

# **Massachusetts Green Party Platform**

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# 1 Ecological Sustainability

As temporary inhabitants of the earth we are not its owners, but its caretakers. We are charged with the immense responsibility of stewardship over the earth's resources, and with insuring that these resources remain intact to be passed down to future generations. We share this planet with many other species, and have a responsibility to promote continuing its biological diversity.

The Greens believe in preventing pollution. In contrast, the State of Massachusetts has spent millions of dollars attempting to regulate pollution, and handing out permits to pollute.

Citizens should have the right to enforce the provisions of all environmental legislation, including the right to initiate lawsuits for failure to comply with statutory and regulatory requirements.

The Greens strongly support the right of community residents to participate in the decision making process related to the cleanup of hazardous waste sites. The Greens advocate ongoing health monitoring for inactive hazardous waste sites.

Energy conservation is the most ecologically sensible, economically sound and immediately available energy resource.

## 1.1 Sustainable Organic Agriculture

The Greens advocate the use of sustainable, organic agricultural policies.

We Greens support:

- A phase-out in the use of petrochemically-derived fertilizers, pesticides, and herbicides, particularly those that contain known or suspected carcinogens or mutagens. Pesticide use on farms causes the loss of irreplaceable topsoil and victimizes farmers by increasing their dependence on chemicals. Massachusetts should encourage alternatives to controlling pests, such as integrated pest management.
- State and local agencies should be required to establish pesticide reduction policies and implement least-toxic, least-impact pest management strategies.
- Banning the use of Bovine Growth hormone in milk production;

- Prohibition of large corporate and insurance company ownership of farmland;
- Expansion and diversification of family and cooperative organic farming;
- Improving the pay and working conditions of farm workers;
- Promoting cooperative and community-owned food markets as an alternative to chain supermarkets;
- Linking farmers cooperatives to consumer cooperatives;
- Increasing the diversity and self-reliance of the food and agriculture economy of Massachusetts;
- Public subsidies of agriculture going to family farmers, not corporate ones;
- The use of tax dollars to purchase development rights from farmers in order to preserve agricultural land;
- The banning of the sale of irradiated food in Massachusetts;
- the preservation of agricultural land in Massachusetts;
- the expansion and improvement of farmers' markets;
- the expansion of opportunities for more people to garden, and education concerning how to successfully garden organically.

## 1.2 Renewable Energy

Our energy needs must be met through the development and use of energy efficiency technologies, conservation, and renewable energy. The risk of cataclysmic global warming or centuries of radioactive contamination is not worth a few additional decades of energy from outmoded energy sources. The use of fossil fuels and nuclear power should be phased out as rapidly as possible

We Greens support:

- a shutdown of all nuclear power plants in Massachusetts now;
- no storage of radioactive materials in Massachusetts (other than what has been produced here); keep nuclear waste at reactor sites;
- energy conservation and efficiency, and clean, renewable energy sources such as solar-hydrogen fuel, solar-electric photovoltaics, solar-thermal electricity, solar heating, small-scale hydro, wind power, and biofuels, being

given priority over ecologically detrimental and socially irresponsible energy sources (i.e., nuclear power, fossil fuels and Hydro-Quebec's James Bay project);

- municipal ownership of power systems, saving local consumers as much as one-third of the cost of electricity;
- electric and gas utilities being required to provide financial assistance to residential and agricultural customers who install solar and wind equipment;
- conversion of at least 10% of the Commonwealth's vehicle fleet to non-polluting vehicles, such as electric or solar-hydrogen combustion by 2003. The state should also equip a percentage of their parking spaces with recharging outlets for use by state employees who commute to work in electric vehicles;
- full U.S. implementation of the Kyoto protocol and the reorientation of Massachusetts energy policies to comply with the intent of that protocol;
- requiring new construction to include renewable sources of energy, such as solar power, and greater energy conservation measures;
- conversion of military research labs to research into alternative energy and energy efficiency, including graduate and post-graduate retraining of research personnel at public expense;
- following California's lead and have state agencies reduce energy consumption by 20% by the year 2003.

We oppose:

- The Bush administration's planned expansion of the use of coal and nuclear energy;
- Oil drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge;
- Subsidies or tax breaks for the automobile, oil, gas, coal and nuclear industries with the exception of programs to assist them with conversion and retraining, and with safety and environmental mitigation measures.
- Military intervention or deployment in the Mideast, Central and South America, or elsewhere, to secure energy reserves.

### **1.3 Recycle Waste**

Those who produce garbage should be held financially responsible for ensuring its safe disposal.

We Greens oppose:

- the use of garbage incineration. Close and ban trash incinerators;
- the use of mixed waste co-composting, since the end product is often contaminated with toxics, plastics, metals, and other contaminants.

We Greens support:

- a move toward total recycling through reduction of non-recyclable wastes, composting organic wastes, and increasing the reuse and recycling of other materials.
- a solid waste program based on promoting waste reduction (such as the Commonwealth's Environmentally Sound Packaging Act and the German packaging law), re-use of materials, and comprehensive recycling and green composting of only food and yard waste, with the residue to be placed in small, environmentally secure landfills.

### **1.4 Clean Air**

The Greens support implementation of the federal Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990 by means of the method chosen by the Commonwealth's Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) including:

- requiring a fee of at least \$40 per ton for stationary source emissions. All projects that have not received permits by Nov 15, 1992 should be required to comply with the new offset rules;
- adoption of Transportation Control Measures which would permit preferential parking for multiple occupancy vehicles and alternative transportation initiatives (e.g., mass transit and bicycle commuting programs); and requiring manufacturers to warranty emission control systems with the Commonwealth having the power to require manufacturers to recall vehicles with faulty emission systems and make all required repairs at no cost to the consumer.

### **1.5 Parks and Wilderness**

Massachusetts must do more to protect our few remaining wilderness areas. Wilderness areas maintain habitat for endangered species and other

plants and animals, help clean the air and reduce global warming, protect against erosion and flooding, help preserve water quality, and are important to the emotional well-being of human society, to name a few of their benefits.

We Greens support:

- expanding existing forest preserves through purchases of conservation easements and acquisition of land in order to preserve ecologically sensitive areas;
- the establishment of at least 300 foot setbacks from shorelines for all future construction in wilderness areas;
- a ban on all logging and development in old growth forest;
- a ban on the laying of fiber optics through wilderness and parklands;
- a ban on building highways through or near wilderness and parklands;
- a two-year action plan to identify and research all endangered landscapes and allocate state resources to acquire them;
- the creation of a Working Farm and Forest fund to provide property tax abatements to landowners who pledge not to develop their property;
- property tax abatements or other tax relief for landowners who open their lands to free public use, even on a seasonal basis.

### **1.6 State Environmental Fund**

The Greens advocate the creation of a State Environmental Fund to provide public funds for environmental initiatives such as recycling, municipal parks and historical preservation, closure of polluting landfills, construction of local water and sewage treatment plants, and preservation of open spaces, wetlands and wilderness areas. The Greens support using unclaimed deposits from beverage containers for environmental programs.

### **1.7 Direct Election of DEP Commissioner**

The Greens support the direct election of the Commissioner of the Commonwealth's Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). The DEP is presently doing an inadequate job of protecting the Commonwealth's environment.

### **1.8 Toxics Reduction**

We Greens support:

- a ban on the dumping of cancer-causing chemicals into our drinking water.
- a comprehensive Toxic Use Reduction program for all Massachusetts waste generators, along with strict timetables for testing and permanent cleanups of hazardous, radioactive, and industrial waste dumps.
- a fund for conversion from polluting technologies towards sustainable technologies;
- increased efforts to protect all residents from lead poisoning, especially children and communities of color, both populations disproportionately at risk of lead poisoning.

### **1.9 Environmental Racism**

We Greens oppose the present practice of routinely siting environmentally polluting facilities in communities of color and in other traditionally disenfranchised communities. The Greens support legislation to end this practice.

### **1.10 Wildlife**

Our continuing destruction of animal habitats threatens an ever-growing number of species with extinction. This not only deprives these species of their existence, but will deprive future human generations of the enrichment of having these species on the Earth. As Greens, we believe that humanity should share the planet with all other species.

