

MASSACHUSETTS ORGANIZATION OF STATE ENGINEERS AND SCIENTISTS

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2022 Legislative Candidate Questionnaire

Candidate Name: Diana DiZoglio

Running for House / Senate/ Local in District: State Auditor

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About MOSES: MOSES is a state employee union representing some 3,400 highly trained and educated professionals who perform various engineering and scientific duties at 30 different state agencies of the Commonwealth. Our members hold Bachelors, Masters' and PhDs in their areas of expertise. Their diverse responsibilities include performing engineering design, materials and construction inspections at the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) and the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR); providing wetlands protection, air quality monitoring, drinking water analysis and water pollution control at the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA); and protecting public health through constant vigilance and testing by scientists and epidemiologists at the Department of Public Health. Our members also enforce labor laws at the Office of the Attorney General, provide forensic science services at the State Police Crime Lab and ensure the safety of our state-owned buildings and facilities at the Division of Capital Asset Management and Maintenance (DCAMM) and the Department of Professional Licensure (DPL). Despite the diversity of their duties, all our members share a commitment to providing quality, dependable services to Massachusetts residents.

In considering an endorsement of your candidacy, MOSES carefully assesses and evaluates your thoughts on the following subjects:

1. Collective bargaining rights
2. Attracting and retaining talented public sector engineers and scientists
3. Funding for worker safety
4. Revenue and tax system fairness
5. Privatization of public services
6. Strong funding for MOSES agencies

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Please answer the questions below to be considered for endorsement.

1. COLLECTIVE BARGAINING RIGHTS:

Collective bargaining rights are the single most important issue to MOSES. Once workers freely decide to form a union their power is found in the right to collectively bargain their wages, benefits, working conditions as well as their ability to collectively assert their voice at work. It is vital that elected officials understand and defend collective bargaining rights and stand with workers to resist any weakening of these rights, including efforts to legislate areas that are traditionally negotiated during collective bargaining, including capping sick leave buyback.

Will you oppose all legislation that seeks to compromise, weaken or otherwise lessen collective bargaining rights for all workers?

YES

In a few sentences, please describe how you intend to support strong wages, benefits, promotional opportunities and working conditions for public employees as an elected official, as well as what actions you would be willing to take to protect the repeal or weakening of protected subjects of collective bargaining for all workers.

As a legislator, I am proud to have voted to increase the minimum wage, for paid family and medical leave, and for the rights of organized labor to organize and collectively bargain. I've continued to support priority legislation for workers to live with dignity. In 2021 I co-sponsored the amendment to require that the new Holyoke Soldiers Home be built under a Project Labor Agreement (PLA) that ensures that union labor will be used to build the facility by mandating a pre-bid, pre-hire collective bargaining agreement for the construction. I've led efforts alongside marginalized State House staffers in Beacon BLOC to provide more equitable compensation and am also the only candidate in this race to publicly support the State House Staff Union. I've strongly supported efforts of grassroots groups such as Raise Up Mass and labor unions such as SEIU, NAGE, IBEW, LIUNA and others to fight for social justice and ensure workers across the Commonwealth are able to live with a standard of dignity in the communities they work so hard to serve. And my support goes beyond the doors of the State House, having stood shoulder to shoulder with many rank and file union members on picket lines across Massachusetts.

I will bring that commitment to workers, and especially public employees, to the Auditor's office. In addition to the duties relative to the Taxpayers Protection Act that I discuss further down in the questionnaire, part of the job of the Auditor is to look out for the tens of thousands of public employees who go to work every single day to honorably serve the residents of the Commonwealth. We will report on what's going right and what's going wrong, so the public knows what is being done across state government.

MWRA Workplace Democracy: Unlike the vast majority of state employees, workers at the MWRA do not have the right to negotiate for certain benefits such as assignments, promotions and seniority. Worker

discipline is meted out through an arbitrary and capricious standard instead of through a “just cause” system. This is due to restrictive language in the MWRA enabling act.

MOSES has filed a bill to eliminate this exception to the collective bargaining laws. Will you support, and would you sponsor or co-sponsor this legislation?

YES

While I may not have the authority as Auditor to vote on this legislation, I do currently support this bill and I will use the bully pulpit of the office to support the MOSES position on this issue.

2. ATTRACTING AND RETAINING TALENTED PUBLIC SECTOR ENGINEERS & SCIENTISTS:

Public employees, particularly those working in scientific, engineering and technical positions, make on average, \$20,000 to \$30,000 less than workers in the private sector. Increases in healthcare premiums, co-pays and deductibles, along with changes to state pension plans, are inhibiting the ability of the state to attract and retain highly educated and trained individuals to state service. Earlier this year, headlines were made when the Group Insurance Commission (GIC), which determines healthcare benefits for most public employees, voted to drop three of the most popular carriers. Despite having the power to determine the benefits and cost structure of health insurance for the majority of the public workforce, only six of the 17 seats on the GIC are currently designated for public employees or retirees. As a result, over the past three years the GIC has voted to shift over \$300 million onto employees and retirees through increased co-pays and deductibles.

