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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY MEMO

TO: Retailers Association of Massachusetts  
FR: Ernest Paicopolos—Polity Research Consulting LLC  
RE: Executive Summary—2024 Massachusetts Registered Voter Survey

Polity Research Consulting conducted a WEB-based survey among 600 Massachusetts registered voters between April 17th and April 22nd, 2024. The sample was constructed to represent the registered voter population of the state. The margin of error on the full, 600-member sample is  $\pm 4.00\%$  at the mid-range of the 95% confidence interval. That is, when conducting 100 such surveys, 95 of them will yield results that fall—at worst—4.00 points on either side of a given percentage.

The results from this survey indicate that the overall mood of voters in Massachusetts has become more pessimistic since our last survey in April of 2023. For example, voters are less likely to think things in Massachusetts are headed in the right direction, and they express less favorable views of major political personalities. In addition, they impart low levels of trust to most governmental entities.

Pocketbook concerns still dominate the issue landscape—especially the cost of living, the affordability of health care, energy and housing, and the overall economy. Also, compared with last year, voters are less likely to think business competitiveness is a very important issue. A plurality of voters think state government spends too much—and solid majorities favor reducing the state sales tax and local property taxes. On a prospective future ballot measure, strong majorities would vote in favor of returning excess state government revenue back to taxpayers. Also, about two-thirds of voters think local climate-related regulations have gone too far.

More than seven in ten voters think organized retail crime is a serious problem in Massachusetts. And, while the majority of voters intend to stay in Massachusetts long-term, a significant minority (about one in five) are less likely to stay in the state or are unsure if they'll stay. Among those less likely to stay, many are higher-income and better-educated voters—as well as the oldest and youngest segments of the population.

All in all, Massachusetts voters are less optimistic than a year ago and are still concerned with a range of economic issues facing the state.

**POLITY RESEARCH CONSULTING LLC**  
**PRC #5317**

**MASSACHUSETTS**  
**APRIL 2024**

*(some percentages may add to more/less than 100% due to rounding error)*

*WEB interviewing dates: 4/17-4/22, 2024; Sample size: N=600 Registered Voters; MOE: ±4.00%*

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1.What is your gender identity?

1. Female	52%
2. Male	48
3. Other, Transgender, Non-Binary	--

2. To start off, do you think things here in Massachusetts are generally headed in the right direction, or are they off on the wrong track?

<b>SCALE:</b>	1. Right Direction	2. Wrong track	3. Don't know
	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>
April 2024	48%	39	13
April 2023	59%	29	12

3. How about nationally, do you think things in the United States are generally headed in the right direction, or are they off on the wrong track?

1. Right direction	29%
2. Wrong track	60
5. Don't know	11

Please indicate whether you have a generally favorable or unfavorable opinion of the following people. **[LIST ROTATED]**

<b>SCALE:</b>	1. Favorable	2. Unfavorable	3. Don't know/Can't rate
	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>
4. Massachusetts Governor Maura Healey			
April 2024	54%	32	14
April 2023	60%	21	19
5. US Senator Edward Markey	50%	29	21

<b>SCALE:</b>	1. Favorable	2. Unfavorable	3. Don't know/Can't rate
	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>
6. Boston Mayor Michelle Wu			
April 2024	47%	31	22
April 2023	53%	22	25

7. Massachusetts Lt. Governor Kim Driscoll

April 2024	33%	24	43
April 2023	40%	15	45

8. US Senator Elizabeth Warren

52%	40	8
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On a scale of “1” to “5” with “1” meaning “no trust at all” and “5” meaning “complete trust”, please indicate the level of *trust* you place in each of the following levels of government:

**SCALE:**

No trust at all				Complete trust			Don't know
1	2	3	4	5			6

	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>MEAN</u>
09. Local city and town government	8%	14	29	33	13	2	3.29
10. Massachusetts State Legislature	14%	16	31	26	10	3	3.04
11. Federal government	19%	25	29	19	6	1	2.68

12. In general, how confident are you about the *current state* of the *U.S.* economy?

1. Very confident	11%
2. Somewhat confident	37
3. Not very confident	35
4. Not confident at all	17

13. And, how confident are you about the *current state* of the *Massachusetts* economy?

1. Very confident	16%
2. Somewhat confident	45
3. Not very confident	28
4. Not confident at all	11

Below is a list of issues facing Massachusetts today. For each one, please indicate whether that issue is very important to you and your family, somewhat important, not very important or not important at all? **[LIST ROTATED] \*slightly different wording**

**SCALE:**

- |                       |                         |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Very important     | 2. Somewhat important   |
| 3. Not very important | 4. Not important at all |

	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>
14. The affordability of health care				
April 2024	72%	23	5	1
April 2023*	79%	18	2	1
15. The impact of undocumented migrants on housing, healthcare and public education				
April 2024	54%	33	10	3