For this reason, we emphasize the importance of protecting endangered species and their habitats. All policies concerning human settlement, food, energy, natural resources, water (fresh and salt), coastal development and industrialization should be formulated to prevent further disruption of the non-human ecosystems' ability to maintain itself.

We Greens support:

- ensuring the protection of native animals and plants in their natural surroundings;
- sponsoring and re-establishing habitats for wildlife, instead of practicing game species management for maximum sustainable yields;
- reintroducing native species to areas from which they have been eradicated;
- eliminating predator control on public lands and reintroducing native predators where they would contribute to a viable ecosystem;

- stopping any further drainage of wetlands and any further development of shore areas;
- strengthening the Endangered Species Act as has been recommended by the National Academy of Science;
- an end to overfishing of our ocean waters.

### 1.11 Animal Farming

The factory farming of animals is an extremely cruel, polluting and unhealthy form of agriculture. Animals are kept in overcrowded, unnatural and unsanitary conditions, causing severe physical and psychological suffering. These conditions in turn promote the spread of livestock diseases, which not only add to the suffering of the animals, but may sometimes affect the health of the food supply – either directly through animal pathogens that can cause human illness, or indirectly through the generalized use of antibiotics which develops resistant strains of pathogenic bacteria. Moreover, American consumption of large amounts of animal products contributes to much of our society's cancer, heart disease and other degenerative diseases.

Current animal farming is wasteful and environmentally destructive. More than half of the water used for all purposes and 80% of all the grain grown in the U.S. is consumed by livestock. Animal farming is a major contributor to water pollution and the greenhouse effect through the vast amounts of animal waste and methane released into the environment. Grazing on public lands - so called "welfare ranching" because it is largely subsidized by taxpayers- is causing serious damage to ecosystems throughout the Western states.

We Greens seek to end the inhumane subjugation, manipulation, and abuse of animals in husbandry and the waste and environmental destruction of current animal farming.

Therefore, we Greens support:

- prohibition of inhumane treatment of food animals and the routine use of hormones, antibiotics, other chemicals, and genetically engineered compounds like BGH for cows;
- a ban on the genetic manipulation of farm animals, other than through conventional breeding;

- phasing out of all inorganic and nonplant-based animal feed;
- regulation of the domestic transportation and slaughter of animals to insure humane treatment.

### 1.12 Ethical Treatment of Animals

As Greens we replace the traditional western belief that our species is the center of creation, and that other life forms exist only for our use and enjoyment, with an ethic that reveres all life. We don't believe that our species has a right to exploit and inflict violence on other creatures simply because we have the desire and power to do so. Our ethic upholds not only the value of biological diversity, and the integrity and continuity of species, but also the value of individual lives and the interest of individual animals.

Throughout history, humanity has exploited other animal species with enormous brutality. We have rationalized this through the belief that the rest of creation has been placed here only for our benefit.

For too long our society has accepted the medical establishment's claim that animal experimentation is necessary, but a lot of evidence shows that not only do alternative testing methods exist but they might, in fact, be safer and more effective in promoting human health. Animal experimentation is an unnecessary and ineffective, and inappropriate research method that must be terminated.

We Greens support:

- an end to all animal experimentation, including within the military;
- a ban on cosmetic and product testing on animals;
- a ban on body gripping traps and the hounding of bear and bobcat, and reform of the Fisheries and Wildlife Board;
- re-channeling the billions of dollars disbursed annually by the National Institutes of Health for animal experiments into direct health care, preventive medicine and biomedical research using non-animal procedures such as clinical, epidemiological and cell culture research.
- immediately outlawing the use of animals for consumer product testing, tobacco and alcohol testing, psychological testing, classroom

demonstrations and dissections, weapons development and other military programs;

- mandating the clear labeling of products to tell whether they have been tested on animals and whether they contain any animal products or by-products;
- establishing procedures to develop greater public scrutiny of all animal research. The areas to be controlled should include the welfare of laboratory animals and a halt to wasteful public funding of unnecessary research, such as duplicative experiments;
- immediately ending the abuse of animals, including farm animals, and strengthening our enforcement of existing laws;
- immediately outlawing all commercial fur ranching and trapping and the use of goods produced from exotic or endangered animals;
- prohibition of large-scale commercial breeding facilities, such as "puppy mills," because of the massive suffering, overpopulation and ill health such facilities produce;
- state and municipal governments subsidization of spay and neuter clinics to combat the ever worsening pet overpopulation problem which results in the killing of millions of animals every year. Where unwanted companion animals are being killed in shelters, we advocate mandatory spay and neuter laws;
- banning the exploitation of animals in entertainment and sports, such as dog and horse racing, dog and cock fighting, fox hunting, hare coursing, rodeos, circuses and other such spectacles;
- increased funding to expand animal shelters, to curtail the use of killing of animals in shelters;
- innovative programs such as bringing unwanted pets to nursing homes and battered family shelters as a substitute for their killing in shelters;
- state and municipal government subsidization of neutering and spaying programs;
- a ban on all state and private-run classroom dissection of live animals.

### **1.13 Transportation**

Our over-reliance on the automobile is fiscally, socially and environmentally destructive. The automobile is a cause of urban sprawl, air and noise pollution, social isolation and economic hardship. Local and regional transportation

planning should generally disfavor expanded use of the automobile and instead favor lower impact public transit (including trains, subways, trolleys, electric buses, and ferries), bicycling and walking. Long-distance transportation planning should generally disfavor expanded use of the airplane and instead favor lower impact transportation such as trains.

Excessive increases in transportation burden society with countless environmental, energy and social costs. Highway accident deaths and injuries, the potential loss of wilderness to oil drilling, road kill of hundreds of thousands of animals, misplaced public investment in Big Dig type projects, neighborhoods sacrificed to airport expansion, the lengthening of the workday in isolating commutes, and the spread of disease and invasive species during international shipment of food, to name but a few "hidden" transportation costs. These costs have not been adequately accounted for in political decision-making and social and economic planning. We Greens will seek means to change land use and development patterns, and the distribution of economic activities, to reduce the need for transportation, and to use the lowest impact means of transport for the transportation actually needed or desirable.

We Greens support:

- halting the expansion of our road network;
- expanded investment in the Massachusetts public transportation system, to make it first in the nation and the world, including development of an Urban Ring subway/rail and the North/South Rail Link in Boston, and a high speed rail link between Boston, Worcester, Springfield and other Massachusetts cities;
- giving priority to the development of public transportation that links underserved neighborhoods with areas offering employment, services, education or commerce;
- requiring that transit agencies make their documents public, to allow for open review and prevent racial and economic discrimination;
- a phased increase in the gas tax to reflect the true costs of driving and to fund public transportation, bikeways, and other lower-impact improvements to our transportation system;

- redesigning streetscapes to emphasize traffic calming (slowing vehicle movement in pedestrian areas), pedestrian access, bicycle lanes and access, dedicated public transit lanes, and HOV lanes;
- changing zoning laws and public construction subsidies to encourage development near mass transit;
- building an integrated network of bicycle lanes and paths within and between all Massachusetts towns, with plentiful bike racks;
- promoting car sharing as an option for residents across the Commonwealth;
- tax credits and other incentives to encourage the use of zero-emission vehicles;
- interim research into zero emission vehicles such as electric cars in the context of a steady reduction in the use of cars for transportation;
- actually implementing Clinton and Gore's 1992 false promise to increase Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFÉ) standards for vehicles to 40 miles per gallon, and 45 miles per gallon by 2015;
- an end to the racist practice in Boston of running the oldest and most polluting city busses through neighborhoods with high populations of persons of color."

## 2 Social Justice

All persons deserve fair and equal access to civil and social justice, and have the rights to share in the fruits of our society. It is our aim to remove any and all impediments to attaining civic or social justice.

We recognize that it is not sufficient simply to remove impediments to social justice. We recognize that simply allowing equal access to social justice does not guarantee that each individual or group will have the desire or capacity to use the courts or other situations to win justice for themselves, unless changes are wrought in our economic, political, and social systems.

