



XI. Don't Be Fooled: Governor Baker is a Republican

By not strongly opposing the national Republican policy agenda, Governor Baker is complicit in those policies and has failed to stand up for Massachusetts residents, many of whom are harmed by those policies. In some areas, Baker's policies are identical with those of the Trump Administration. Furthermore, Baker's fundraising in conjunction with the Republican National Committee (RNC) (which allows him to evade MA campaign finance laws) has put at least \$2 million in the Trump-controlled RNC's coffers. Therefore, Baker is financially supporting, for example, the payment of Trump's legal bills and the Republican national policy agenda, including the 2017 tax cut for the wealthy, voter suppression, and the war on women's health care. (Harrison, L., 1/11/18, "The devil and Charlie Baker," The Berkshire Eagle)

As this Dossier documents across a wide range of issues, Governor Baker lacks a vision for the future of our Commonwealth. Instead, he markets himself as a skilled manager. While he cultivates an aura of folksy reasonableness, a close look at his actions make it clear that he is first and foremost a Republican. His policies are often mean-spirited and harmful to those most in need. And he's no great shakes as a manager either: Management failures have surfaced in agency after agency.

Because of Governor Baker's lack of leadership, Massachusetts has fallen from first to eighth on US News & World Report's list of the best states. Baker touted and took credit for the No. 1 ranking in his 2018 State of the Commonwealth speech and on national TV. Factors very much under his control contributed to the decline in the ranking, such as a drop in MA's ranking on infrastructure (45th) and fiscal stability (40th). High levels of economic inequality were also a factor in the lower ranking. The rankings are based on 77 measures in eight categories (listed in order of their importance): health care, education, economy, infrastructure, crime and corrections, fiscal stability, and quality of life. In the infrastructure category, MA was 47th on electricity prices (a major concern to the business community), 47th in average commute time, 46th on road quality (36.5% of roads are in poor condition), and 49th in terms of households with ultra-fast internet access (only 0.1 percent). (Miller, J., 2/27/18, "Mass. falls in US News ranking from 'best' state to eighth state," The Boston Globe; Mohl, B., 2/28/18, "Why Mass. fell from No. 1 to No. 8," Commonwealth)

A. Governor Baker's hand-picked Lt. Governor, Karen Polito, and several state candidates whom he supports have policy positions that mirror those of right-wing national

Republicans. He has flip-flopped on policies to prevent gun violence and his positions are often aligned with those of the National Rifle Association (NRA). He and Lt. Governor Polito have received high ratings from the MA chapter of the NRA. He even appointed the head of the local NRA chapter, Ronald Amidon, to a senior post in his administration.

1. **Governor Baker has endorsed, actively supported, and raised money for right-wing Republican candidates for Massachusetts offices.** He has endorsed the whole Republican ticket in Massachusetts, including Geoff Diehl for US Senator. Diehl was President Trump's campaign chairman in Massachusetts and trumpets his unwavering support for the president. If this Baker-supported candidate were to win, he would provide a key vote in the US Senate for Trump and right-wing policies that Baker claims not to support. Baker also supports right-wing state Senate and House candidates who support reversing marriage equality, repealing our transgender rights law, exempting schools from anti-discrimination laws, defunding Planned Parenthood, and requiring medical professionals to convey graphic information to women seeking to end a pregnancy. With Baker's strong support, one of them has risen through the ranks of the state Republican Party and obtained a seat on the Republican National Committee. (Lannan, K., 6/7/18, "Gonzalez slams Baker for supporting GOP ticket," CommonWealth Magazine; Metzger, A., 10/13/17, "Baker stands by Ventura despite disagreements with Senate candidate," State House News Service; Murphy, M., 11/21/17, "Baker urged to withdraw support for Tran's candidacy," State House News Service; Chabot, H., 4/23/18, "GOP state treasurer candidate undecided on transgender bill repeal," Boston Herald)
2. **Karen Polito, whom Governor Baker hand-picked as his running mate, voted as a state representative against the Transgender Civil Rights bill and for a constitutional amendment defining marriage as between one man and one woman. She led the effort for a statewide ballot question to ban same sex marriage, supported an effort to dissolve the LGBT Youth Commission, and received a 100% rating from the MA chapter of the National Rifle Association (NRA).** (Vote Smart, retrieved from the Internet 5/28/18, "Rating Group: Gun Owners' Action League 2014 positions," <https://votesmart.org/interest-group/46/rating/7553#.WwwhAkgvzIU>)
3. **When Baker ran for Governor in 2014, he received a 94% rating from the state chapter of the NRA and refused to support a federal assault weapons ban.** Then, he flip-flopped and said that the MA assault weapon ban is working and the federal government should adopt something similar. Baker initially supported Attorney General Maura Healey's crackdown on the sale of copycat assault weapons. However, he again flip-flopped and began questioning it, using talking points from the gun industry. (OnTheIssues, retrieved from the Internet 5/29/18, "Charlie Baker on gun control," <http://>