16. Business competitiveness of Massachusetts versus other states				
April 2024	33%	47	16	3
April 2023	42%	46	10	2
17. The economy and jobs				
April 2024	68%	28	4	--
April 2023	78%	19	2	1
18. State and local taxes				
April 2024	54%	39	6	1
<b>SCALE:</b>	1. Very important	2. Somewhat important		
	3. Not very important	4. Not important at all		
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
19. Crime				
April 2024	59%	33	7	2
April 2023	71%	24	4	1
20. The cost and availability of housing				
April 2024	68%	24	6	2
21. The cost of living—including items like food and utilities				
April 2024	80%	18	2	1
April 2023*	84%	14	1	1
22. The cost of energy—like gasoline, heating oil and natural gas				
April 2024	66%	29	5	1
23. Quality public educational choices for our children				
April 2024	60%	32	6	2
April 2023*	72%	22	4	2
24. Climate change				
April 2024	46%	29	15	10
April 2023	55%	27	12	6
25. Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, or DEI				
April 2024	35%	39	15	10
April 2023*	48%	34	13	5
26. In general, do you think state government here in Massachusetts spends too much, not enough or about the right amount?				
1. Too much	34%			
2. Not enough	22			
3. About the right amount	31			
4. Don't know	14			

[LIST ROTATED]

2. Cut  
4. Don't know

30. Turning to the issue of *climate*, certain Massachusetts cities and towns have imposed widespread regulations that reduce parking options and travel lanes for cars—as well as restrictions on natural gas use in new construction. The goal of these regulations is to move away from fossil fuels and help deal with climate change. These regulations include significantly increased bike lanes, bus lanes, reduced parking and other restrictions that some people say can limit the purchasing options of consumers and make it less convenient and more costly to patronize local businesses.

*“While climate change is an important issue, some local government restrictions that limit consumer choice—like banning certain heating and appliance options and reducing parking and travel lanes to create extensive bike and bus lanes—have gone too far.”*

31. The State of Colorado has a voter-passed law that generally *limits the amount of revenue state government can keep and spend in a given year, requiring excess revenue to be refunded to taxpayers*. The revenue limit is generally equal to the prior fiscal year's limit plus the rate of inflation and population growth in Colorado. How would you vote on a ballot measure that would enact *a similar law here in Massachusetts*? Do you think you would definitely vote "YES" to limit state revenue and spending, probably vote "YES", probably vote "NO" or definitely vote "NO" on such a question?

5

5. Don't know	12	12%
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32. Turning to another topic, there's been a lot of discussion recently about organized retail crime—that is, coordinated groups of people shoplifting large amounts of merchandise from retail stores. How serious a problem do you think organized retail crime is here in Massachusetts: very serious, somewhat serious, not very serious or not serious at all?

1. Very serious	33%
2. Somewhat serious	39
3. Not very serious	17
4. Not serious at all	4
5. Don't know	7

33. How likely are you to stay in Massachusetts *long-term*?

1. Very likely	54%
2. Somewhat likely	28
3. Not very likely	12
4. Not likely at all	2
5. Don't know	5

34. [IF RESPONSES "1" OR "2" T Q. 33] Specifically, why do you feel that way?

Grew up here, lived here a long time	24%
Be near family, family lives here	14
Love/like Massachusetts, happy here	8
Own a home here, this is home	6
Retired, too old to move, disabled	4
Done moving, established here, no interest in moving, not leaving	4
Too expensive, cost of living high	3
Job security	2
Safe, peaceful, good community	2
Familiar, resonate, outstanding state	2
Good healthcare, hospitals	2
Culture/environment/economy strong	2
Good education system, in school	2
Can't afford to leave, too much work to leave	1
Weather is nice	1
Massachusetts is better than other places	1
Other places better, probably will move	1
Inexpensive, best for low-income	1
Can't afford to move	--
Don't know/No reason	3
Other	7

Now, please complete some final questions for statistical purposes.

35. In which of the following categories is your age?

1. 18-25	10%
2. 26-35	15
3. 36-45	16
4. 46-55	15
5. 56-64	18
6. 65+	26
9. Refused	--

36. What is the highest level of education you completed?

1. Some high school or less	2%
2. High school graduate	20
3. Some college or vocational training	23
4. Graduated college	38
5. Graduate school education	18

37. Please indicate which of the following groups you **most** identify with racially or ethnically:

1. White, Non-Hispanic	78%
2. Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin	7
3. Black or African-American	8
4. Asian or Pacific Islander	4
5. Native American, American Indian, Alaska Native	--
6. Multi-racial, multi-ethnic background	2
7. Some other race, specify: _____	1
8. Refused	--

38. How are you registered to vote here in Massachusetts?:

1. Democrat	38%
2. Republican	18
3. Independent (Un-Enrolled)	44
4. Some other party	1

39. Politically, would you generally consider yourself more of a liberal, more of a conservative, more of a progressive, or more of a moderate?

1. Liberal	28%
2. Conservative	25
3. Moderate	41
4. Progressive	4
5. Refused	2

40. Please indicate in which of the following categories is your total household income—that is, of everyone living in your household:

1. \$0-29,999	16%
2. \$30-49,999	15
3. \$50-74,999	20
4. \$75-99,999	16
7. \$100,000-\$124,999	10
8. \$125,000 and over	17
9. Refused	6

REGION:	1. Boston Metro (Middlesex, Suffolk, Norfolk)	44%
	2. North (Essex)	12
	3. South (Dukes, Nantucket, Barnstable, Plymouth, Bristol)	19
	4. Central (Worcester)	12
	5. West (Hampshire, Hamden, Franklin, Berkshire)	12

***Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey!***