### 2.1 Criminal Justice

The main purpose of any effective criminal justice policy is to assure public safety first by preventing crime, followed by fair due process and appropriate sentencing, and the education and rehabilitation of offenders to prepare for their eventual return to the larger community. Our

vision of authentic justice includes preventing crime at its root by reducing social and economic inequalities, and by eliminating the cultural acceptance of violence and exploitation. For the Greens, a key goal of criminal justice reform is the uprooting of the racist effects of a criminal justice system which disproportionately sentences, imprisons and executes persons of color, particularly young black men. Thus a Green criminal justice policy is one aspect of a larger vision of authentic justice for all people.

### Community policing

Crime prevention is best done when the community and law enforcement professionals can work together in a spirit of mutual trust and respect. We Greens therefore support:

- community policing approaches;
- establishment of civilian police review boards with a direct role in the development of policy and the reviewing complaints about police conduct;
- the election of such civilian police review boards, and providing them with subpoena powers and career-track professional investigators with no ties to the police department;
- the protection of the due process rights of both civilians and officers, with civilian police review boards having authority to impose sanctions on police officers who violate citizens rights.

### Gun control

We Greens support:

- - enacting and enforcing strong hand gun control laws and other restrictions on the use and ownership of guns, including waiting periods and background checks for
- purchasing any firearm;
- - a complete ban on assault weapons (defined as any semiautomatic or automatic rifle capable of easy operation and rapid fire).

### Due process and sentencing

We Greens support:

- establishing community mediation facilities to handle cases that do not need to go through the adversarial court system;

- the right of every defendant to a fair and impartial trial, in those cases requiring conventional trial,
- expansion of the right to competent legal counsel;
- public subsidy of an increased number of lawyers to represent low-income persons without charge or at reduced rates in civil and criminal cases;
- undiminished rights against self-incrimination and against double jeopardy;
- expanded rights against cruel and unusual punishment, including an end to the use of prolonged solitary confinement of prisoners;
- the right of a jury to disregard jury instructions that would clearly produce an unjust result under the facts of the case before them;
- the right of jurors to question witnesses under protocols to be developed and incorporated into the trial process.

### **Domestic violence**

A combined approach toward domestic violence should include education and early intervention, strict enforcement of restraining orders and/or incarceration, wider availability of shelters and support systems for victims and women and children in domestic crisis, a greater number of courts available for handling domestic abuse and neglect cases, effective mandatory treatment for offenders, and confiscating and barring access to guns by perpetrators. We recognize that, while most cases of domestic violence are male-on-female, other forms also exist, and all must be condemned and responded to equally.

### **Economic violence**

Economic exploitation can be just as devastating to a victim or community as any other form of violence or theft. Unfortunately, many who perpetrate so-called “white collar crimes” are often sentenced with only monetary restitution and/or a fine. We propose that perpetrators of these crimes also receive a sentence of compulsory community service with the people whom they have adversely affected.

## **2.2 Free and Accurate Public Information**

Whereas the greatest protection against injustice, whether before the law or before one's peers in

society, is information. And whereas the right to inform oneself about the world around him/herself should not ever be abridged, and the community must be ready to assist any individual in his/her search for information. We call for:

### **The extension of the library system**

We believe that there should be community centers that make information and resources available to any who ask, with no regard for their particular circumstances. A library can be more than a warehouse of books. It can host guest lecturers or classes. It can house various tools or resources for the community's use, ranging from computer equipment to swimming pools to other resources. Libraries should provide computer access to members of their community sufficient to meet the needs of those communities.

The resources made available in such community centers must always be based directly on the demand and interest of the community at large. If more people have an interest in automobile maintenance than in classic literature, more resources (as appropriate) should be put towards filling the need for instruction in auto maintenance. Libraries and community centers fail when they see their mission as building community rather than responding to the community -- in the former instance they tend to choose materials based on an assumption that certain materials are better despite inspiring less interest, in the latter instance members of the community find themselves rewarded for presenting their real interests and the community can thrive.

### **The right of the community to demand labeling of products**

The community has the right to demand, of those who do business in the community, that full and accurate information about their product be presented. The community must have, and enforce, truth in advertising laws. The community may demand that full and accurate information about a product's contents be listed on the packaging or be easily available. The community maintains the right to distribute warnings or messages about a product with the product being distributed, if the product poses any kind of risk to any person using it, in the opinion of the community.

## **Language**

The Greens support and encourage the adoption of English by immigrant groups, so that they may easily interact with and feel part of the broader community in Massachusetts. However, the Greens are opposed to English-only legislation, or other actions that make life needlessly difficult for new residents.

To ensure that vital information not be missed by persons who are not versed in English, the Greens support the use of other common languages in official documents and signs. In the context of Massachusetts, we are particularly concerned about Spanish, Mandarin Chinese, and Creole speakers.

The necessity of doing away with mandatory and official truth: Rid ourselves of truancy laws

By their nature, truancy laws create a circumstance in which most persons are forced by economic reality to send their children to a public school. As such, the Commonwealth maintains an official truth from which students do not have the ability to protect themselves. This breaks the ideals of freedom of thought and the development of pluralistic society.

Persons of the upper classes are given the right to home school in this state, but persons in poverty are not. (To home-school, at least one parent must be home during the day, and the school committee in the area must approve of the parent -- and the state is very unlikely to approve of a parent in poverty who is not working.) The result is, the rich are free to give their children any education that they desire, but the poor are forced to accept state education, like it or not.

Truancy laws place our young in a circumstance that no other citizen of the U.S. would tolerate. They are imprisoned without trial or cause, simply because they are under age 16. Their opinions and views about what is important for them is always secondary to what the state thinks is important for them. The argument is, the best way to train people to be free citizens is to imprison them for 12 years; this is a bankrupt and non-sensical argument.

Massachusetts was the first state to implement this draconian policy; perhaps we should be the first to remove it from the books.

## **2.3 Civil Liberties**

## **Extending the right to marry**

As they stand, marriage laws give special financial and legal protection to heterosexuals who are willing to enter into marriage. Within the existing limits of age and incest restrictions, we Greens support full marriage rights and privileges for all people.

## **The call for repealing truancy laws is also a Civil Liberties issue**

Children, too, should have freedom of thought, speech, assembly, and the other basic freedoms denied them by the state through truancy laws.

## **Privacy and encryption**

In the modern age, when the ability of the government to monitor the individual has increased one-hundred-fold, it seems important to make stronger statements, and give further protection, to private rights. As such, the Greens stand against laws that mandate the type or forms of encryption which individuals can use.

## **Protection of non-citizens**

The Greens oppose policies and standards that give residents, both legal and illegal, fewer protections, rights, and liberties than the citizenry.

To this aim, the Massachusetts Greens demand that, within Massachusetts, the Declaration of the Rights of the Inhabitants of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and the Bill of Rights of the United States, be extended to protect all people, regardless of residency or citizenship status, in the Commonwealth at all times.

## **2.4 Drugs**

Greens recognize that the war on drugs is racist and disproportionately targets people of color, poor communities, and victims of drug addiction. Therefore we Greens support the following:

- legalization of marijuana
- de-criminalization of all drugs, so that a discussion of the issue can take place without the cloud of criminality hanging over it
- immediate treatment of drug abuse as a disease, rather than a criminal offense

- efforts by community residents to remove and eliminate the drug trade from their neighborhoods.

## **2.5 Civilian Police Review Boards**

The Greens endorse the establishment of civilian police review boards wherever supported by the community. Civilian police review boards should have a direct role in the development of policy, as well as reviewing complaints about police conduct. Internal police review of police misconduct should be eliminated. The civilian police review boards should:

- be elected;
- have subpoena powers;
- have career-track professional investigators with no ties to the police department;
- provide protection of both civilians and officers due-process rights;
- have authority to impose sanctions on police officers who violate citizens rights.

## **2.6 Indian Treaty Rights**

Greens believe that we must respect the sovereignty and treaty rights of Massachusetts' Indian nations. The Greens call upon the federal and state governments to honor their treaty commitments to indigenous peoples. The Greens support governmental recognition of indigenous nations right to self-determination and self-government.

We must stop the exploitation of natural resources on the lands of indigenous peoples by the state and private companies, and the destruction and pollution of those lands by mining and waste-dumping practices.