www.ontheissues.org/Governor/Charlie_Baker_Gun_Control.htm; Dumcius, G., 2/28/18, “Massachusetts Gov. Baker says feds should adopt something similar to state’s assault weapons ban,” Mass Live; Miller, J., 10/15/14, “Super PAC goes after Charlie Baker on gun control,” The Boston Globe; Miller, J., 7/26/16, “Baker administration raps Healey’s gun crackdown,” The Boston Globe; Stop Handgun Violence, 8/11/16, “An open letter asking Governor Charlie Baker to support assault weapons ban,” <http://www.stophandgunviolence.org/awb-charlie-baker-letter>)

4. **Governor Baker appointed the President of the Gun Owners’ Action League (GOAL), the MA chapter of the National Rifle Association (NRA), as the Commissioner of the Commonwealth’s Dept. of Fish and Game.** (Cassidy, C., 7/7/17, “Charlie Baker gives Fish & Game gig to gun guy,” Boston Herald; Berkshire Eagle, 11/20/17) Although it was removed after the Parkland Florida gun massacre, there had been a link on the state Dept. of Fish and Game website to the Gun Owners’ Action League.
- B. **Baker described the national Republican tax bill that passed in late 2017 as “pretty good.” Although he expressed some concerns, he avoided any strong criticism of it** and said that “the full impact is not going to be known until you get several years down the road from now.” **This tax bill gives huge, permanent tax cuts to wealthy individuals and businesses,** particularly large multi-national corporations. It also limits deductions for state and local taxes, which will hurt Massachusetts taxpayers, and mean double taxation on amounts paid for these state and local taxes. The small tax cuts it gives to some low- and middle-income individuals are temporary. It will reduce the federal government’s revenue by \$1.5 trillion over ten years, increasing the deficit and raising serious questions about whether the federal government will be able to continue to provide Massachusetts with current levels of funding for Medicaid and other joint federal-state programs. (Murphy, M., 1/9/18, “Baker: Impact of GOP tax plan won’t be known for years,” State House News Service)
- C. **Governor Baker has failed to oppose the draconian immigration policies and practices of President Trump’s Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agency.** Furthermore, Baker proposed that MA police detain immigrants at the request of federal immigration agents (ICE agents). However, this policy was struck down by the state’s Supreme Judicial Court, which ruled in July 2017 that state law did not give local police the authority to do so. Baker then proposed legislation that would allow local police to detain immigrants at the request of ICE. Most recently, **Baker’s threat to veto a provision attached to the state budget that would have clarified the relationship between state and local police and ICE resulted in the provision being dropped from the budget in the final conference committee. He has used incendiary and inaccurate statements to describe the provision:** he called it “outrageous” and “ridiculous,” falsely claiming that it would prevent MA law enforcement

from talking to federal officials about “criminals who are currently in our prisons and have been convicted of terrible crimes ...”. This is not true; the budget language explicitly states that it does not “prohibit or restrain” such communication. (The Berkshire Eagle, 5/30/18, “Governor playing politics with ICE amendment”; Johnson, A., 1/31/18, “Baker proposal would let police detain immigrants at request of federal authorities,” The Boston Globe)

