

HEALEY / HILLMAN
for Governor *for* Lt. Governor

**Tough, Smart Solutions to
Change Massachusetts**

Over the course of this campaign, voters will learn more about my priorities and how they differ from my opponents. I have a lot of ideas - both big and small - to make Massachusetts a better, more affordable place to live, work and raise a family.

Everyone knows that the key issues in this race are taxes, job creation, education and public safety. I'm taking on the issues voters care most about and have proposed smart, tough solutions to change Massachusetts.

I want to take this opportunity to share 50 of those ideas with you. These are smart solutions to make life better for our residents. You can be sure as the campaign moves along, there will be many more to come.

- *Kerry Healey*

1. Raise the mandatory age of school attendance from 16 to 18 to keep kids from dropping out of school

While we can be proud of the achievements of Massachusetts students, there are still too many students that are falling through the cracks. Our drop-out rates – especially in urban schools – are unacceptably high. Fifty years ago, it might have made sense to allow young people to drop out of school at age 16. Today, it is a different story altogether. To allow 16-year-olds to prematurely end their education is to sentence them to a life of disappointment, poverty, or even jail.

- 14 percent of the children who start high school never make it to 12th grade.
- In some urban districts, the drop-out rate is closer to 50percent.
- Over 80 percent of people in our jails dropped out of high school.

We don't have to write these kids off. A Healey-Hillman Administration would raise the age of mandatory school attendance from 16 to 18, and expand our alternative education options so that all kids can have a real chance at success.

2. Require voters to present a valid ID at the polls to prove citizenship

Voting in elections is one of the greatest privileges of being an American citizen. We must do all we can to preserve the integrity of our elections. To address the problem of voter fraud, voters should be required to present a state-issued photo ID when heading to the polls. This will prevent non-citizens from voting and will discourage other types of voter fraud, such as voting in multiple locations and voting under a false identity.

3. Post addresses and photographs of Level 2 sex offenders on the internet to help parents protect their children from sexual predators

Our administration battled the courts to have Level 3 sex offenders posted on the internet and ultimately signed the law allowing the state's sex offender registry board to post the most dangerous sexual predators online.

A Healey–Hillman Administration would go a step further by posting Level 2 sex offenders on the Internet. Level 2 sex offenders are likely to re-offend and threaten the safety of our communities. Currently, photos of these sexual predators are available at local and state police stations but residents have to obtain the information by going to the station.

A sexual predator could move to a community and residents would be not aware of his or her presence. Concerned citizens can currently log on to the state website to find out how many Level 2 offenders live in their community, but they cannot easily obtain the names of the offenders, what they look like or what crimes they committed.

In the age of the Internet, it is the responsibility of government to put public safety first and make this information easily accessible to communities in Massachusetts.

4. Bring real competition to the state's auto insurance market and reward good drivers by cutting our sky high auto insurance rates

People are often rewarded for good behavior, unless of course, you are a Massachusetts driver. In the Commonwealth, good drivers have to pay for the bad driving habits of others. If this doesn't sound fair, that's because it isn't.

Drivers should pay premiums that reflect their own driving records. Over 60 percent of all drivers have clean driving records and by reforming the state's auto insurance system, good drivers will save money and benefit from lower rates.

A Healey - Hillman Administration would create a competitive auto insurance marketplace that gives Massachusetts consumers more choices. A few select insurance companies do business in the state, which limits competition, and consumers deserve to have more choices. Companies like Geico, Progressive, and Allstate advertise in Massachusetts but our drivers can't purchase their products because our market isn't open to competition. Rewarding good drivers and bringing more competition to the auto insurance market is another way we can make Massachusetts more affordable.

While our neighbors in Rhode Island and New Hampshire can choose from more than 200 companies for auto and homeowners insurance, our choices in Massachusetts are limited to fewer than 20. Opening the market to competition will drive down rates for our best drivers, and end the influence of a few powerful insurance companies on Beacon Hill.

5. Roll back the state income tax to 5 percent as the voters demanded at the ballot box back in 2000

One of the top priorities of a Healey–Hillman Administration will be the immediate rollback of the individual income tax to 5 percent. Year after year, the Legislature has ignored the will of the voters, arguing that the timing isn't right for the rollback and that we can't afford it. But the taxpayers of Massachusetts have been waiting 17 years to undo this "temporary" tax increase, and that's long enough. We can afford it:

- In 1989, the income tax was "temporarily" increased from 5% to 5.75% during a fiscal crisis. By 1991, it had been increased to 5.95%.
- In 2000, the people of Massachusetts voted to return the state's income tax rate to 5% in three increments, reaching 5% by 2003.
- In 2002, the Legislature reversed the will of the people, freezing the rate at 5.3%.
- Since then, taxpayers have sent an extra \$2 billion to Beacon Hill for the Legislature to waste.

