

Massachusetts Office of Campaign and Political Finance

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Statewide ballot question committees report spending \$25.2 million in 2024 cycle

Nine ballot question committees spent \$25.2 million on five propositions in 2024, and received an additional \$19.2 million in in-kind contributions, according to an OCPF review of ballot question fundraising and spending.

OCPF's review of ballot question activity covered fundraising and spending in 2023-24 for five questions that appeared on the 2024 statewide ballot:

Question 1: State Auditor's Authority to Audit the Legislature (Passed)

Question 2: Elimination of MCAS as High School Graduation Requirement (Passed)

Question 3: Unionization for Transportation Network Drivers (Passed)

Question 4: Limited Legalization and Regulation of Certain Natural Psychedelic Substances (Failed)

Question 5: Minimum Wage for Tipped Workers (Failed)

The committees organized for **Question 1**, about auditing the legislature, reported a total of \$414,808 in expenditures, all by the "support" group, Committee for Transparent Democracy. The committee opposed to the question reported no activity.

Of the 458 monetary and in-kind contributions to Transparent Democracy, 10 were for \$10,000 or more, accounting for \$240,330. An in-kind contribution is something of value that's not money.

The question passed, 2,326,911 to 924,289. The average spent per vote in support was 18 cents.

Question 2 concerning the MCAS exam had the highest amount of overall spending, including in-kind contributions, of any other question.

The two committees organized to support and oppose the question reported \$21,962,382 in activity, including \$15.7 million spent on in-kind contributions, and \$6.3 million in committee expenses.

The Massachusetts Teachers Association was the largest contributor to the Committee for High Standards Not High Stakes, paying for goods and services such as advertising, mailings, consulting, and staff time to support the question.

The committee opposed to the question, Protect Our Kids' Future, received 15 contributions of \$100,000 or more).

The question passed 2,004,196 to 1,388,553. The winning side spent \$8.25 per vote, with monetary and in-kind contributions combined.

Question 3 concerned unionization for transportation network drivers, which had one committee in support and no committees opposed.

The committee supporting the question, United for Justice, spent \$7.3 million. Nearly all funds were contributed by the Service Employees International Union and its affiliated accounts.

The question passed, 1,771,750 to 1,504,674. The committee in support spent, on average, \$4.10 cents per vote.

Question 4, concerning legalization of natural psychedelic substances, was one of the two questions to fail, 1,444,797 to 1,902,513.

In support of the question, the Massachusetts for Mental Health Options ballot question committee spent the most money: \$7,723,405, and reported 32 contributions of \$100,000 or more. The successful committee in opposition, Coalition for Safe Communities, spent \$128,803.

The unsuccessful ballot question committee spent \$5.35 per vote, to 7 cents for the winning side.

An organization called One Fair Wage was the primary donor supporting **Question 5**, asking voters for a minimum wage for tipped workers. The question failed.

The committee opposing the question, Committee to Protect Tips, spent \$2.5 million. Restaurant industry organizations and businesses largely funded the effort.

The question failed 1,200,966 to 2,147,233. The winning side spent \$1.17 per vote.

The figures in this study are based on reports filed by committees covering activity through Dec. 31, 2024, and are subject to change due to any subsequent corrections, deletions or additions made as a result of any review conducted by OCPF or amendments filed by committees.

The overall spending record of \$65.8 million was set in 2022 when four questions appeared on the ballot for taxes on income over \$1 million, dental insurance regulations, expanded licenses for alcoholic beverages and drivers licenses for undocumented immigrants.

In addition to the fundraising and spending reported by ballot question committees in 2024, businesses and other entities reported a total of \$36,127 in spending that was [independent](#) of any ballot question committee. Independent spending in 2022 reached nearly \$2.8 million.

Reports filed by each of the committees may be found on OCPF's website at www.ocpf.us.

A breakdown of activity for each question follows.

Campaign Finance Activity for the 2024 Statewide Ballot Questions

Totals include receipts, in-kind contributions and expenditures by each ballot question committee organized with OCPF for 2023 and 2024.

