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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY MEMO

TO: Retailers Association of Massachusetts
FR: Ernest Paicopolos—CEO, Polity Research Consulting LLC
RE: Executive Summary—2025 Massachusetts Registered Voter Survey

Polity Research Consulting conducted a WEB-based survey among 600 Massachusetts registered voters between April 23rd and April 29th, 2025. 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 mood of voters in Massachusetts has *continued* to become more pessimistic—intensifying from what we witnessed in 2024 and 2023. Today, less than four in ten voters (39%) think things in Massachusetts are “headed in the right direction”—down a full 9 points from just a year ago. Moreover, only 8% of voters are “very confident” about the current state of the Massachusetts economy—an 8% drop from a year ago. Voters are even more pessimistic about the direction of the country and the national economy. In addition, registered voters in the state—*once again*—assign low levels of trust to most governmental entities—with the exception of their local congressperson.

Interestingly, however, this souring of the public mood has *not* translated into negative perceptions for most state elected officials. In fact, the Governor, Lt. Governor and both United States Senators saw their favorability ratings rise over the last year. Conversely, President Trump’s favorability rating comes in at just 28%. This may largely be due to the fact that fully 76% agree that the President’s tariffs will have a “negative impact” on Massachusetts businesses and consumers.

As we have seen in the past two statewide surveys, “pocketbook concerns” continue to dominate the issue landscape—especially the cost of living (83% extreme importance) and the affordability of health care (72% extreme importance). The cost of housing (69% extreme importance), energy prices (68% extreme importance) and the state of the overall economy (68% extreme importance) also score highly on the issues list.

Voters are just about evenly split on state government spending—as 33% think the state spends “about the right amount”, while almost as many (31%) believe state government spends “too much”. As we saw last year, solid majorities continue to favor *reducing* the state sales tax (55%) and local property taxes (58%). However, a plurality (47%) think the state’s 5% income tax should stay at the same level.

A solid plurality of registered voters (47%) “strongly agree” that it’s unfair for small Massachusetts businesses to pay more than large businesses for things like employee health insurance and unemployment insurance. An equal share of voters (47%) believe that state government did not do enough to ease the burden of increased energy and utility costs this past Winter. And, while the majority of voters (62%) say they are “very likely” to stay in Massachusetts long-term, a significant minority (about one in seven) are less likely to stay in the state or are unsure if they’ll stay. Among those less likely to stay, many are from the higher-income and youngest segments of the population.

Most voters get the bulk of their information on public issues from local television (39%), followed by internet news sites (22%), local newspapers (10%) and social media sites (10%).

All in all, Massachusetts voters are *less* optimistic than they were a year ago—or even two years ago. And, they continue to be concerned with a range of economic issues facing the state.



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POLITY RESEARCH CONSULTING LLC

PRC #5702

TOP-LINE RESULTS

MASSACHUSETTS

APRIL 2025

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

WEB interviewing dates: 4/23-4/29, 2025; Sample size: N=600 Registered Voters; MOE: ±4.00%

1. What is your gender identity?

1. Female	52%
2. Male	47
3. Other, Transgender, Non-Binary	1

2. To start off, what do you think are the one or two most important problems facing Massachusetts today—*the ones that affect you and your family the most?*

[OPEN-ENDED RESPONSES TO BE CODED]

3. Do you think things here in *Massachusetts* are generally headed in the right direction, or are they off on the wrong track?

SCALE:	1. Right Direction	2. Wrong track	3. Don't know
	1	2	3
April 2025	39%	43	18
April 2024	48%	39	13
April 2023	59%	29	12

4. 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?