The income tax rate must be immediately rolled back to 5%. The people of Massachusetts voted for it and the only way to keep the Legislature's spending in check is to take the money off the table.

6. Require state legislators to file monthly campaign finance reports to improve transparency

Improving transparency on Beacon Hill is a key component of improving public confidence in our state government and insisting on accountability in the public arena. A step in the right direction would be to post monthly campaign finance reports filed by every member of the state Legislature.

Everyone knows the special interests seek to curry favors with influential legislators in order to draw attention and taxpayer dollars to the issues they care about most. Our proposal would help watchdog groups and citizens more effectively monitor the link between access to decision makers and action taken, or not taken, on key issues.

OCPF would continue its responsibility for oversight and enforcement of the new monthly filing deadlines and the information would be available online in the first week of each month.

7. Raise training standards for aspiring teachers by establishing more challenging college-level curriculum standards

There is a strong correlation between teacher content knowledge and student performance. In order to provide our public school students with an excellent education, we must establish more rigorous college-level curriculum requirements for aspiring teachers. If we expect our students to acquire the knowledge and skills to succeed, our teachers must have the foundation to provide them with a top-notch education.

Under our current system, especially at the elementary school level, we do not require our teachers to develop the math and science skills they need to teach our children on an internationally competitive level. New teachers should have to pass entry-level test requirements in math and science to ensure that they are just as proficient in these areas as they are in reading and history. The first step toward helping our students to excel in math and science is to empower our educators to teach them the skills they need. By ensuring that our educators themselves are well-versed in math and science, we will make it possible for them to pass those skills along to their students.

The Healey-Hillman education plan proposed an advanced accreditation for new teachers in math and science that would be rewarded with a higher initial base pay.

8. Help educators and parents better measure student performance by testing kids at the beginning and end of each school year

High educational standards means having high standards for every one of our students. We are not doing our job if we are not ensuring that every student is making academic progress. The MCAS test is a valuable tool for measuring students, schools, and school districts against certain benchmarks.

We should evaluate every student at the beginning of the school year and again at the end of the year. Not only will this allow us to measure each student's progress, but it will help teachers and parents to identify students' strengths and weaknesses and better serve each child. It will also allow teachers to evaluate the effectiveness of their teaching methods and adjust them to better meet the needs of each student. Finally, it will allow us to identify our most effective teachers and reward them appropriately.

9. Take advantage of renewable energy sources to reduce costs for consumers and protect our environment

To prepare to meet our state's future energy needs, we must keep costs and demand down, increase the region's supply and embrace innovative energy sources such as hydropower and deep water turbines. Cities and towns benefit from renewable energy projects that allow them to generate their own energy to power municipal facilities. We need to encourage more towns to use wind, hydro, and solar power to provide energy to libraries, schools, and other town facilities

- Streamline the permitting process. The current permitting system takes years and is costly, leaving the development of renewable energy sources mainly to large-scale, privately funded projects, and out of reach for local governments.
- Speed up the approval process for renewable energy installations in communities that have endorsed projects.
- Provide state funding (through the Renewable Energy Trust) for wind turbines, solar panels and other renewable energy sources on municipal land to foster green power and decrease utility payments for cities and towns.

Encouraging the use of renewable energy sources will protect our environment and better prepare us for our future energy needs. Encouraging municipal energy independence will help keep property taxes down by lowering the cost of energy for cities and towns.

10. Prepare vocational students for the 21st Century economy by partnering neighboring businesses with technical schools

Our vocational and technical high schools will play a key role in meeting the needs of the 21st Century economy. Vocational and technical schools educate a student population that is most likely to stay in Massachusetts. We can directly improve the local economy by graduating highly trained technical students. These schools should continue to prepare students for success in advanced technology fields, as well as the traditional trades that are always in demand.

We also need to challenge the local business community to engage with our vocational school students. Biotech and other technology companies should be encouraged to partner with schools to help students realize the value of science education. These partnerships could involve in-school programs, internships with companies, and field study. Programs like these expose high school students to training and hands-on educational experiences throughout the life science industry.

Companies will benefit by being able to help design vocational course work to train students to work in high-demand or specialized fields. Students will graduate with better opportunities for employment and a better sense if their chosen field is right for them.

11. Improve Financial Literacy for High School Students

To make Massachusetts more affordable, it's important that recent college graduates entering the workforce have basic knowledge of personal finance. College students can easily run into debt when they are unaware of the long-term consequences of their financial choices.

The Healey - Hillman ticket wants every high school student to develop the skills to make financial decisions by expanding the state's financial literacy initiative known as "HiFi" to every school. Only 25 percent of high school students have received personal finance instruction leaving over 100,000 high school juniors and seniors without the life skills to avoid debt. While young people continue to have greater disposable income and access to credit, studies show a majority of high school students do not have basic personal finance knowledge. Through the Department of Education, Massachusetts schools would implement a uniform, voluntary high school financial literacy program.