Question 1: State Auditor’s Authority to Audit the Legislature – Passed

Committee (OCPF ID)	Receipts	Expenditures	In-Kind Contributions
<i>Support</i>			
Committee for Transparent Democracy (95510)	\$418,714	\$414,808	\$22,248
Transparency Now (95524)	\$0	\$0	\$0
<i>Totals in favor</i>	\$418,714	\$414,808	\$22,248
<i>Oppose</i>			
No committees opposed			
<i>Totals in opposition</i>	\$0	\$0	\$0
<i>Question 1 Totals</i>	\$418,714	\$414,808	\$22,248

Vote Count

Yes: 2,326,911 (spent per vote: 18 cents)

No: 924,289 (spent per vote: 0)

Question 2: Elimination of MCAS as High School Graduation Requirement - Passed

Committee (OCPF ID)	Receipts	Expenditures	In-Kind Contributions
<i>Support</i>			
Committee for High Standards Not High Stakes (95507)	\$950,000	\$950,000	\$15,600,360
<i>Totals in favor</i>	\$950,000	\$950,000	\$15,600,360
<i>Oppose</i>			
Protect Our Kids' Future: Vote No (95518)	\$5,318,258	\$5,318,258	\$93,764
<i>Totals in opposition</i>	\$5,318,258	\$5,318,258	\$93,764
<i>Question 2 Totals</i>	\$6,268,258	\$6,268,258	\$15,694,124

Vote Count

Yes: 2,004,196 (spent per vote: 47 cents, and \$8.25 when in-kind contributions are included)

No: 1,388,553 (spent per vote: \$3.83)

Question 3: Unionization for Transportation Network Drivers - Passed

Committee (OCPF ID)	Receipts	Expenditures	In-Kind Contributions
<i>Support</i>			
United for Justice (95509)	\$7,276,313	\$7,259,067	\$583,831
<i>Totals in favor</i>	\$7,276,313	\$7,259,067	\$583,831
<i>Oppose</i>			
No committee opposed			
<i>Totals in opposition</i>	\$0	\$0	\$0
<i>Question 3 Totals</i>	\$7,276,313	\$7,259,067	\$583,831

Vote Count

Yes: 1,771,750 (spent per vote: \$4.10)

No: 1,504,674 (spent per vote: 0)

Question 4: Limited Legalization and Regulation of Certain Natural Psychedelic Substances - Failed

Committee (OCPF ID)	Receipts	Expenditures	In-Kind Contributions
<i>Support</i>			
Massachusetts for Mental Health Options (95505)	\$7,750,634	\$7,723,405	\$1,245,249
<i>Totals in favor</i>	\$7,750,634	\$7,723,405	\$1,245,249
<i>Oppose</i>			
Coalition for Safe Communities (95522)	\$136,775	\$128,803	\$0
<i>Totals in opposition</i>	\$136,775	\$128,803	\$0
<i>Question 4 Totals</i>	\$7,887,409	\$7,852,208	\$1,245,249

Vote Count

Yes: 1,444,797 (spent per vote: \$5.35)

No: 1,902,513 (spent per vote: 7 cents)

Question 5: Minimum Wage for Tipped Workers - Failed

Committee (OCPF ID)	Receipts	Expenditures	In-Kind Contributions
<i>Support</i>			
One Fair Wage Plus Tips MA (95513)	\$889,526	\$889,526	\$1,036,954
<i>Totals in favor</i>	\$889,526	\$889,526	\$1,036,954
<i>Oppose</i>			
Committee to Protect Tips (95521)	\$2,515,568	\$2,515,568	\$658,123
<i>Totals in opposition</i>	\$2,515,568	\$2,515,568	\$658,123
<i>Question 5 Totals</i>	\$3,405,095	\$3,405,094	\$1,695,077

Vote Count

Yes: 1,200,966 (spent per vote: 74 cents)

No: 2,147,233 (spent per vote: \$1.17)

Statewide Ballot Question Expenditures: 1988 – 2024

Note: There were no questions on the statewide ballot in 2004.

<i>Year</i>	<i>Number of Questions</i>	<i>Number of Committees</i>	<i>Total spent</i>
1988	4	18	\$13,317,952
1990	6	20	\$5,661,062
1992	4	8	\$16,139,661
1994	9	23	\$11,155,835
1996	1	3	\$1,210,777
1998	3	9	\$9,999,283
2000	8	16	\$15,340,199
2002	3	6	\$2,332,880
2006	3	6	\$15,320,327
2008	3	7	\$11,516,215
2010	3	9	\$9,098,307
2012	3	13	\$9,554,909
2014	4	13	\$30,193,266
2016	4	15	\$57,477,775
2018	3	7	\$42,640,899
2020	2	4	\$60,336,052
2022	4	14	\$65,810,494
2024	5	9	\$25,199,436