The Greens support the rights of indigenous people to participate in and celebrate their own culture.

## **2.7 Reproductive Rights**

Greens accept the difficult moral questions that many people hold around the issue of reproductive rights. Greens refuse to demonize those who oppose abortion. However, Greens also accept that the right of an individual to control his or her own body, is one that cannot be superseded by the government. Each individual, with input from families, friends, and the community, must make the choice for him or her self.

The unlimited expansion of the human population is damaging to the human community and to the planet as a whole. Voluntary reduction of reproduction should be encouraged, provided such encouragement is not used in any way to shape the racial, ethnic, class, gender or other demographic composition of our populations.

Therefore, we Greens support:

- the right to free and complete birth control information and devices for all men and women and for all adolescents with or without parental consent;
- the right to abortion;
- the right to free counseling and support for pregnant women;
- the right to complete free maternity care for those who can not afford it;
- the right for both parents to post-partum and post adoption leave, and to work at three-quarters time or on a flexible schedule with no elimination of benefits, during the first year after birth or adoption of a child;
- the right to be free from involuntary sterilization;
- expansion and protection of sex, reproduction, and human sexuality education in the public schools, covering sexual functions, prevention of sexually transmitted diseases, contraception methods, prenatal care and health, and the process of bearing and caring for children;
- increased educational and self-help programs for mothers to prevent putting fetuses at risk by drinking, smoking or using drugs during pregnancy.

## **2.8 Workers Rights**

We Greens support:

- the organization of democratic labor unions in all workplaces;
- rank-and-file movements for democracy in existing labor unions;
- international labor networks to coordinate struggles against the international power of capital;
- the outlawing of permanent employment of replacements for striking workers;
- democratic workplaces and workers control of the immediate production process;

- the right of workers and their communities to seize the assets of runaway corporations through eminent domain or direct action.

## 2.9 Human Rights

Along with our work in our communities, we advocate for human rights in other nations: the child enslaved by wage work or stitching clothing; the worker denied the right to unionize; the gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgendered person marginalized by their communities; the racial or cultural group persecuted by its neighbors; the political activist threatened by death squads; the prisoner tortured or on death row; the person of faith driven underground by forced conversion; the woman faced with involuntary circumcision, domestic violence, or forced abortion.

## 2.10 Ending Sexism

The Greens want to create an open, non-sexist, non-racist society in which all people will be free to develop to their full potential.

Historically, women's contributions have been fundamental to the development of our society and yet continue to be undervalued.

In a society where leadership is almost exclusively male, we support:

- active efforts, including numerical goals, to create opportunities for full participation by women;
- strong, effective affirmative action programs, including programs within unions, to bring about full representation of women.

Women's liberty is severely restricted by the ever-present threat of violence. We reject the acceptance of violence as normal in male-female relationships. At least one out of four women is physically beaten by a male partner. We must provide help for battered families, including legal resources, psychological counseling and accessible centers and programs which aid women in achieving freedom from economic dependence on men.

Rape is an act of violence. We support:

- programs which provide strong, effective measures to combat rape, including marital rape;
- active reform of existing rape laws (including enlargement beyond traditional legal concepts

of the circumstances under which the crime is considered to have occurred);

- legal and medical support for rape victims;
- school and community programs which train women to defend themselves from rape.

We Greens support:

- the enactment and enforcement of legislation to prohibit sexual harassment.
- elimination of job discrimination against women with children;
- programs such as flexible work hours, work-place child care, and part-time employment at all job levels.

## 2.11 Dismantling White Racism

Racism remains a core problem in our society and has precluded equality of opportunity for many members of our nation. The struggle for democracy has been continuously and systematically frustrated by racist practices and assumptions that affect every institution of American life. This dynamic is the basis of oppression of African-Americans and other persons of color, as well as the means by which an overwhelming majority of whites also lose in the quest for democratic government. The profits derived from racism have contributed to the corporate domination of American life. We Greens recognize that without ending racism, we cannot build a just and democratic society.

We Greens are actively anti-racist. We see exposing and combating racism as a primary component of *all* aspects of our work and policies, from the fight for environmental justice and criminal justice reform, to our efforts to reshape U.S. foreign policy, education and the economy. We oppose institutional, interpersonal and cultural racism. We Greens therefore support:

- the full implementation of affirmative action programs in both public and private sectors of the economy;
- overcoming racism to establish equality of opportunity for all members of our society;
- strong enforcement of all civil rights laws;
- a zero tolerance policy regarding so-called "racial profiling" (where, based on a "racial profile," persons are targeted by the police for traffic stops, questioning and arrest).

## 2.12 Ending Heterosexism

The Greens support legislation to outlaw discrimination based on sexual orientation.

We Greens support:

- the rights of gay, lesbian and bisexual people in housing, jobs, benefits, child custody and all areas of life;
- the legal recognition of gay and lesbian relationships;
- legislation to provide penalties for acts of violence and intimidation motivated by bias based on race, creed, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or sexual orientation;
- enactment of legislation to require private organizations and clubs whose membership services significant business purpose to accept members on a non-discriminatory basis without regard to an individuals race, creed, color, national origin, gender, disability, age, or sexual orientation.

## 2.13 Health Care

The Greens recognize that health care is a basic human right.

### Availability

The Greens support a health care system that provides care to all people in Massachusetts regardless of their employment status. This includes:

- the adoption of a single-payer, universal health care system that provides affordable, quality health care to all people in Massachusetts. A single-payer system would eliminate the need for private health insurance. This system would also impose important cost controls such as global budgeting on the health care industry while preserving the consumers right to decide from whom they receive health care services;
- for the longer run, Congressman Dellums's model US Health Service Act, which would not only socialize health care costs, but also decentralize and democratize the health care delivery system by making it publicly owned and democratically controlled from the community level;
- long-term care, prescription drug, mental health and dental care services;
- removing deductible and co-payment barriers;

- financing by the whole population based on the ability to pay and avoidance of regressive premiums for each worker. Large businesses should not have the option to opt out of the health care system to obtain their own health insurance.

### Prevention

Our health care system should focus on keeping citizens healthy, rather than on curing people once they get sick.

We Greens support:

- increased resources to training primary care providers rather than specialists;
- expanding loan forgiveness for primary care providers who practice in medically underserved areas;
- increased efforts to reduce exposure to second-hand smoke;
- increased research into the environmental causes of diminished mental capacity, violence, mental illness, and reproductive failure.

### Community Control

Our present medical system is overly regulated to increase the salaries and profits of doctors and other health care professionals, while restricting the ability of traditional health care providers such as midwives to provide needed medical services. Community control needs to be reasserted over our health care system.

### Long Term Care

Any national or state health care plan should include long term care. The Greens support the establishment of a single Point of Access to long-term care to ensure that the needs of the patients and their families - not the health care providers - are met. Such an access system would ensure that all consumers receive help in obtaining the most appropriate and cost-effective services, often non-medical community based services, as they move through the long term care system. Early intervention can help the elderly and disabled adults maintain their independence longer.

### Family Medical Leave

The Greens support enactment of a Family Medical Leave Act, which would require employers to provide up to sixteen weeks of

unpaid medical leave during any 24 month period to care for a newborn or adopted child; to provide care for a parent, household member or child; or to seek attention for a serious health condition. The employer would be required to maintain health benefits for the employee for the duration of the leave period.

### **AIDS Research**

The Greens strongly advocate increased state and federal funding for programs to expand AIDS-centered research, education, and care programs.

### **Mental Health**

The Greens support increased investment in community residences to enable those who suffer from mental health problems to live independently.

### **Ethics**

Doctors should be prohibited from referring their patients to laboratories, clinics and other health care businesses in which the doctor has a financial investment.

## **2.14 Public Education**

The Greens regard education as the basic requirement of a democracy based on an informed, responsible and active citizenry. The quality of a child's education should not be dependent on the wealth of their parents or community. We Greens therefore support free public education through college.

The educational process must be restructured to emphasize critical thinking and lay the basis for independent judgment, respect for others, and social consciousness. Curriculum and teaching methods should foster a critical citizenry rather than a passive, de-politicized workforce for capital. We believe that the best educational climate is one that is flexible enough to adjust to individual needs and that encourages individual self-development through the recognition and promotion of individual strengths. We therefore support the following measures.