12. Evaluate judges every 7 years to create an environment of accountability and professionalism in the Judicial Branch

Instances of judicial misconduct are rare, but they can have a devastating effect on the public's trust in our judicial system. Massachusetts is one of only three states where judges are given lifetime appointments. While we recognize the importance of the judicial branch's autonomy, there also needs to be a system in place to hold judges accountable. Judges should be evaluated every seven years by an independent Judicial Evaluation Commission, and these evaluations should be publicly available.

- Judges would be evaluated by their peers, the Massachusetts Bar Association, defense attorneys and prosecutors on demeanor, work ethic, judicial management, and compliance with mandatory sentencing guidelines.
- The governor would review the evaluations and decide whether or not re-confirmation by the Governor's Council is indicated.
- Upon request, the Governor's Council would review the suitability of the individual for the judiciary as it would for any gubernatorial nominee for the bench.

13. Keep doctors in Massachusetts and reduce health care costs by adopting medical malpractice reform

There is an alarming need for medical malpractice reform in our state. Escalating medical liability insurance costs have a negative effect on the Commonwealth's competitive position to retain and recruit physicians. Since 2001, there has been a 32 percent decline in the number of malpractice awards in the Commonwealth. Despite this reduction, the average award has increased by 41 percent leaving doctors with insurance rates that are not only extremely high, but have increased by 87 percent since 1999.

Kerry Healey has already filed legislation that would address many of the current problems with medical malpractice laws.

- Reform the current \$500,000 cap on non-economic damages by eliminating loopholes under the current law. These loopholes have enabled plaintiff lawyers to circumvent the intent of the law and win damages well in excess of the harm caused to the patient.
- Tighten the state's current tribunal system to help ensure that only meritorious medical malpractice lawsuits go to trial. The decisions of the tribunal are admissible in court to encourage settlement of lawsuits. This will help injured patients receive more compensation and avoid the often arduous and painful process of a courtroom trial.
- Allow medical providers to disclose and, if appropriate, apologize for medical errors by making the disclosure or apology inadmissible in court. Physicians are currently discouraged from discussing medical errors with patients due to the threat of a lawsuit.
- Reduce lawyers' fees from 25 percent for verdicts over \$500,000 to 15 percent for verdicts over \$600,000.

These changes would increase the number of obstetricians and neurosurgeons who choose to stay in Massachusetts, as well as decrease the waiting time to see all doctors.

14. Reform the state's pension system to eliminate fraud and abuse and return more than \$200 million in savings to cities and towns to cut property taxes

The state's pension system is ripe for abuse. On Beacon Hill, elected officials and the politically connected use loopholes to gain unfair access to millions in taxpayer dollars. According to a recent study, in the last five years legislative changes to the pension system providing richer benefits for some and offering early retirement incentives to others cost the taxpayers an additional \$125 million a year.

The plan applies only to new employees and excludes police officers and firemen.

Each year, \$1.3 billion of the state budget goes to pay off state pension debt. In recent years, the state has struggled to keep pace with its pension payments, causing the debt to grow even larger, leaving the system with an unfunded liability of \$13 billion. If the current system stays in place, the state can not pay off the debt for another 17 years, passing the burden along to future generations.

The Healey – Hillman pension plan will close the loopholes used to game the state pension system and streamline management and operations by rolling underperforming municipal pension plans into the state system.

- Under the plan, new state employees would be given 401(K) style retirement accounts, saving taxpayers roughly \$100 million over the next decade.
- Once all public employees are included in the new system, the state will realize savings to the tune of \$140 million a year.
- Cities and towns would immediately save \$200 million that could be used to reduce property taxes.

15. Lift the cap on charter schools to provide parents more options for their child's education

Our public schools are some of the best in the country and our charter schools are among our highest achieving public schools. In the last four years, nearly 90 percent of the state's charter schools performed better or the same on the MCAS exam as their corresponding district schools. Low-income and minority students in charter schools also performed better than their district school peers.

Many parents find the innovative educational practices at charter schools appealing, but there are not enough charter schools to meet the demand. There are 15,000 students on waiting lists to get into charter schools, but the Legislature has imposed a cap which limits the creation of new charter schools. A Healey-Hillman Administration would lift this cap so that more parents have the opportunity to choose a charter school for their child.

16. Create a level playing field for all Massachusetts companies by penalizing firms that hire illegal aliens

Massachusetts companies that hire illegal immigrants hurt our economy. Every job they give to an illegal immigrant is a job that could have been done by a Massachusetts worker. In addition, many companies who hire illegal immigrants don't pay their employees a fair wage, don't give them required benefits, and don't pay employment taxes for those employees. This gives these employers an unfair advantage in the marketplace at the expense of those who play by the rules. To create a level playing field for all Massachusetts companies, the Healey-Hillman Administration will introduce severe penalties for companies that hire illegal aliens.