MOSES has filed legislation to incur additional labor representation on the GIC, giving public employees a greater voice in the decision-making process. Will you support, and would you sponsor or co-sponsor this legislation?

YES

Though as Auditor I will not be in the position to vote on this legislation, I fully support the MOSES position on this issue. As a current Senator, I am a proud co-sponsor of H.2573, An Act relative to GIC composition and transparency.

MOSES is concerned about the long-term impacts these changes will have on the ability of the Commonwealth to recruit and retain top talent in the engineering and scientific professions.

In a few sentences, please describe how you will work in your capacity as an elected official to contain the rising costs of healthcare for public employees, prevent the shifting of costs from the state onto employees, and fix the broken GIC:

We need to ensure that the tens of thousands of dedicated public employees of the Commonwealth get the affordable and quality healthcare they need and deserve. As the Auditor, I'll review GIC processes to ensure its health insurance carrier selection is in the best interest of both the state and employer. I'll look at what the GIC does to assess the needs of employees, their utilization of health insurance, and the costs of premiums. And we'll review how the GIC takes those assessments into account in monitoring contracts and making decisions about continuing to carry certain providers or electing to procure new ones.

3. OSHA PROTECTION FOR ALL PUBLIC EMPLOYEES:

Perhaps the contributions of the labor movement that are most taken for granted are the accomplishments we have achieved by our fights for occupational safety and health. One of the reasons the labor movement formed was the desire of workers to act collectively to improve their working conditions. Safe jobs at safe workplaces are an indispensable factor in an employee's quality of life. Nothing is more central to quality of life than one's health and ability to return safely home from work. Each year on April 28, MOSES participates in the international 'Workers Memorial Day', meant to commemorate the lives of workers who die on the job each year. One worker dying on the job in preventable accidents is one worker too many.

Thanks to recent actions taken by the legislature, Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) regulations now protect not only private sector workers but almost all public sector workers in both state and municipal roles across the Commonwealth.

The challenge now comes in ensuring that these laws are properly implemented and enforced.

Will you support legislation to strengthen worker safety on the job and prioritize strong funding for the Department of Labor Standards (DLS) to enforce OSHA standards?

YES

I support the MOSES position. As a Representative in 2017, I was a proud co-sponsor of and voted in favor of successful legislation that provided all state and municipal workers with the same protections provided to private workers under the federal Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA). I will continue to support these efforts.

4. REVENUE AND TAX SYSTEM FAIRNESS:

State revenue has fluctuated in recent years, leaving many agencies uncertain as to how to best plan for the future. Past proposals to lower the state personal income tax and a more recent proposal to lower the sales tax, all negatively impact state revenue. Alternately, a proposal to increase taxes on individuals with income over \$1 million, would increase revenue for the Commonwealth. With costs for health care and energy steadily increasing, MOSES is very concerned about the stability of state revenue to fund the important work being done by our members at agencies across the state.

In a few sentences, please describe your views on changes to the state personal income tax and sales tax being proposed:

I was proud to vote to place the Fair Share question on the ballot – the fourth time that I have voted in favor of the amendment. I was also thrilled to stand with Raise Up Massachusetts at a [rally](#) in my district

to publicly endorse the campaign as the first to sign their petition and urge my constituents to talk to their families, friends and neighbors to get the vote out in support of the Amendment.

5. PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC SERVICES:

Despite major public-private partnership (P3) disasters across the nation and here at home, foreign, multinational companies and Wall Street investment houses continue to push for private toll roads and other risky private takeovers of public assets. These projects allow investors to siphon huge profits out of the public transportation and water systems while inflicting outrageous fees through cumbersome, lengthy contracts.

In 1993, the Legislature enacted the Tax Payer Protection Act (TPA)/Pacheco Law as the direct result of reports issued by the state auditor that uncovered large scale instances of waste, fraud and abuse in privatization contracts. The TPA, which applies to state contracts of \$500,000 or more, establishes a process through which private vendors are required to meet a set of standards before proceeding with privatization. Vendors must demonstrate to the auditor that the total cost to perform the service in question will generate savings of just *one cent* and maintain equal or greater quality to the in-house cost.

Unfortunately, the TPA does not include design and engineering services. This has created a persistent consultant culture in Massachusetts, driving up costs and creating dangerous safety situations for the public. The transportation sector in Massachusetts alone now sees over \$300 million a year being spent on consultants doing engineering and design—work that could be done in-house at 1/3 of the cost.