SCALE:	1. Right Direction	2. Wrong track	3. Don't know
	1	2	3
April 2025	27%	66	7
April 2024	29%	60	11

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

SCALE: 1. Very confident
2. Somewhat confident

3. Not very confident
4. Not confident at all

	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>
April 2025	8%	21	42	29
April 2024	11%	37	35	17

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

- SCALE:**
1. Very confident
 2. Somewhat confident
 3. Not very confident
 4. Not confident at all

	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>
April 2025	8%	44	36	12
April 2024	16%	45	28	11

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

- SCALE:**
1. Favorable
 2. Unfavorable
 3. Don't know/Can't rate

	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>
07. Massachusetts Governor Maura Healey			
April 2025	58%	31	11
April 2024	54%	32	14
April 2023	60%	21	19
08. US Senator Edward Markey			
April 2025	52%	26	22
April 2024	50%	29	21
09. President Donald Trump			
April 2025	28%	67	5
10. Massachusetts Lt. Governor Kim Driscoll			
April 2025	39%	21	40
April 2024	33%	24	43
April 2023	40%	15	45
11. US Senator Elizabeth Warren			
April 2025	54%	37	9
April 2024	52%	40	8

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	7	8	9	10	11
<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>11</u>

12. Local city and town government										
April 2025	10%	14	30	31	10	4	3.19			
April 2024	8%	14	29	33	13	2	3.29			

13. The Massachusetts State Legislature	April 2025	15%	15	32	27	7	4	2.96
	April 2024	14%	16	31	26	10	3	3.04
14. The Federal government	April 2025	34%	23	23	11	5	2	2.27
	April 2024	19%	25	29	19	6	1	2.68
15. Your local Congressperson	April 2025	15%	13	27	28	14	4	3.13

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? [Qs. 16-25 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>	<u>DK</u>
16. The affordability of health care					
April 2025	72%	21	5	1	1
April 2024	72%	23	5	1	--
April 2023*	79%	18	2	1	--
17. The impact of undocumented migrants on housing, healthcare and public education					
April 2025	45%	29	17	6	2
April 2024	54%	33	10	3	--
18. Business competitiveness of Massachusetts versus other states					
April 2025	33%	45	15	2	5
April 2024	33%	47	16	3	--
April 2023	42%	46	10	2	--
19. The economy and jobs					
April 2025	68%	26	3	1	1
April 2024	68%	28	4	--	--
April 2023	78%	19	2	1	--
20. State and local taxes					
April 2025	59%	32	5	2	2
April 2024	54%	39	6	1	--
21. Crime					
April 2025	52%	35	9	2	1
April 2024	59%	33	7	2	--
April 2023	71%	24	4	1	--
22. The cost and availability of housing					
April 2025	69%	24	3	2	2
April 2024	68%	24	6	2	--

23. The cost of living—including items like food and utilities					
April 2025	83%	13	3	--	1
April 2024	80%	18	2	1	--
April 2023*	84%	14	1	1	--

24. The cost of energy—like gasoline, heating oil and natural gas					
April 2025	68%	27	3	1	1
April 2024	66%	29	5	1	--

SCALE:	1. Very important	2. Somewhat important			
	3. Not very important	4. Not important at all			
	1	2	3	4	DK

25. Quality public educational choices for our children					
April 2025	57%	30	7	3	2
April 2024	60%	32	6	2	--
April 2023*	72%	22	4	2	--

26. In general, do you think state government here in Massachusetts spends too much, not enough or about the right amount?

SCALE:	1. Too much				
	2. Not enough				
	3. About the right amount				
	4. Don't know				

	1	2	3	4
April 2025	31%	20	33	16
April 2024	34%	22	31	14

Below is a list of different **taxes** here in Massachusetts. For each one, please indicate whether you think that particular tax should be raised, cut, or whether it should stay the same as it is now.
[LIST ROTATED]

SCALE:	1. Raised	2. Cut		
	3. Stay the same	4. Don't know		
	1	2	3	4
27. The state's 6.25% sales tax				
April 2025	6%	55	34	5
April 2024	5%	56	34	5
28. The state's 5% income tax				
April 2025	6%	41	47	6
April 2024	6%	39	49	7
29. Local property taxes in the state				
April 2025	6%	58	28	7
April 2024	7%	59	26	8