Turning a blind eye to illegal hiring practices only encourages illegal immigrants to locate in Massachusetts. By enforcing tough penalties on businesses that hire illegal aliens we will discourage illegal activity in the Commonwealth, and lower costs in our schools and emergency rooms.

17. Boost English as a Second Language programs in regions where the labor market relies heavily on new Americans

Learning English is a major step toward helping legal immigrants achieve the American dream. It is essential for legal immigrants to learn English in order to become self-sufficient and succeed in Massachusetts.

A Healey-Hillman Administration will expand English as a Second Language and basic adult education classes in urban areas, such as Boston and New Bedford, where immigrants make up a large percent of the labor force. Immigrants who make the commitment to learn English demonstrate a work ethic that points to becoming dedicated, productive members of the Massachusetts workforce. We should do everything possible to help them achieve their goals.

18. Ban cell phones for teen drivers

Using a cell phone while driving can distract all motorists, especially young and inexperienced drivers. While teen drivers are learning the rules of the road, their full attention is required to help ensure the safety of the drivers, their passengers and other motorists who share the road.

To make the roads safer for all drivers, a Healey -Hillman Administration would ban teens younger than 18 from talking on cell phones while behind the wheel. Cell phone use is ubiquitous among teens and distracting conversations and text messaging are potential causes of accidents.

In addition, we support more education for teen drivers. Teens caught driving with their cell phones would be fined and license restrictions would be extended.

19. Stop subsidizing legislators' commutes by eliminating *per diems* for elected officials living within 30 miles of the State House

There are very few jobs in Massachusetts for which employees are compensated for their trip to and from the office, but it should come as no surprise that state legislator is one of them. Currently, all legislators, even those who live in Boston, are entitled to a 'per diem' for every day that they are on Beacon Hill. These allowances cost the taxpayers tens of thousands of dollars every year. While it may be reasonable to reimburse those legislators who must travel long distances to Boston, a Healey-Hillman Administration would eliminate per diem payments to legislators who live within 30 miles of the State House.

20. Bring Massachusetts in line with federal welfare-to-work guidelines to prevent welfare abuse and save millions of dollars for taxpayers

Massachusetts was at the forefront of welfare reform when Governor Weld signed the reforms in 1994. With a federal waiver set to expire, Massachusetts is now failing to meet the federal government's minimal welfare-to-work guidelines and is facing millions of dollars in penalties.

- Federal guidelines require that at least 50% of welfare recipients work.
- In Massachusetts, only 28% of welfare recipients are required to work. Less than 10% actually do work.

Failing to enact comprehensive welfare reform will cost Massachusetts at least \$50 million. In addition, increasing the work requirements will help to raise welfare recipients above the poverty level and put them on the road to self-sufficiency.

A Healey-Hillman Administration would require work from all federally work-eligible welfare recipients and provide the job training and child care supports necessary to lift families out of poverty.

21. Lower health care insurance costs for cities and towns by allowing them to purchase coverage through the state

Municipal budgets are feeling the squeeze of higher costs, forcing our communities to choose between two difficult options – higher property taxes or reductions in local services. One of the main drivers of local costs is the dramatic increase in health care insurance premiums for municipal employees. Over the last four years, the cost of health care insurance in our cities and towns has risen 63 percent, four times the growth of local budgets.

Legislation is currently under negotiation that would allow cities and towns to join the state Group Insurance Commission, thereby eliminating duplicative administrative costs at the local level, and allowing state negotiators to push for lower prices as risk is spread across a larger pool of employees. The state system has done a good job controlling its health care spending over the last four years, with costs rising at half the rate of municipalities' over the same period.

If implemented, the result is likely millions of dollars in annual cost savings for local taxpayers without any negative impact on the quality or access to health care for municipal employees. Those are real and immediate savings that can be used to lower property taxes, hire additional teachers, police and firefighters and fund important local capital projects.

22. Require lifetime parole for Level 2 sex offenders to assist law enforcement's efforts to track and monitor sexual predators and protect children

For the last three years, Kerry Healey has fought hard for laws which protect our families and our society from sex offenders. Some of the toughest laws enacted gives the public a greater ability to track convicted sex offenders once they leave prison.

However, many of these provisions only apply to Level 3 sex offenders. Level 2 sex offenders are also likely to re-offend and we have an obligation to do all we can to monitor their whereabouts in our communities.

To assist law enforcement's efforts to track and monitor sexual predators, a Healey–Hillman Administration will require lifetime parole for all Level 2 sex offenders. Offenders would be assigned a parole officer who would always know where the offender is living and working for the rest of the predator's life. In addition, any violation of their parole would result in tough penalties, including an expedited return to jail.