### **A Focus on Students' Individual Needs**

We Greens support:

- greater emphasis on individually tailored, individual instruction and the development of teaching aids designed to identify individual problem areas and evaluate individual progress;
- reduction of class sizes - small classes are a critical ingredient of effective education;
- evaluation of student progress by taking into account all of their talents and dimensions, to provide useful input to parents and teachers;
- education that encourages cooperation, mutual respect and teamwork among students, for example, through joint projects and student-to-student learning;
- providing specific remedial training to students lacking in basic math or English skills, developed and taught by teachers with experience in such remedial education.

### **School Funding from Broad-based Progressive Taxes**

We Greens support funding the schools out of progressive broad-based taxes, not regressive property taxes. The property tax is an unfair way to finance education. The property tax, instead of being a tax on wealth as initially envisioned when our country was founded 200 years ago, has become primarily a tax on housing. The property tax unduly burdens senior citizens and low and moderate income households since they pay a higher percentage of their income for housing costs. The quality of a child's education should not depend on the wealth of their local community. Schools should primarily be financed out of the state income tax and federal funds.

### **An End to the MCAS**

High-stakes standardized tests such as the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) will not improve education. MCAS is a diversion from what's needed instead: substantially increased funding for schools in inner city and rural areas so that they can provide small classes, experienced and well-paid teachers, well-stocked libraries, modern computer and science labs, and other things successful suburban schools take for granted. Ultimately, schools can truly be equalized only by erasing income and resource gaps among the state's school districts. MCAS, though, leads to narrowed curricula aimed at low-level skills rather than critical and creative thinking, teach-to-the-test drills, increased failures, and higher dropout rates.

The result will be a workforce shaped to meet corporate needs rather than one educated for democracy and independence. Thus, we Greens support grassroots efforts to eliminate MCAS from our schools, including the Parents' Call to Resist MCAS (calling on parents to refuse to allow their children to take MCAS) and the Call for Mass Refusal (calling on teacher union locals to refuse to administer MCAS in the spring of 2002).

### **Curtailement of the Privatization of Schools**

We Greens oppose:

- vouchers that transfer public education funds to privately run schools, undermining public school budgets and the democratic control of schools;
- the use of for-profit corporations to run public elementary and secondary schools.
- The corporate intrusion into curriculum, classroom, and social environment of schools

### **Mainstreaming**

Those who are physically impaired should have access to mainstream public education. Those who are mentally impaired should have access to mainstream non-academic courses if in the student's best interests, and to academic courses tailored to that student's needs.

Students who have psychological problems, such as recurring violent behavior, that will jeopardize the safety or learning of the other students, should be removed to an educational environment tailored to that students' needs. The rights of individual students to learn with their peers to the maximum extent possible must be balanced against the rights of other students to have an educational environment that is optimal for their learning. We favor the development of a state-wide task force of parents, teachers and psychologists to examine the problem and possible solutions to violence in our schools.

## **2.15 Spirituality and Religious Freedom**

We Greens recognize that spirituality and religion are an integral component of many cultures and many individuals' lives. Moments turned inward – in contemplation, in silence, in reverence in natural environments, in prayer, in meditation – are a

significant source of human renewal. We acknowledge that there are many different definitions and practices of spirituality and religion and also that many persons do not believe in spirituality or religion. We believe in fostering a tolerant, multi-cultural society where the full range of religious and spiritual beliefs, and non-beliefs, is socially and politically accepted.

We Greens consequently support:

- the right of every person to decide which path is most appropriate for them in the pursuit of inner wisdom, spiritual renewal, or religious truth;
- the right of every individual to freely practice their religion to the extent that practice does not violate other generally applicable laws;
- the separation of church and state;
- freedom of religion and freedom to reject religion;
- the right of public schools and public school teachers to discuss religion with students as an important aspect of human culture, provided that no particular religion nor religion generally is advocated.

We oppose:

- religious discrimination in any form;
- incitement of hatred against particular religious groups;
- public prayer during governmental or public school functions;
- the provision of government services through religious institutions.”

## **3 Grassroots Democracy**

The average citizen should have the right to make the political and economic decisions that determine the quality of life for their families and communities. The Greens support the use and development of democratic forms of government that will break the stranglehold that large corporations and the wealthy have over our political and economic system. Political power must be transferred to the people at the grassroots level.

### **3.1 Participatory Democracy**

Political power must be transferred from the political elite in elected and bureaucratic office to the people at the grassroots. The Greens want to

replace the vertical hierarchy of the centralized state with a horizontal confederation of citizen assemblies. We call for city and county charter changes and state constitutional changes to:

- establish face-to-face citizen assemblies in each neighborhood and town as the legislative power in society, with legislative authority in their own communities and legislative control from below over the larger jurisdictions (municipal, county, state) with which they are associated. They should be guaranteed sufficient funding to citizen assemblies to insure that they can hire the staff and experts needed to play an autonomous role in the decision-making process;
- empower citizen assemblies to give binding instructions to their representatives and the use of immediate recall to enable voters to remove elected officials who no longer are representing the will and interests of the local residents;
- confederate assemblies with legally enforceable claims on confederal resources to insure adequate floors for income and basic services and on the basis of legally enforceable guarantee of civil rights and liberties for all people without regard for race, color, creed, nationality, sex, or political views. These guarantees, already in the state constitution, should be retained and enforced.
- replace centralized chief executive officers (mayor, county executive, governor) and their concentrated executive power with executive branch agencies that are more accountable to the legislative branch whose power derives from the confederation of citizen assemblies. The legislative branch should make policy. The executive branch should be limited to administering policy. More executive branch officials should be elected.
- significantly curtail the powers of the Assembly Speaker and Senate Majority Leader in the State Legislature. State legislative salaries should be set at the average salary for Massachusetts residents (based on a full time, full year job).
- extend the Freedom of Information Law and Open Meetings Law to the State Legislature;
- provide no increase in salaries for elected and public officials once they have been elected or appointed to their term of office (i.e., a general

election must take place between the time the pay raise is approved and it takes effect);

- amend the civil rights law to permit the exercise of free speech and the right to petition in the common areas of shopping malls.

### **3.2 Economic Democracy**

Economic power must be transferred from corporate and state ownership to democratic forms of ownership and control: worker and consumer cooperatives, decentralized and democratic public enterprise, non-profit community development projects, and small individual businesses.

Regulation of the economy must move from the profit motives of the wealthy few to the democratically chosen priorities of the majority.

The Greens therefore call for:

- public funding and technical assistance for worker cooperatives and worker/community takeovers of private corporations;
- increased community control and ownership of banking, insurance, energy, transportation, media, health care, land and natural resources;
- decentralized, democratic structures of participatory economic planning to insure community control of local development and grassroots-democratic control of regional and statewide projects;
- an amendment to the U.S. constitution declaring that corporations are subservient to the people and are not to be accorded the rights of people;
- legislation requiring the periodic renewal of corporate charters, with provisions barring renewal and/or dissolving the corporation when it has repeatedly acted illegally or against the public interest.

### **3.3 Multicultural Democracy**

Institutionalized racism, sexism, and heterosexism must be uprooted through:

- affirmative action to ensure equal opportunity;
- social programs that guarantee every person full access to the means to life: food, housing, health care, education, employment, and a non-toxic environment;
- participatory democratic political and economic institutions that enable every person to contribute the full measure of their abilities

and creativity to improving the community and the environment;

- economic reconstruction that equalizes wealth among communities;
- public education to foster mutual respect and understanding by people of all ethnic groups, genders, and sexual orientation.

### **3.4 Proportional Representation**

Our winner-take-all electoral system is fundamentally anti-democratic. It denies people of color and the politically disenfranchised their fair share of representation and power. This systematic under representation inflates the power of bare majorities or pluralities far beyond their actual support in the population.

Every democratic country in the world uses some form of proportional representation except the U.S., the U.K., and Canada. The new democracies in Eastern Europe and in South Africa chose proportional representation. New Zealand just switched to proportional representation. In countries with proportional representation, more people vote, more women, and minorities are elected, and more parties and points of view get representation.

