



A NEW DIRECTION FOR AMERICA

What This Legislative Agenda Means for Massachusetts

The Administration has mismanaged the war in Iraq and failed to make Massachusetts' security a priority.

- The Administration's mismanagement of the Iraq war has inflicted a heavy toll on our troops - including the 14,056 brave Massachusetts men and women that have been deployed to Iraq or Afghanistan since 2001. [Dept. of Defense, 5/31/06]
- This has put a tremendous strain on families of the state's 6,794 National Guard and Reservists that have served in Iraq or Afghanistan - many of whom have been called up multiple times. [Dept. of Defense, 5/31/06]
- Here at home, the Republican Majority's proposals have repeatedly failed to adequately secure our ports and borders and properly equip first responders in Massachusetts and across the nation.
- Democrats will transform the Administration's failed policies in Iraq, the Middle East and around the world; require the Iraqis to take responsibility for their country; and press for the beginning of the phased redeployment of US forces from Iraq in 2006.
- We will implement the recommendations of the 9/11 Commission, ensuring Massachusetts police, firefighters and other first responders have the equipment and training they need.
- We will pass a New GI Bill of Rights for the 21st Century to honor the sacrifice of Massachusetts' 490,883 veterans and ensure that they receive all the benefits they have earned and deserve.

The Administration's economy is moving in the wrong direction for Massachusetts' working families.

- In the past six years, 102,900 manufacturing jobs have been lost in Massachusetts and 167,700 people are currently looking for a job. [BLS, 7/06]
- Today, the purchasing power of the minimum wage is at its lowest level in 50 years. [CPS; CEPR, 6/06]
- Instead of creating good paying American jobs, the Majority has provided billions in corporate tax subsidies for shipping jobs overseas and steadfastly refused to increase the minimum wage for nine years.
- We will end tax giveaways that encourage companies to move jobs overseas and prohibit the Congressional pay raise until we raise the minimum wage to \$7.25 an hour for hardworking Americans. [EPI, 6/06]

The Administration rewards profitable oil companies while Massachusetts families are paying record prices at the pump.

- Bay Staters are paying up to an average of \$3.04 for a gallon of regular gasoline - 101% more than January 2001. [AAA, 7/06]
- Massachusetts families will spend an additional \$4,185,048,964 - \$1,802 per two-car family - on gasoline compared to 2001. [House Government Reform Committee, Dem. Staff, 7/06]
- Instead of working to bring down rising fuel costs, the Majority continues to advocate legislation to grant billions in subsidies for Big Oil even as these companies report record profits.
- We will fight price-gouging and end Big Oil tax subsidies; invest in alternative energy resources such as biofuels from the American heartland; and achieve independence from foreign oil.

Health insurance costs rise sharply in Massachusetts.

- Since 2000, health insurance costs for Massachusetts families have increased by \$1,141 - a 75 percent increase. [KFF; MEPS]
- During the past six years, the number of uninsured residents has reached 748,000 here in Massachusetts - up 228,000 since 2000. [CPS, 8/05]

- Yet the Congressional leadership has failed to take action to lower health care costs for middle-class working families.
- We will address health care affordability by fixing the Administration's prescription drug program and making insurance more affordable for both employers and employees.

Cost of college soars for 439,245 Massachusetts students, federal financial aid dramatically reduced by the Majority.

- In Massachusetts, the costs of attending a 4-year public college have jumped 49% and the costs of attending a 4-year private college have jumped 24% since fall 2000. [Dept. of Education, 2005]
- Today, the typical student borrower in Massachusetts now graduates from college with \$17,353 in debt. [Project on Student Debt, 2004]
- But rather than helping Massachusetts students, the Majority has made it harder to pay for college - cutting \$12 billion out of federal student aid programs.
- We have a plan to make college more affordable for Bay Staters - expanding and simplifying tax credits for college tuition; expanding Pell Grants; and cutting interest rates in half on student loans, saving the average Massachusetts student \$5,550 over the lifetime of their loans.

The Administration's out-of-control record budget deficits are a tax on Massachusetts families.

- In five years, President Bush and Republicans in Congress have taken a projected 10-year surplus of \$5.6 trillion and turned it into record debt.
- The current Administration has borrowed a staggering \$1 trillion from foreign nations - more than the previous 42 U.S. presidents combined.
- The net impact of these irresponsible economic policies is a debt burden of \$30,650 for a typical middle-income family of four in Massachusetts. [Citizens for Tax Justice, 6/06]
- We have a plan to reduce the federal deficit and restore the tough fiscal discipline of the 1990s that helped spur record economic growth.

The Majority's plan to partially privatize Social Security puts Bay Staters' retirement security in jeopardy.

- Saving for retirement has become a real challenge for Massachusetts' working families.
- The Administration plan to partially privatize Social Security would significantly reduce workers' retirement security by cutting Social Security benefits for the middle class and adding trillions to the national debt.
- This could hurt the nearly 1,066,957 Bay Staters receiving Social Security benefits. [SSA, 12/05]
- We will ensure a dignified retirement for Massachusetts workers by stopping the privatization of Social Security, expanding retirement savings incentives and enact real pension reform to protect employees' financial security from CEO mismanagement.