23. Reinstate the death penalty for felons convicted of killing a law enforcement officer, judge, prosecutor or corrections officer

Law enforcement officials play an invaluable role in maintaining safety and order in our society. They keep our families and our communities safe and put their lives on the line for us every single day. Those who would harm our law enforcement officers threaten to destroy the very fabric of our society.

Currently, there is no enhanced penalty for killing a law enforcement officer. To deter those who would consider committing such a crime, a Healey – Hillman Administration would reinstate the death penalty for those convicted of killing a law enforcement officer.

24. Reduce Massachusetts's sky-high "jobs tax" by eliminating abuse in our unemployment insurance system

Massachusetts has the highest-in-the-nation unemployment insurance cost, a “jobs tax” that costs businesses \$688 per employee. The Healey–Hillman ticket wants to give employers an immediate savings of more than \$100 per employee during their first year in office.

Reforming the unemployment insurance system would include aligning Massachusetts with the other states by reducing the number of weeks an individual can collect unemployment benefits. The Healey–Hillman proposal would reduce the current 30 weeks of benefits to 26, in line with the federal government, and increase the number of weeks an individual would have to work in order to receive benefits from 15 weeks to 20.

The Healey-Hillman plan would also eliminate loopholes and abuses of the current law that allow some self-employed individuals to game the system by “firing” themselves and collecting unemployment benefits for 7 months, while working only a few months a year. These reforms will lower costs for employers, while preserving the unemployment insurance safety net for those who really need it.

25. Require that driver's licenses issued to legal immigrants expire on the same day as their visa to cut down immigration violations

Illegal immigrants should not have driver's licenses. While we can prevent those who are not here legally from applying for a driver's license, it is more difficult to prevent legal immigrants from retaining their driver's license when their immigration status changes. To address this problem, driver's licenses issued to non-permanent immigrants should expire on the same day as their visas.

26. Require anyone applying for taxpayer-funded public housing to submit proof they are a legal citizen

There are hundreds of people on waiting lists for public housing in Massachusetts and hundreds more who are in our family homeless shelters waiting for affordable housing. Public housing spots should be reserved for legal citizens. To ensure that illegal aliens are not receiving public assistance ahead of our legal citizens, anyone applying for public housing should be required to submit proof of their citizenship.

The Healey-Hillman Administration would challenge the current federal court ruling that prohibits state officials from requesting proof of citizenship from individuals applying for public housing.

27. Improve accountability and performance in the classroom by rewarding our best teachers with higher pay and merit-based bonuses

To maintain our competitive edge nationally and to compete internationally, Massachusetts must recruit and retain quality teachers in our public schools. To motivate educators to reach their professional potential, we must compensate and reward them like *professionals*.

Other professions offer raises and bonuses for quality performance and advance individuals to supervisory positions when they demonstrate leadership qualities and skills. Under the current system, teacher pay is based on a collectively bargained salary grid, determined solely by what degrees teachers have earned and how long they've been in the classroom. There is no reward for superior skills, creativity, or student achievement; consequently, many quality young educators leave the profession. The structure of the teaching profession leaves teachers with no opportunity to receive feedback or to advance. Teachers have no input, no support, no incentive for innovation, and no reward for performance.

A Healey-Hillman Administration would correct this by offering our teachers comprehensive evaluations, professional standards, and merit-based pay.

28. Protect taxpayers and encourage higher voter participation by requiring Proposition 2 1/2 override votes to be held on regular election days.

For the last 26 years, Proposition 2 1/2 has served as one of the most effective methods to protect taxpayers from excessive property tax increases. It also allows the citizens of cities and towns to control, via the override process, when their property taxes can be increased by more than 2.5 percent and for what purposes. The override process is an important part of the law, but the process is sometimes abused by those who advocate for overrides. These override proponents often schedule override votes at atypical times or dates in order to depress voter turnout. These maneuvers advance the agenda of a select few by attempting to silence the voice of the taxpayers. To make sure that Proposition 2 1/2 override votes truly reflect the will of all the voters, a Healey-Hillman Administration would require these votes to be held on regular election days.

29. Reduce health care costs by helping consumers comparison shop for treatments and facilities

Rising health care costs continue to put a strain on state government, employers and working families. We can take steps to hold down the rate of annual increases through better cost management. One way to improve the current health care system is to empower consumers so they can make better informed choices in the marketplace when shopping for health care services.

As consumers, we comparison shop for most everything in our economy and look for the highest quality for the best price. However, when it comes to health care, consumers make the assumption that the highest cost equals the best care, which is often not the case. The Healey-Hillman plan would create a database of medical information gathered from hospitals, doctors, insurers and patients to compare the costs of specific procedures from providers and evaluate the quality of the care received for each. Insurers could then determine when high quality treatment overlaps with lower costs and direct patients to those facilities.

The database could also be used as a framework for individuals and employers negotiating health insurance premiums with providers, allowing them to commit to utilizing the highest ranking and most cost effective doctors and facilities in exchange for lower premium rates.