The Green Party calls upon Massachusetts to lead the U.S. in replacing the undemocratic winner-take-all system with a proportional representation system. Specifically, we call for:

Preferential ballots (a type of Instant Run-off Voting) for the Election of Single-Member Offices (Governor, Lieutenant-Governor, Attorney General, Comptroller, U.S. Senators, District State Legislative Representatives): With preferential balloting, voters rank candidates in order of preference. If a candidate receives over 50% on the first ballot, she wins. If not, the last place candidate is eliminated and ballots for that candidate are distributed to the designated second preference. This process continues until a candidate receives over 50%. Preferential ballots eliminate the problem of choosing the lesser evil, giving all parties the true measure of their support in the first round of counting.

Mixed Member Proportional Representation in a Unicameral State Legislature: Voters will vote once (by preferential ballot) for their district State Legislative Representative and then again for the

party of their choice. Half the seats will be elected from single-member districts and half from the party vote. Seats are awarded in proportion to the party vote, with district seats elected counting toward the party's total. This mixed member proportional system combines the advantages of proportional representation -- a fair share of representation to all groups -- with the advantages of single-member district representatives -- representation of and service to the districts' constituents. The unicameral legislature better represents the democratic will of the people. Our current bicameral legislature often results in the thwarting of the democratic will by institutional gridlock.

### **3.5 Campaign Finance Reform (non-existent)**

We Greens support:

- enacting progressive campaign finance laws to restrict the ability of special interests to dominate the political process;
- guaranteeing all candidates equal access to the media;
- limiting the maximum individual or PAC contribution for any race to \$1,000.

### **3.6 Election Law Reform**

Voters, not the candidates ability to navigate the technical requirements of the states ballot access laws, should determine who represent them. The states election law needs to be dramatically overhauled to reduce the power of party officials and special interests to dominate the political process. To this end, we Greens support:

- limits on the number of terms an elected official can hold office to help return our elected bodies to the average citizen rather than career politicians;
- giving voters the opportunity to vote against candidates by voting for None of the Above to force parties to put forth candidates and platforms acceptable to the people;
- the adoption of strong ethics legislation to prohibit conflicts of interests among elected officials. Party and elected officials should be required to fully disclose all their financial interests and sources of income;

- the adoption of the initiative and referendum at the municipal, county, and state levels to allow voters to directly decide issues of concern to them;
- candidates having the opportunity to correct any technical deficiencies in their petitions once they are submitted to the Board of Elections;
- dramatically reducing the number of signatures required to be on the ballot and candidates should have the opportunity to go out and collect additional signatures if the Board of Elections should determine that more are needed;
- eliminating witness requirements for petitions;
- amending the election law so as not to favor major party candidates over independents;
- removing control over the Board of Elections from the two major parties (i.e., the Commissioner of the State and County Board of Election should not have an affiliation with any political party).

### 3.7 Participatory Culture and Media

#### Culture and Art

We Greens recognize that free and diverse artistic expression is vital for building a rich culture and society, for challenging people to rethink their assumptions, and for educating people about past and present issues and future visions. Today, the mass media, controlled by a few large corporations, is the primary distributor of artistic culture. Wide access to a diverse range of artistic expression and ideas has consequently narrowed. We seek to expand the number of persons who can make art, the range of artistic expression possible, and the opportunities for others to experience that art. We hope to create a culture that truly respects, utilizes and celebrates art, and fully embraces independent artisans as an indispensable part of the community.

We Greens therefore support:

- public funding of artistic and cultural endeavors to benefit all and develop community, not merely elite cultural centers;
- public funding of independent artists through peer-review panels, free from state censorship;
- establishment of a state-sponsored artisan support network for the arts community, similar

to business-networking groups for entrepreneurs;

- setting aside a certain percentage of the state budget for the arts, irrespective of fluctuations in surpluses accumulated year to year;
- providing funds to promote cultural diversity and for artists of color at least in proportion to their ethnic representation in the state population;
- building publicly owned community centers and performance spaces for the use of local and new artists;
- individual and social responsibility by artists.

We oppose:

- censorship in the arts.

#### Media

We Greens believe in the essential link between vigorous public debate through free media and a strong democracy, a link recognized by our revolutionary fore-bearers. The concentration of control of the media in the hands of a few corporations has weakened and limited political discourse in our nation, and with it, our democracy. We will work to decentralize control over the media and restore active, diverse political debate and social discussion in the media.

We Greens therefore support:

- public funding for community media: TV, video, radio, alternative presses, and public bulletin boards in order to expand and diversify the voices heard on social and political issues;
- increasing the number of public radio and television stations, their state subsidies, and the state subsidies available for community access programming;
- requiring increased air time for local communities and organizations to direct local programming, publicize free meetings and events open to the community, and discuss political, religious, cultural and scientific ideas and developments.”
- measures to restore diversity of media ownership and break up the concentration of corporate ownership

### 3.8 Non-Violence

[This section has not yet been defined as its own section.]

## 4 Community Based Economics

The Greens call for building a new economy, one in which workers and consumers exercise democratic control (and ownership) over economic decisions. The Greens realize that strong environmental protection is key to the development of a sustainable economy that can provide a decent standard of living for all its citizens.

Economic decision making must be made part of the democratic process. Communities must have an effective voice in deciding such essential questions as what goods and services shall be produced; where and how they shall be produced; what prices shall be charged; and how the wealth of the nation shall be invested.

Massachusetts should provide leadership in developing blueprints for economic development at the local, regional and state levels. A democratic economic plan should begin with a democratic method of defining realistic goals for the economy, and defining priorities. Priorities for local community investment must be developed. Indirect costs of projects need to be clearly identified - the impact on unemployment, pollution, and taxes.

### 4.1 Economic Justice

There are a number of goals a democratic economy must accomplish to provide economic justice:

- meet the social needs of our communities, especially in the critical areas of housing, food, energy, and health care;
- distribute our nations wealth, income, and power in a just and equitable manner. Work should raise families out of poverty, enabling them to obtain a decent standard of living.

Some of the ways to meet these goals include:

- **Restrict Plant Closings.** The Greens favor restrictions on plant closings that threaten the viability of communities. We support programs that enable communities to propose alternatives to closings, such as government guaranteed loans to enable workers to purchase plants and modernize them, and company or government guarantee of wages and benefits until workers affected by plant closings can find suitable employment.
- **Guaranteed Minimum Income.** We believe that all individuals in Massachusetts, including

welfare recipients, should have the right to a guaranteed minimum income to ensure them a decent standard of living, including the ability to obtain such basic necessities as adequate housing, food, medical care, utilities, and education. We support ending poverty now by doubling public assistance grants to 125% of the poverty line and, in the longer run, replace the welfare bureaucracy with a negative income tax that automatically gives low income people a guaranteed minimum income above the poverty line.

- **Fair Minimum Wage.** The Greens support restoring the minimum wage to its historical level of 50% of the average, non-supervisory agriculture wage, and indexing it to inflation, raising the minimum wage immediately to \$6 an hour, and establishing of a maximum wage at a level no higher than 10 times the minimum wage.
- **Full Employment.** Everyone who wants to work must be entitled to a job at a decent wage. Public job banks should be established so that people who cannot find decent work in the private sector can take a quality publicly funded job. These public jobs would be the core of a democratically organized system of unalienated and ecological work that fulfills community-defined needs and promotes ecologically sound development. To achieve full employment, the Greens support such measures as a shortened work week, lengthened vacations, limitations on forced overtime, and socially-useful public works to create jobs.
- **Dislocated Workers.** Instead of paying to keep people on unemployment, we should be paying to give them new skills to find jobs. We should provide more opportunities for people on unemployment to enter education and job training programs and should explore providing unemployment compensation grants for business start-up ventures.
- **Workers Superfund for Income Security and Reduced Work Hours at Same Pay.** Income, education, and retraining should be provided to all workers displaced by bankruptcies, corporate flight, military conversion, and technological change. Income earning opportunities should be shared equitably by progressively reducing the work week with no loss in pay until everyone willing and able to

work has a good job. This way social productivity gains will accrue to all instead of only corporate owners. The Workers Superfund would provide income and education/retraining grants to displaced workers until they find a new line of work and provide a second check to make up for reduced working hours, a social dividend representing each workers share of socially created wealth.

