

350 Action 2019 Candidate Questionnaire

Ayanna Pressely

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About You

Your Name: Ayanna Pressely

What office are you running for, and as which party?: *Democrat running for Congress, MA-07*

Policy Positions

Do you support a Green New Deal that ends fossil fuels and provides an immediate and just transition to 100% renewable energy? Explain what that means to you.

I am a vocal supporter and co-sponsor of the Green New Deal because I believe that bold, meaningful action to address the climate crisis is not only an environmental imperative - essential to preserving our planet for future generations - but is inextricably linked to racial justice, economic justice, and health justice. For generations, marginalized communities have felt the burden of short-sighted environmental policies, and are already being disproportionately impacted by our changing climate - challenges only exacerbated by an energy infrastructure that continues to rely predominantly on fossil fuels. I am committed to working with my colleagues and the communities we represent to advance the Green New Deal and, specifically, construct an energy system that centers sustainability and justice for marginalized communities.

How will you center racial, economic and social justice in your climate policies?

I have often said that those closest to the pain should be closest to the power, driving and informing the policymaking. I believe that generations of exclusionary, top-down policymaking have led to the entrenched disparities and inequities we see in our communities, including when it comes to climate and energy policies. The only way to ensure justice - racial justice, economic justice, and health justice - for our communities going forward is to create policy in partnership with community. That's why I have - and will continue to be - intentional about remaining in close proximity to the hurt in the communities I represent - listening and learning from the people of the MA-07 about the challenges they face and how the changing climate is affecting their lives, and then using those experiences to guide my policymaking.

Do you support a moratorium on all new fossil fuel infrastructure, including pipelines, fracked gas and oil, compressor stations and coal power plants? Please tell us with specifics what you'd do, if elected to stop the expansion of the fossil fuel industry and keep fossil fuels in the ground? *

I support a moratorium on new fossil fuel infrastructure. Existing fossil fuel infrastructure poses unacceptable public health risks, especially in marginalized communities, and we must be committed to transforming our energy system in pursuit of sustainable, renewable alternatives.

Do you support investigation of the fossil fuel industry's role in causing climate change, blocking climate action, and misleading the public? If so, do you have plans for a process to hold the industry financially accountable for that role and related harms? * (For more context: InsideClimate News has done detailed investigative reporting showing that Exxon and other companies understood the risks of climate change 50+ years ago and suppressed the research instead of taking action. Investigations into Exxon have launched in New York, Massachusetts, and more.)

Yes, as a member of the House Committee on Oversight and Reform I have led strong lines of questioning that aim to put the industry on the record and hold them accountable. I also strongly support the work of Attorneys General like my friend and colleague Maura Healey in Massachusetts, who are working tirelessly to hold major corporations accountable for knowingly contributing to climate change and exacerbating the public health impacts, especially in marginalized communities. I support continued investigation at the local, state, and federal level to hold these corporations accountable, and I believe it's such an important example of why I have elected to reject any contributions from corporate PACs - my constituents in the MA-07 should feel confident that our work on climate and energy policies is prioritizing their needs, not the interests of corporations who are knowingly doing lasting harm to our communities.

Do you pledge to reject any contributions from the fossil fuel industry, as defined by the "No Fossil Fuel Money Pledge"? * More information about the No Fossil Fuel Money Pledge: <http://nofossilfuelmoney.org/>

Yes

Do you support plans to create an immigration policy that allows a path to citizenship for undocumented people? *

Absolutely. We need to fundamentally transform our immigration system to ensure justice for DACA recipients, TPS holders, and asylum seekers, and to create a compassionate path to citizenship for undocumented people that keeps families together and addresses the trauma that this Administration's cruel and draconian policies are causing our communities

What are your specific plans on addressing the refugees and other migrants at the US borders? *

The families at our border must be treated with compassion and met with trauma informed resources. Migrant families have faced horror and hardship. We have a moral obligation to allow families to settle

in community as they await a timely review of their asylum claim. Seeking asylum is a legal human right. The Trump Administration's anti immigrant agenda has caused deep and lasting harm. Let me be clear that the racist policies including family separation, remain in Mexico policies and detention of migrants are short sighted, cruel and unnecessary. We must reject the false talking points that there is no other solution. Community based supports, compassionate processing of asylum claims and increased investments in legal resources are solutions we could implement right now while we fix many broken aspects of our immigration system and create less onerous pathways to citizenship for mixed immigration status families.