30. Require state government employees pay 25 percent of their health care premiums; a rate that is in line with the private sector

Cities and towns are feeling the squeeze of higher costs from health care insurance premiums for municipal employees. The costs associated with health care contribution rates are soaring. We owe it to the taxpayers to require that state government employees pay the same contribution rates as their counterparts in the private sector.

State employees should pay 25 percent of their premium instead of the current 15 percent rate. Shifting the premium contribution rate will generate \$15 million in savings for taxpayers each year.

31. Provide loan forgiveness for students that pursue in-demand careers like engineering and forensic sciences

For the Massachusetts economy to be competitive in the 21st Century, we must be able to retain our talented pool of college students. Too many of our college students seek employment in other states after graduation because the cost of living is too high in Massachusetts. We should make a particular effort to retain those students who pursue in-demand careers, like engineering, in fields that are important to Massachusetts' success in a global economy.

We should also offer incentives for students to enter these in-demand fields of study at our public colleges and universities by partnering with Massachusetts employers to provide loan forgiveness as part of new employees' compensation packages. This program will align our workforce needs with our programs of study in public higher education, as well as make Massachusetts more affordable to recent graduates.

32. Automate all state operations and mandate that all agencies must accept credit card transactions

Massachusetts has made great strides in its effort to provide better service to our citizens and make interaction with state government more customer friendly. Our state website, www.mass.gov, is an excellent tool to help citizens navigate the wide range of state government programs and services. We want to make sure when visitors find what they are looking for, they can take care of whatever business they have without delay or confusion.

That's why a Healey-Hillman Administration would, where appropriate, require that all transactions done between our citizens and state government are fully automated and every state agency will accept credit card payments online. There is no reason state government can't mirror the private sector when it comes to automated customer service, saving time for our citizens, saving money for taxpayers and improving efficiency across the board.

33. Increase penalties for the production and distribution of methamphetamine

Methamphetamine abuse has been sweeping the country, filling our prisons with addicts and causing an alarming rise in child abuse and neglect. Not only is methamphetamine a dangerous drug, but the production of it can poison homes, make children in the immediate area ill, and harm the environment. Enacting stricter penalties for the production and distribution of methamphetamine will keep meth dealers out of Massachusetts and protect children from the dangerous toxins given off during the home-based production.

34. Appoint an Executive Director for the Massachusetts Sales Force Team to coordinate business recruitment

In order to capitalize on our local strengths and advantages, state government must play a key role in raising awareness that Massachusetts is the place to be when a company is looking to expand or relocate its operations. Leading the effort to promote Massachusetts is our state's sales force, and a Healey - Hillman Administration would appoint an Executive Director responsible for coordinating and managing the outreach efforts to employers and serving as a facilitator to partner local firms with new clients.

As a state that produces the entrepreneurs, innovators and risk takers that are driving the 21st century economy, we've got an opportunity not only to be an incubator for great ideas but a magnet for investors who want to invest in emerging business opportunities. Whether it's education, health care, high technology, life sciences or finance, Massachusetts has the employers and skilled workers that are always in demand. Our task is to do a better job of selling our talent to companies across the nation and around the world.

35. Make housing more affordable for first-time homebuyers

Owning a home is a big part of realizing the “American Dream,” and for too many first-time homebuyers in Massachusetts it is a dream that is simply out of reach. A Healey - Hillman Administration will not only work to create more housing that is affordable across the state, but also provide a helping hand to our working families and young professionals who want to live and work in the Commonwealth.

We will partner with our state’s banking community to establish a low fee, tax-free savings and investment account for prospective first-time homeowners to accrue savings toward a down payment for a home using pretax or post-tax dollars, similar to an IRA or Roth IRA. The savings plans would be operated in conjunction with a personal finance course to help first-time homebuyers effectively navigate the purchasing process, including choosing an appropriate mortgage, purchasing home insurance and planning for the unexpected costs faced by homeowners.

We would also expand the “soft second” mortgage program to help first-time homebuyers get past the hurdle of a 20 percent down payment, and re-invigorate and expand MassHousing’s Municipal Employee Mortgage Program that makes mortgages available to teachers, police officers and firefighters at reduced rates and low down payments.

36. Encourage citizens to support Massachusetts-based non-profits by re-establishing charitable tax deduction

Currently, out of the 41 states that levy an income tax, 33 provide a deduction for charitable giving. Unfortunately, Massachusetts is one of only 8 that does not. A Healey - Hillman Administration would immediately file legislation to restore this tax benefit.

Massachusetts ranks near the bottom nationally when it comes to per-capita support for charitable giving, even though our state is home to some of our nation's best non-profit organizations. In 2000, voters overwhelmingly supported a proposal that would allow taxpayers to deduct charitable donations from their state income tax returns. The Legislature delayed the implementation of this tax cut in 2002 due to the growing fiscal crisis and now the deduction is set to be re-introduced in 2014 – 14 years after the voters mandated it.