- **Economic Conversion.** A community-based program to develop alternative uses for military and defense industry facilities and to assist demobilized soldiers and defense industry workers with income, education, and retraining grants.
- **Pension Funds.** The largest owners of corporations in the U.S. are workers through their pension funds investments. The Greens advocate taking away the control on these pension funds from banks and other financial managers and restoring control to their true owners.
- **Comparable Worth.** The Greens support an economic system that recognizes and rewards the value of work traditionally done by women such as child care, homemaking, and care of elderly or disabled relatives. Women and men must receive equal pay for work of comparable value.

## 4.2 Affordable Childcare

Inadequate child-care service is often cited as a reason people can't enter the workforce.

We Greens support:

- increased state funding of day care services to allow more people to go to work and to create jobs in low-income communities;
- encouraging companies to develop work site child care options;
- creation of a quality, free public daycare system for infants and children;
- an increase in the salaries of all daycare staff.

## 4.3 Welfare Reform

The welfare system should help, not punish recipients.

Most welfare recipients are children. The U.S. is the only industrial country in the world where children are the largest segment of the poverty population.

We Greens support:

- the adoption of a children's allowance program to ensure that every child has the income needed to obtain basic necessities and to become a productive citizen;
- recognizing the value of child rearing.

Training and education programs:

- are needed for welfare recipients, tailored to the needs of the individual recipient. The Greens recognize that such programs will fail unless there is a commitment to create decent paying jobs.
- should be mandatory for all Department of Social Service (DSS) workers.

The Greens support the establishment of maximum caseload sizes per DSS worker.

We Greens oppose:

- the fingerprinting of welfare recipients and applicants;
- efforts to effect changes in recipients behavior by reducing the already immorally low level of benefits. The welfare system should not economically punish recipients for finding paid work.

## 4.4 Nutrition

The Greens believe that all individuals in Massachusetts have the right to an adequate diet. To support this right,

We Greens support:

- making the Women, Infants and Children (WIC) program an entitlement program;
- requiring that every school participate in the federal school breakfast and lunch programs, and providing universal access to such programs;
- providing full funding to the Meals on Wheels program for disabled, homebound senior citizens;
- increasing food stamp benefits by changing the basis for the program from USDAs Thrifty Food Plan to the Low Cost Food Plan, and moving from a gross income test to a net income test for eligibility;
- simplifying the application process for the food stamp program;
- increasing funding for the states SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program)

Homeless and Destitute program which provides funding to local food pantries and soup kitchens;

- guidelines and subsidies to encourage school food programs to purchase healthier food, including: preferences for fresh fruits and vegetables, organic food and locally grown food, and reductions of processed foods and sugared foods such as donuts, “candy” cereals and juice “drinks.”

#### **4.5 Affordable Housing**

Every individual in Massachusetts has the right to decent, safe, affordable housing.

The Greens long range goal is to replace private speculative ownership of land and housing for profit with social ownership (public, cooperative, and limited-equity household) under tenant control, with security of tenure and equity assured, but with resale for profit prohibited.

Additional public funding is required.

We Greens support:

- public funding of housing to go only to non-profit builders;
- public capital grants to replace debt financing to reduce public housing costs;
- Public Investment. Public investment should be increased, including the use of public pension funds, in constructing affordable housing for low and moderate income people.

Homelessness is a significant problem in Massachusetts that is primarily caused by a lack of affordable housing.

We Greens support:

- Mobile Home Cooperative Fund. A Mobile Home Cooperative Fund should be established to provide loans to support cooperative ownership of mobile home parks;
- A Special Needs Housing Program providing at least \$15 million in funding for the Special Needs Housing Program to support the development of SRO (Single Room Occupancy) units;
- Rent Subsidy: the establishment of a rent subsidy program to assist households with income below 150% of poverty and which require rental subsidies in order to obtain or maintain standards of health and safety;

- Community Land Trusts: the establishment of community land trusts to eliminate speculation and profit-taking on the ownership of land;
- Rent Control: the use of rent control to ensure the access of tenants to affordable housing, while ensuring landlords a reasonable rate of return on their investment;
- Urban Reconstruction under Community Control. A major portion of the savings from military spending cuts should be invested in a Domestic Marshall Plan for a humane and ecological reconstruction of our cities, including infra-structure, housing, transportation, public meeting space for neighborhood assemblies, and full employment. All redevelopment planning should be under community control, with boards elected by the people, not appointed by the mayors.

#### **4.6 Public Finance**

##### **Progressive State and Local Tax Reform**

We Greens support:

- establishing a progress tax system which makes wealthy individuals and large corporations pay their fair share of the tax burden;
- closing loopholes on the corporate taxes making multi-state and multi-national corporations pay their fair share of the corporate tax burden. Corporations should be required to disclose how much taxes they pay to other states and countries.
- extending the state sales tax to include business services (accountants, lawyers, consultants, data processing, etc.) to reflect how our economy has changed from a base of manufacturing to services;
- making the state sales tax progressive by providing a simple sales tax rebate system as part of the state income tax forms; restoring the personal income tax rate to 15% for the top income bracket;
- exempting primary homes from the property tax;
- establishing progressive wealth and inheritance taxes;
- enacting a state Earned Income Tax Credit to ensure that all working individuals have an income above the federal poverty level;

- increasing the property tax credit for low-income homeowners and renters in order to provide property tax relief.

### **Peace Dividend**

Cut U.S. military spending by 95%. U.S. military spending should be reduced to the level necessary for non-nuclear, conventional defense of U.S. territory. This would entail the return of all U.S. troops stationed abroad and complete U.S. nuclear disarmament. Only 3% of current U.S. military spending is for the conventional defense of U.S. territory. The rest is for foreign intervention (72%), nuclear arms (2%), and the overhead of maintaining a global military deployment (5%). 5% of current military spending, or \$15 billion, is therefore a conservative figure for defending the U.S.

### **Democratic Public Enterprise**

Public policy and spending should support increasing community ownership of community wealth, so that as neighborhoods, cities, towns, and counties increasingly own and develop their own productive wealth, a portion of the surplus produced by economic activity goes straight into the public treasuries. The sectors that should be socialized, decentralized, and democratized as soon as possible include banking, insurance, energy, transportation, health care, and natural resources.

### **Democratize Industrial Development Authorities and Other Public Authorities**

Bonding authority and project selection should be removed from technocrats accountable to politicians accountable to wealthy political contributors and be directly accountable to the people through boards elected, mandated and recallable by citizen assemblies.

### **Equal Revenue Sharing**

A system of statewide revenue sharing should be established with a formula for equalizing payments to ensure that neighborhoods, municipalities, and counties have sufficient revenues to provide a minimum floor of comparable public services and comparable levels of taxation.

## **5 Feminism**

### **5.1 Elimination of Hierarchy**

[This section has not yet been defined.]

### **5.2 Equal Rights for Women**

[This section has not yet been defined.]

## **6 Decentralization**

### **6.1 Human Scale, Human Rights**

Massachusetts Greens stand in solidarity with people abroad who seek to decentralize economic and political power. We see decentralization as necessary for communities to regain control over their economies and the very ecology of their daily lives. Over-centralization lies at the root of large-scale conflict and the mass movement of refugees and immigrants.

The Greens are committed to a world in which the competitive nation-state system is replaced by a cooperative and democratic world confederation of decentralized regions with self-governing communities. We work for a world where complete and general disarmament becomes possible. We envision a world that is united democratically on the basis of mutual agreement from below, rather than divided by nation-states that war with each other economically.

Some programs of the United Nations serve as important forums for this international communication and voluntary cooperation. Other U.N. bodies, most notably as the Security Council, host an elite-dominated struggle for global power, approving violent interventions that do not promote democracy, human rights, or true peace grounded in justice. Member nations must join together to reform the U.N. so that it becomes a forum for building trust and developing strategies for joint, non-violent interventions, such as "peace brigades," conflict resolution, election observers, and human rights monitors. The United States should pay all of its past and future U.N. dues.

