reform. I'm just not interested in changing the rules without carefully considering what comes next.

Our elections belong to the voters, and any major change should start with their interests, not the interests of political parties or candidates.

Q4 Election Day Registration

This question, proposed by Galvin, would allow Massachusetts voters to register at the polls on Election Day – also known as same-day voter registration.

I believe that same-day voter registration has the potential to increase voter participation by encouraging eligible residents with the opportunity to register and cast a ballot even if they missed traditional registration deadlines due to moving, life changes, or even a lack of awareness. It also believe that individuals who take the time to participate in the democratic process should have a reasonable opportunity to vote if they meet all eligibility requirements. Additionally, allowing registration updates at the polls may improve the accuracy of voter rolls by capturing address changes and correcting outdated information. Now here is the challenge, if this ballot question passes, then implementing same-day registration must be balanced with practical considerations, including the potential for longer wait times at polling locations, especially in busy precincts with limited staffing. I would also have concerns about the ability to verify residency and eligibility before a ballot is cast, although in other states that use same-day registration, they typically have procedures in place to complete verification afterward. We would also need to factor in the additional costs of training, etc. before rolling this out completely. I think that a moderate and reasonable approach should focus on expanding access while ensuring election officials have the resources and safeguards necessary to maintain an efficient and secure election process.

Q5 State Revenue Limit and Rebate

Business groups are pushing this question that would make the state revenue surplus cap law account for money from the millionaire's surtax.

In my opinion, Question 5 is about how Massachusetts calculates when taxpayers are entitled to rebates under the state's existing tax-revenue limit. I believe taxpayers deserve transparency and accountability, but the state also has a responsibility to maintain the resources necessary to fund schools, roads, public safety, transportation, and other essential services. I would recommend that when you vote, you look very carefully at Question 5 based on whether changing the existing formula provides meaningful relief to taxpayers without creating unnecessary instability in the state budget. If you feel the money is better spent on schools, roadways, and infrastructure then vote No.

Q6 Natural Resource Conservation Fund

This proposed law would establish a “Nature for All Fund” that would receive 50% of state taxes from sporting goods, recreational vehicles and golf courses. The money would be used for natural resource conservation, such as protecting green spaces and bodies of water.

I believe protecting our natural resources is an investment in our quality of life, our economy, and future generations. In the 9th Bristol District, in particular Dartmouth, where we have consistent shortages, conserving our drinking water, preserving working farms, and protecting open spaces are goals that benefit our district. At the same time, I believe dedicated funding should be managed with transparency and accountability to ensure taxpayers know exactly how their dollars are being spent and that projects deliver measurable results. As your State Representative, I will support practical conservation efforts that balance environmental stewardship with fiscal responsibility while ensuring communities across Massachusetts share in these investments.

Q7 Single-Family Homes

Pushed as an initiative to make more affordable “starter homes,” this law would allow single-family homes to be built on lots as small as 5,000 square feet, provided they have at least a little room between the road.

I believe our cities and towns are in the best position to understand their unique character, infrastructure, and development needs, and local decision-making should continue to play a central role in shaping our communities. At the same time, we cannot ignore the growing shortage of affordable starter homes that allow young working professionals, first-time homebuyers, and seniors looking to downsize to remain in the communities they call home. I support working collaboratively with municipalities to encourage thoughtful housing solutions that respect local priorities while expanding opportunities for residents at every stage of life. This proposal is not the way to do it though.

Q8 Prohibit Retail Sale of Adult Recreational-Use Marijuana:

While Massachusetts has increasingly legalized marijuana in recent years, this question would repeal provisions in the current law that allow for the drug to be sold commercially in the state.

I understand and respect the concerns many residents, myself included, have raised about the public health impacts of marijuana, especially when it comes to protecting young people and preventing substance misuse. Any policy involving marijuana must prioritize strong regulation, responsible business practices, education, and enforcement to prevent youth access and address impaired driving. I also do not support any expansion of sales or how it is sold, beyond current conditions, i.e. no smoke lounges. At the same time, Massachusetts voters made the decision to legalize adult-use marijuana, and I believe our focus should be on making sure the system works responsibly, protects public health, and holds bad actors accountable. In addition, this roll back would be the 21st century equivalent of prohibition and could promote illegal growth, sales and utilization. As State Representative, I will support policies that balance individual responsibility with the need to safeguard our communities, especially our children and vulnerable populations.

Q9 Firearms Regulation

This is a referendum question on the 2024 gun reform law known as Chapter 135 that strengthened Massachusetts gun regulations. A yes vote would uphold the law, while a no vote would repeal it.

I believe Southcoast residents understand that public safety and respect for responsible firearm ownership can and must exist together. Many of our neighbors, myself included, are lawful firearm owners, including hunters, sport shooters, collectors, and individuals who take firearm safety very seriously. Their rights and traditions deserve respect, while we also have a responsibility to keep firearms away from those who pose a threat to our families and communities.

No law is perfect, and I fully recognize that the current firearms law has areas that deserve a serious and thoughtful review. Some provisions need clarification, adjustments, or changes to ensure we are not creating unnecessary burdens for those who are faced with enforcing the laws as well as responsible gun owners while still maintaining strong public safety protections. However, fixing the parts of a law that need improvement doesn't require throwing out the entire law.

As State Representative, I will approach this issue the same way I approach all legislation: listen to residents, work with law enforcement and stakeholders, identify what is working and what is not, and make common-sense improvements. We can support responsible gun ownership while also taking reasonable steps to prevent gun violence and protect our communities.