With state finances in solid shape, and the Legislature's appetite for more spending stronger than ever, it is time to restore this tax relief for our citizens and give a boost to our non-profits that do so much good and needed work across Massachusetts.

37. Encourage Massachusetts companies to expand and create new jobs through targeted tax incentives

Creating new jobs should begin at home. While attracting cutting-edge businesses to the state is important, we must also encourage existing Massachusetts businesses to grow and invest here. Too many of our businesses look to other states when they expand because the cost of doing business in the Commonwealth is too high. A key component of making Massachusetts more business friendly is offering targeted incentives for companies to grow in Massachusetts. For example, the state could assist businesses with infrastructure expenses associated with creating or retaining jobs, such as enhanced electrical or water supply, highway access or sewer work.

38. Encourage municipalities to permit accessory apartment rentals to diversify housing stock and increase the supply of affordable housing

Our proposal would provide incentives to cities and towns that amend their zoning regulations to allow for accessory apartments on existing properties to expand the local housing stock. It is an easy way to quickly create additional housing in communities across the state without having to expand the footprints of existing properties. Towns that agree to be creative when searching for new housing solutions would be eligible for local aid incentives to reward innovation and offset potential added costs for local services.

Everyone knows that housing in Massachusetts is expensive. However, we can pursue multiple avenues, big and small, to make it easier for homeowners to put some extra money in their pocket each month, help a young professional find an affordable place to live or help a senior citizen remain independent longer. Permitting accessory apartments is a quick solution to expanding affordable housing.

39. Reduce crime by requiring mandatory post-release supervision, a program that includes supervision, job training, housing and drug treatment for inmates leaving jail or prison

Approximately 20,000 inmates return to cities and towns each year and almost half of all former inmates commit another crime just one year after being released from prison. The Healey-Hillman ticket would establish mandatory post-release supervision for all convicted felons. The program would both supervise and prepare ex-inmates for life outside prison including job training, substance abuse treatment and housing options.

Our plan calls for mandatory post-release supervision for all individuals serving time in a state prison or house of correction to give them the best opportunity to become law-abiding citizens. The judge would impose a period of post-release supervision at the time of sentencing. The length of supervision would be at least nine months.

The cost to incarcerate one inmate per year is approximately \$40,000. Lowering the recidivism rate among former inmates would save taxpayers millions of dollars each year.

Sex offenders on lifetime community parole would not be eligible for this program.

40. Provide tax incentives for individuals who care for elderly relatives in their homes

Given a choice, senior citizens overwhelmingly prefer to remain in their homes or with their families instead of entering a long-term care facility. There is an opportunity for a win-win solution for Massachusetts if we make a commitment to focusing on expanding less costly home health care services. Providing tax incentives to caretakers, who dedicate a significant amount of their time and personal resources to care for an elderly relative, will allow more seniors to remain in their home in a caring environment.

41. Create a recruitment program for retired engineers to teach/mentor high school students and encourage more young people to enter science and engineering fields

We need to prepare our children to succeed in an economy where science and engineering skills are in demand. It is not enough to have excellent science and math curricula, we must also expose students to real-world examples of jobs in these fields. The state's Department of Labor and Workforce Development should recruit retired engineers to teach and mentor high school students, using the Museum of Science curriculum and Northeastern's RE-SEED program as guides.

Encouraging students to consider science and engineering fields will give them more options as they prepare for college and consider future careers. This benefits not only our students, but also our state by helping our students succeed in knowledge areas that are important to the Massachusetts economy.

42. Require fiscal transparency for local school districts so residents know how their education dollars are being spent

While the Commonwealth's deep-rooted tradition of local control ensures that town residents' voices are heard on issues of local governance, it has not, until now, guaranteed that voters know how tax dollars allocated for education are actually spent. It also does not allow for valuable comparisons among districts, all of which manage schools with similar challenges but have no opportunities to share administrative efficiencies.

Increased transparency in school spending will assure parents and taxpayers that dollars spent on education are used wisely. Such transparency will highlight areas of excessive expenditure and encourage local school boards to take advantage of savings by consolidating expenses and working with other localities, wherever possible.

Regionally, schools could gain by working together to pool administrative costs across district lines and enhance buying power for supplies and selected services. Parents could rest assured that more of their tax dollars would go directly to the classroom, rather than funding excessive administrative expenses. Moreover, local school boards would not lose their autonomy and accountability, because only those services associated with administrative expense would be pooled regionally.

43. Gain additional state revenue by leasing state-owned golf courses

The state of Massachusetts owns two public golf courses that are maintained at taxpayer expense. A good way to save the state money, and raise additional state revenue, is leasing these golf courses to private operators. A similar approach to state-owned skating facilities has resulted in better maintained rinks and better public access to recreational facilities.