Decentralization requires a new commitment to solidarity, not power, as the means of peace. Greens work to make contacts with other cultures that are person-to-person and community-to-community, working in solidarity to support self-sufficiency and cultural diversity. We know that intervention by force will not stop crimes against

human rights; rather, we must refuse to make the purchases that support them, and work through moral pressure and accompaniment of the threatened.

## **6.2 No Mandates without Money**

Massachusetts mandated local programs should be fully funded by progressive taxes at the state level.

## **7 Respect for Diversity**

### **7.1 Domestic Partnership**

As they stand, marriage laws give special financial and legal protection to heterosexuals who are willing to enter into a marriage contract. These same rights are unfairly denied to homosexuals who are willing to marry.

The obvious solution is to allow any two or more people who enter into marriage contract to do so, regardless of their genders or other extraneous qualities. Such a contract could stipulate which, if any further, types of marriages would be allowed by the parties, or the terms under which the contract could be terminated. Alternately, marriage could be removed from the law as a legal concept, so that individuals or communities may celebrate it as they would, according to their own traditions, without the state giving more or less rights and respect to certain types of union than other types of union.

### **7.2 Personal and Global Responsibility**

Our international platform is self-evolving and does not follow any set ideology. It attempts to find peaceful and just responses to global crises of violence and poverty.

### **7.3 Community-Based Economics**

Living sustainably on the Earth requires community-based economics. The current levels of elite wealth, abject poverty, and environmental destruction threaten to destroy our companionship with the Earth and each other.

The corporate-market system is based on a competitive struggle to exploit people and nature for profits and growth. We reject this system because it creates a dynamic of endless growth that is incompatible with ecological sustainability and

that fosters greed and domination in society. We reject any centrally controlled economies that take the moral decisions of economics and environmental relationship out of the hands of local communities.

Past U.S. foreign development assistance, applied from above with little grass-roots accountability, has too often benefited only the governmental elite and U.S. corporations. Worse, loans to many countries have racked up huge interest payments that cannot be paid. Such a situation constitutes usury--the permanent indebtedness of the poor through interest.

Future assistance should encourage development programs that are democratically designed, owned, and controlled to meet the economic rights of all.

Loans to oppressed nations should be made only to democratic governments and be interest-free. The World Bank and the International Monetary Fund should be reformed to make decisions publicly, and poorer nations should hold an equal share of power in these institutions.

What is needed most is not more foreign assistance but a transformation of how we in high-income, high-waste countries live. Purchasing a good means taking responsibility for how it is made--from the wages paid to the worker who made it to the pollution required to transport it to us.

We support:

- taxes on foreign goods to discourage their purchase
- restrictions on goods from countries which have dictators or poor human rights or environmental practices
- bans on goods made by workers paid poverty wages, or by child or imprisoned labor.

Most of the world's people have been impoverished and much of its ecological integrity degraded by the exploitation of global corporations in alliance with local elites. We must also personally shape our purchases and nationally structure our trade to reduce pollution of Earth's air, land, and water. Our environment and other species do not understand our borders; the human race must act jointly to be better companions to them.

When a region does not grow its own food or produce its own clothing or shelter, it is over dependent on others and lives with great risk. We support fair trade, not free trade, and oppose general free trade agreements (including NAFTA and GATT), for they serve to reduce the diversity in local production, reduce the bargaining power of workers (who cannot move location as easily as investment capital), disrupt communities, and allow investors to auction their support to the community with the lowest wages, the weakest environmental protections, or the cheapest social safety net.

#### **7.4 Non-Intervention**

Until the U.S. has turned away from aggressive economic and military policies, we regard as suspect any claim by the U.S. government that it is intervening or stationing troops abroad to protect nations or prevent genocide. We believe that much of the United States' intervention abroad has not accomplished the expressed purpose of protecting human rights and democracy, but has only suppressed them to clear the way for exploitation by U.S.-based global corporations.

When considering intervention, the U.S. government must honor the wishes of those supporting democracy and human rights in the country in question. [The economic embargo of Cuba is not widely supported by the Cuban people, and has not yet contributed to any political change in the country. Thus we support an economic embargo of Burma, where a widely supported democracy movement calls for it, but not of Iraq, where the embargo is not seen as helping to oust Saddam Hussein, and indeed is providing him with justification to starve thousands of Iraqis.] Our diplomacy should be honorable: world peace will be built on trust, not arms races and regional "balances."

In the long run, we believe that violent intervention--whether by arms or intended starvation--should not be used at all. U.S. diplomacy must be based on persuasion and understanding, not pressure and domination. We work towards a time when the United States does even not hold such power to intervene abroad at will.

#### **7.5 Unilateral Disarmament**

We call for a return to a principle of the first American Revolution: that to guard against state tyranny, standing armies must be disbanded in peacetime and a well-regulated guard established, that is, a citizens' guard under democratic community control, with democratically elected officers and democratic votes on basic operational plans and policies. Over time our military should be reduced into such a guard. To this we add a system of nonviolent social defense, organized alongside the citizens' guard and also under democratic control. We believe that only these small guards are needed, that other nations do not currently have designs on invading us, and that by unilaterally disarming, other nations will follow our example.

We also oppose security pacts, such as NATO, that include some countries and exclude others.

We oppose all arms sales to other countries and military training of foreign soldiers, including at the U.S. Army School of the Americas.

Cutting our military budget so drastically will save trillions of dollars; some of these resources should be invested in worker retraining for those who would lose their current jobs through this national conversion. Here in Massachusetts there are thousands of workers, working for both military contractors and local bases, who could make major contributions to the development of new technologies in support of new, just, sustainable ways of life.

We support unilateral destruction of our nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons and land mines, including the termination of all production and research in support with them.

We call for the abolition of all, covert agencies and operations, including the CIA.

We call for an end to all forms of coerced military service.

We honor the sacrifices of our troops while holding accountable those political and military leaders with the power to command unjust actions. We support the right of an individual soldier to refuse an unjust order.

We believe that the presence of ROTC in colleges and universities violates the appropriate independence of higher education, and we deplore the recruiting of youth through Junior ROTC. We encourage schools to offer peace studies programs so students can objectively consider our contributions and responses to violence. We commit to work towards a time in which low-income young people need not turn to military service because of a lack of economic opportunity elsewhere.

## **7.6 Self Determination**

Cultures have a right to their existence and their autonomy. Our governments should support all calls for secession referenda by regional groups with a common cultural history, [including the indigenous nations of all continents, the Palestinians, and the residents of Puerto Rico, Northern Ireland, East Timor, Tibet, Chechnya, and Kurdistan.] Our governments must not pressure the voters of other nations through military or economic aggression.

We call for the release of U.S. political prisoners convicted for just action in international affairs, [including Leonard Peltier, the Puerto Rico 15, and Mordachi Vannunu.] We must also recognize our own violations of self-determination, honor the treaty and economic rights of Native American nations and Chicanos, and pay reparations for past injustices.

## **7.7 Immigration**

Large-scale immigration is a disruptive result of the free-trade mentality. Millions of people leave their homes for wealthier places because they must follow the decisions of centralized investors and planners to survive, and because the people of more powerful nations have monopolized the

resources of the poorer nations. Immigration to the United States is a symptom of this global economic imbalance. Attacking or scapegoating immigrants will not reduce the need of the poor to move nearer to the wealthy. We should be addressing economic problems abroad by curbing our own materialism.

Only through decentralization of economic and military power will other nations be able to achieve well being for all their citizens, eliminating the need for immigration. Such a policy will tend to even out the economic imbalances of the world, taking away our ability to monopolize wealth when others are in need. In the long run, we should respect the fundamental right of individuals to live and travel where they please. We believe that borders should eventually be open and that we should be hospitable towards all newcomers.

We Greens support:

- humane treatment for those crossing borders;
- welcoming immigrants by providing opportunities for productive employment and community living arrangements;
- eliminating immigration preferences for highly educated and business-preferred immigrants;
- the right of all immigrants to the integrity of their families to bring their children and domestic partners, including same sex partners, into the country
- the reform and full funding of the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) so that immigration cases are handled fairly and swiftly.

We oppose:

- immigration restrictions based on sexual orientation or gender self-identification;
- immigration restrictions on those who are HIV-positive.