In a few sentences, please describe your views on public-private partnerships, any experiences you have had with these kinds of projects and how you would approach the TPA as an elected official:

Senator Marc Pacheco, the author of the Taxpayer Protection Act, has endorsed my candidacy for State Auditor because of my work alongside him on this issue and in the Senate demanding transparency around privatization. This is a crucial statute for our Commonwealth. It ensures a transparent, open cost analysis of public and private bids through the Auditor's Office and requires contractors to prove cost savings before they are considered as service providers. I would uphold this responsibility by making high-quality service with taxpayer accountability my main priority. My stance is clear: a public process allows for the proper vetting of contracts and prevents unfettered privatization. As Auditor, I have pledged to conduct regular audits to ensure we are fulfilling our commitments made through legislative efforts.

6. STRONG FUNDING FOR MOSES AGENCIES:

Since the 'Great Recession' of 2008-2009, the budgets for many of the agencies where our scientists and engineers work have been cut dramatically. These cuts combined with early retirement have left our members struggling to fulfill their agencies' mission. Some of these include:

- Department of Environmental Protection (DEP)
- Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR)

- Department of Public Health (DPH)
- Division of Capital Asset Management and Maintenance (DCAMM)
- State Police Crime Laboratory
- Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT)

During the State Budget process, will you prioritize investing in staffing levels at public agencies such as MassDOT, DCR, DEP, DPH, DCA & the State Police Crime Lab to ensure the Commonwealth maintains and develops in-house expertise and is able to carry-out its key functions?

YES

I support the MOSES position.

In a few sentences, please describe which of these agencies you would prioritize during the budget process and why:

As my record demonstrates over the course of the last ten years, and most recently in regards to the State House staffers seeking to unionize, I am a strong and vocal supporter of workers rights. Like I have supported the Mass Nurses Association, as lead sponsor, in their push for safe staffing levels, I will support workers in their fight for fair and just treatment and safe and supporting staffing levels in our agencies. It is important we support staffers across these state agencies in this fight. I will use the powers of the Auditor's office to audit these critical state agencies and report any findings that show that the lack of in-house expertise and/or reduced staffing levels are having a negative impact on key functions.

UNION EXPERIENCE

What, if any, direct experience do you have or have you had with labor unions?

I have a long and proud history of standing up for – and alongside – organized labor in Massachusetts. I know first-hand the financial challenges that too many working families are struggling with because I have lived them. My single mom had me when she was 17 and helped raise me through the support of public assistance. We struggled to make ends meet, were victims of domestic violence and were often housing insecure. I waitressed and cleaned houses to make my way through community college. I then earned a full scholarship to Wellesley College to become the first in my family to graduate. This lived experience is why I am so passionate about supporting working families.

When it comes to direct experience I have had with labor unions, the list is long. Prior to being elected to the state legislature, I served as Chief of Staff for the Professional Firefighters of Massachusetts and also worked at the National Association of Government Employees. Both have endorsed my candidacy for Auditor alongside many other unions. As of now, I am the only candidate in this race to receive any labor endorsements based on my strong track record of standing up for workers rights over the last 10 years in the legislature.

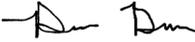
And, as stated above, I've led efforts alongside marginalized State House staffers in Beacon BLOC to provide more equitable compensation and am also the only candidate in this race to publicly support the State House Staff Union. I've strongly supported efforts of grassroots groups such as Raise Up Mass and labor unions such as MTA, AFT, SEIU, NAGE, IBEW, LIUNA, MNA and many others to fight for social

justice and ensure workers across the Commonwealth are able to live with a standard of dignity in the communities they work so hard to serve. And my support goes beyond the doors of the State House, having stood shoulder to shoulder with many rank and file union members on picket lines across Massachusetts. I will continue to do so as Auditor.

FINAL THOUGHTS: Please utilize the space provided below to provide us with some final thoughts about why MOSES should consider an endorsement of your candidacy. A simple paragraph or two will suffice. Please try not to skip this section.

The 3,400 members of MOSES bring vital expertise and passion to the job of making Massachusetts work for its residents. Their commitment to public service – often for compensation and benefits that is well below what their education and experience would garner in the private sector – needs to be respected, applauded, and rewarded. As stated at length above, my commitment to working families and the rights of organized labor is unmatched in this race. In fact, I am the only candidate to have been endorsed by organized labor, including but not limited to the National Association of Government Employees (NAGE), UNITE HERE 26, IBEW Local 223, Boston Carmen’s Union, Iron Workers Local 7, Machinists District 15, the MBTA Inspectors Union, Operating Engineers Local 4, the Professional Fire Fighters of Massachusetts, and Teamsters Local 170 and 25. They are supporting me because I have always stood with organized labor and the families they fight for every day. I have earned the support of your organization in past years, and I would be humbled and honored if the members of MOSES joined in support of my campaign for Auditor. I can’t do this without you. Thank you!

PRINT NAME: Diana DiZoglio

SIGNATURE: 

DATE: May 4, 2022