44. Create a “cell phone” parking lot at Logan Airport to ease congestion and enhance security

Just about everyone who has headed over to Logan Airport has a story about endlessly circling the terminal while waiting to pick up a passenger whose arrival was delayed because the plane was late or their bags didn't show up. This is a hassle for drivers, contributes to congestion and presents a security risk for the airport that can be avoided by designating an off-site “cell phone” parking lot.

People would park for free in a lot near the airport and wait in their cars until their passenger arrives and contacts them on their cell phone. After getting the call, they would head over to the terminal and pick up their passenger and avoid much of the aggravation a trip to the airport can cause.

45. Identify and protect 50,000 of the state's most important eco-systems

Protecting open space and preserving our environment is a key component to ensuring the long term quality of life for our citizens and communities. A Healey – Hillman Administration would partner with the Commonwealth's leading environmental groups to identify and purchase 50,000 acres of our state's most valuable and vulnerable eco-systems to ensure they are adequately protected and expertly managed for the long term preservation of our environment. We want future generations to have the opportunity to explore and enjoy the same natural beauty of Massachusetts that we do today.

46. Allow civic, private and corporate organizations to purchase naming rights at selected state parks and dedicate the funds to park maintenance and improvements

Already widely used in the private sector as a revenue stream, the Commonwealth would permit Massachusetts-based civic, private and corporate organizations to sponsor the maintenance and improvements of our parks and recreational facilities in communities that agree to participate in the parks partnership program.

Safe, attractive and well-maintained parks are a major contributor to a vibrant community, and this program provides an opportunity for local entities to demonstrate their commitment to enhancing the quality of life where their friends, neighbors and employees live and work. The program would allow communities to opt-in and retain local control over which parks or open space would be eligible for sponsorship. Revenue generated from any agreement would be retained by the municipality.

47. Introduce “Cops in the Halls” to curb school violence

If our public schools are going to fulfill their mission to educate the next generation of skilled workers and corporate leaders, we need to ensure that the school environment is safe, supportive and conducive to learning. If a public school has a problem with violent behavior, illegal drugs and alcohol or chronically disruptive students, it is extremely difficult for educators and students to remain focused on being productive in the classroom. We propose assigning specially trained police officers to work with school administrators, teachers and students to prevent the bad actors from engaging in behavior that undermines the learning process and negatively impacts morale.

48. Implement GPS tracking program to protect victims of domestic violence

Global Positioning System (GPS) is currently used to track dangerous sex offenders in Massachusetts. Healey - Hillman want to expand the use of this technology to protect victims of domestic violence from their abusers.

Implementing a statewide GPS tracking program would make Massachusetts the first of its kind in the nation.

Victims of domestic violence are often scared into hiding to escape dangerous or life-threatening situations. Domestic violence is one of the few crimes where the victim is forced to abandon their lives to find safety. Over 30 percent of families living in homeless shelters are directly fleeing domestic violence.

Abusers who violate their restraining orders would be required to wear a GPS bracelet as a condition of their probation. The court would set up exclusion zones around areas such as a home, workplace and child's school. With law enforcement monitoring the tracking program, abusers would also face steep fines for violating the restraining order.

Domestic violence abusers would have to pay for the GPS bracelet.

49. Establish Commonwealth Academies across the state to encourage high standards and innovation in public education

Public schools are positioned to help students succeed when administrators and teachers have a working environment that promotes high standards and provides incentives for teachers. The Healey - Hillman proposal would provide grant money for schools that embrace adopting best practices in education. Commonwealth Academies will serve as an incubator for new ideas and innovation for public education in Massachusetts.

Schools choosing to be dedicated a Commonwealth Academy would earn additional state funding for implementing four or more of the following programs:

- Partnering with a private, non-profit group or higher education institution to provide students with additional educational opportunities;
- Creating a website for parents to interact with their child's teacher and view homework assignments;
- Offering school-to-work programs;
- Empowering school administrators to have full responsibility over staffing, budget allocations, curriculum, and the length of the school day;
- Instituting a measuring system at the beginning and end of each year;
- Offering the Museum of Science Engineering curriculum in high schools;
- Ensuring after-school and summer opportunities are available for all students in grades Kindergarten through 8; and,
- Establishing school-to-work programs, dual enrollment opportunities at community colleges, college-ready curriculum, higher education application and financial aid planning assistance in high schools.

50. Require state agencies to reduce energy consumption by 10 percent through conservation and the use of energy efficient products

More energy efficient technologies and products are introduced into the marketplace every day and the Commonwealth should be setting a “green” example for our companies and families by adopting policies that maximize energy efficiency.

A Healey-Hillman Administration would require state agencies to reduce energy consumption by 10 percent over the next four years through conservation efforts in existing facilities and requiring energy efficient construction in the state’s building program. Reaching the 10 percent conservation goal would result in savings of \$15 million for taxpayers.