How do you see climate change impacting mass migrations and what are your plans to address the increase in refugees as a result of the climate crisis. For background on climate impacts on human migrations: <https://www.unhcr.org/en-us/climate-change-and-disasters.html>

It is clear that climate change has displaced so many already and will displace millions of people in the coming years - predominantly in developing nations. We must pass the Green New Deal and resist this Administration's efforts to roll back critical environmental protections and abdicate responsibility on the international stage for addressing the climate crisis. We must rebuild America's commitment to foreign aid and help developing nations both address conditions that are worsening because of climate change and become more resilient to ongoing impacts. And we must fundamentally transform our immigration system to focus on resettling refugees in community, rather than tearing families apart at the border and conducting raids and enforcement actions that traumatize entire communities.

What are your plans for criminal justice reform?

Recently I introduced legislation - The People's Justice Guarantee (HRes 702) outlining a bold, progressive vision that would fundamentally transform our criminal legal system through massive decarceration and an intentional focus on the values of shared power, freedom, equality, safety, and dignity. You can read more about my plan here:

<https://pressley.house.gov/sites/pressley.house.gov/files/The%20Peoples%20Justice%20Guarantee%20One%20Pager.pdf>

Do you support a worker's right to unionize?

Yes. Absolutely. As a former hotel service worker, I know, firsthand, the vital role that unions play in ensuring that workers receive a living wage, health care, workplace protections, and other critical benefits.

Do you support a \$15/hour minimum wage?

Yes, I believe that raising the minimum wage is essential to closing the widening wealth gap in our communities and to ensuring justice for working people.

How do you plan to address the resurgence of white supremacy in the public discourse? Please tell us your plan to respond to white nationalist terrorist acts in this country?

Every day, the hateful rhetoric and bigoted policies emanating from this White House are emboldening white supremacy and white nationalism, so removing the occupant of the White House is - and must remain - a top priority. However, we must not let it be our only goal - white supremacy existed long before that man descended an escalator at Trump Tower, and it will exist long after he has left Washington, DC. To effectively combat white supremacy and white nationalist violence, we must not only hold individual perpetrators accountable, but must invest significant resources in combatting misinformation campaigns that spread white supremacist propaganda, and dedicate federal intelligence resources to combatting the networks that fuel white supremacist terrorism in America.

What is your plan to reduce gun violence and mass shootings?

My focus has always been twofold: to reduce the number of guns on our streets and address the trauma of gun violence and the impact it has on our communities. I am proud to have supported vitally important legislation that passed the House of Representatives to require universal background checks on gun purchases, and to be a co-sponsor the the Making America Safe and Secure (MASS) Act - legislation that would incentivize states to adopt gun-licensing standards similar to those in Massachusetts, and make it harder for young people, people with mental health illness, and those with a criminal history to purchase or sell a gun. I am equally proud to have convened the first hearing in the history of the House Committee on Government Oversight and Reform focused on childhood trauma, including the trauma resulting from gun violence, and to continue my work in support of a survivors' bill of rights aimed at those dealing with trauma as a result of experiencing gun violence. However much work remains. I remain committed to advocating for long overdue federal policy that addresses the public health crisis of gun violence inclusive of domestic violence, community based violence and mass shootings. There is not hierarchy of hurt and our policy solutions must address the scale of the crisis.

Do you support the payment of reparations and/or related structural adjustment to remunerate the descendants of enslaved African Americans to addressing America's history of codified and systemic racism? For more background on reparations:

<https://sites.duke.edu/lit90sresearchprojectlauramarty/introduction/>

Yes. The emancipation of black people — people who spent centuries brutalized and disenfranchised and are still suffering the residual effects of slavery — was only the first step in our liberation. We must acknowledge the continued prejudice and oppression that limits opportunity for Black people in America, and that delivering thoughtful, intentional, and adequate recourse to all Black Americans is a vital step in making progress towards true liberation. I am a proud co-sponsor of Rep Sheila Jackson Lee's Reparations bill.

Do you support the return of unceded lands and territory or related royalties to Indigenous Populations as a form of redress for America's history of codified and systemic racism?

Yes. Our nation is indebted to our Indigenous communities who have been robbed of their land, lives and livelihood throughout this nation's history. We need specific and culturally relevant and responsive

policy, including policies that address the current day crisis of the murder and exploitation of indigenous women and girls and tackle the suicide epidemic robbing us of Native American youth.

Do you support Medicare for All?

Yes. I am a co sponsor of Rep Jayapal's Medicare for All bill. No one should be rationing their insulin because their coverage is insufficient and the cost of their prescription is too high. No one should have to choose between paying their medical bills or making the mortgage. Life-saving medical care should never come at the expense of food to put on the table. Healthcare is a human right, and every person should be guaranteed access to high-quality, affordable health care.

Do you support a woman's right to choose?

Yes

Race

Black

Gender

Cis-Woman