Please indicate whether you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree with the following statements. **[LIST ROTATED]**

SCALE:

- | | |
|----------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Strongly agree | 2. Somewhat agree |
| 3. Somewhat disagree | 4. Strongly disagree |
| 5. Don't know | |

- | | <u>1</u> | <u>2</u> | <u>3</u> | <u>4</u> | <u>5</u> |
|--|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| 30. It's unfair that Massachusetts small businesses and their employees pay a higher share of costs than large businesses for things like employee health insurance, taxes, energy costs and unemployment insurance. State government needs to bring some relief to these small businesses by leveling the playing field—so that they can stay open for consumers. | 47% | 36 | 6 | 2 | 8 |
| 31. This past Winter, energy and utility costs rose dramatically in Massachusetts. State government leaders are not doing enough to help consumers and businesses cope with the rising cost of these energy and utility bills. | 47% | 40 | 7 | 1 | 5 |
| 32. The tariffs recently implemented by President Trump will have a negative impact on Massachusetts businesses and consumers. | 55% | 21 | 10 | 7 | 7 |
| 33. Thinking about the costs faced by small businesses and their employees in Massachusetts, which one of the following do you think causes them the most hardship: | | | | | |
| 1. Health insurance costs | | | 26% | | |
| 2. Federal, state and municipal taxes | | | 12 | | |
| 3. Energy and utility costs | | | 9 | | |
| 4. Federal, state and municipal regulations | | | 5 | | |
| 5. Unemployment insurance taxes | | | 2 | | |
| 6. Credit card fees paid to banks | | | 1 | | |
| 7. All equally | | | 38 | | |
| 8. Don't know/Not sure | | | 8 | | |
| 34. How likely are you to stay in Massachusetts long-term ? | | | | | |

- SCALE:**
1. Very likely
 2. Somewhat likely
 3. Not very likely
 4. Not likely at all
 5. Don't know

	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>
April 2025	62%	24	6	5	4
April 2024	54%	28	12	2	5

35. Where do you get **most** of your information about public issues facing the state?

01. Radio	7%
02. Local Television	39
03. Internet news sites	22
04. Newspapers—like <i>The Boston Globe</i> or <i>The Boston Herald</i>	10
05. Social media sites like Facebook, Instagram and X (formerly TWITTER)	10
06. Podcasts	2
07. Word of mouth from family and friends	5
08. (Other _____)	2
09. (Don't know/Refused)	3

Now, please complete some final questions for statistical purposes.

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

1. 18-25	6%
2. 26-35	8
3. 36-45	15
4. 46-55	19
5. 56-64	21
6. 65+	31
9. Refused	--

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

1. Some high school or less	2%
2. High school graduate	18
3. Some college or vocational training	25
4. Graduated college	37
5. Graduate school education	18

6. Refused --

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

1. White, Non-Hispanic	81%
2. Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin	7
3. Black or African-American	7
4. Asian or Pacific Islander	3
5. Native American, American Indian, Alaska Native	--
6. Multi-racial, multi-ethnic background	2
7. Some other race, specify: _____	--
8. Refused	--

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

1. Democrat	26%
2. Republican	9
3. Independent (Un-Enrolled)	64
4. Some other party	1

40. 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	23%
2. Conservative	20
3. Moderate	50
4. Progressive	5
5. Refused	2

41. 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	15%
2. \$30-49,999	18
3. \$50-74,999	20
4. \$75-99,999	15
7. \$100,000-\$124,999	11
8. \$125,000 and over	18
9. Refused	2

REGION:	1. Boston Metro (Middlesex, Suffolk, Norfolk)	44%
	2. North (Essex)	10
	3. South (Dukes, Nantucket, Barnstable, Plymouth, Bristol)	19
	4. Central (Worcester)	14
	5. West (Hampshire, Hamden, Franklin, Berkshire)	13