- D. **Governor Baker authorized the Massachusetts National Guard to send troops and sophisticated technology to the Mexico border to support President Trump’s extreme and un-American border policies.** Baker changed his mind and canceled the deployment orders after negative publicity. (McGowan, A., 6/18/18, “Baker cancels National Guard deployment to border, citing ‘inhumane’ treatment of children and families,” WGBH News; Walsh, J., 6/17/18, “Why Charlie Baker is beatable,” Commonwealth Magazine)
- E. **Governor Baker’s “no new taxes” pledge is perfectly aligned with national Republicans’ fiscal irresponsibility. Baker is willing to let public infrastructure (e.g., roads, bridges, school buildings, and public transportation) crumble rather than find the revenue to fix and maintain them. He underfunds our public schools, public health, child care, our parks, state aid to our cities and towns, and other important state functions rather than raise revenue. In June 2017, Standard & Poor’s (S&P) credit rating service downgraded MA bonds for the first time in 30 years.** This makes it more expensive for MA to borrow money. As reasons for the downgrading, S&P noted the structural imbalance in the state’s budget and the use of gimmicks and manipulation by Governor Baker to balance the budget. Under his predecessor, Governor Patrick, our bond rating had gone up, even during the Great Recession. (Berkshire Eagle, 11/20/17)
- F. **Governor Baker has repeatedly tried to cut 140,000 people, many of them parents, off Medicaid.** Fortunately, Democratic legislators have blocked these efforts. (Miller, J., McCluskey, P.D., & Levenson, M., 1/25/18, “Baker plan again shifts some off Medicaid,” The Boston Globe; Walsh, J., 6/17/18, “Why Charlie Baker is beatable,” Commonwealth Magazine)
- G. **When the legislature passed a transgender rights bill, Governor Baker signed it into law behind closed doors with no public ceremony.** He clearly does not want to be publicly viewed as a supporter of transgender rights. (Peled, S., 7/9/16, “Massachusetts transgender rights bill signed into law,” CNN; Walsh, J., 6/17/18, “Why Charlie Baker is beatable,” Commonwealth Magazine)
- H. **Governor Baker says he is preparing legislation to reinstate the death penalty in Massachusetts. The death penalty doesn’t deter crime, is racially biased, results in**

irreversible errors, and is expensive to implement. Nationally, since 1973, at least 162 people sentenced to death have been released due to evidence of their innocence. Death penalty cases are four times as expensive to prosecute as cases leading to life in prison because of lengthy trials and appeals. Furthermore, the state's violent crime rate has been declining. (Loth, R., 5/21/18, "Baker's death wish," The Boston Globe)

- I. **In May 2018, Governor Baker, echoing President Trump, denounced a judge's sentencing in a drug case as "ridiculous and outrageous," and called for the judge to be removed from the bench.** The judge had sentenced to probation a 32-year-old defendant charged with intent to distribute drugs, who had been dealing drugs for only a month and was arrested with half an ounce of heroin and a small amount of cocaine. The defendant's only prior criminal record was a dismissed drug possession charge from a decade ago. Although he lost his job due to his recent arrest, he found another one after he was released on bail. He is a responsible father, supporting a wife and two children, but would face likely deportation if convicted. **Baker's cynical call for the removal of a distinguished judge because of a ruling in a single case with which he (or his base) disagreed reflects a disregard for the importance of the independence of the judiciary, as well as indifference to the nuances and complexities of sentencing non-violent drug offenders.** (Gertner, N., 6/1/18, "Irresponsible attacks on a fine judge," The Boston Globe)

- J. **Governor Baker has proposed a new, mandatory minimum sentence for some non-violent drug offenders, which contradicts current research, past campaign promises, national trends, and the criminal justice reform law recently passed in Massachusetts** (which all call for eliminating most mandatory minimum sentences). (Pattison-Gordon, J., 9/6/17, "Baker proposes new drug-related mandatory minimum," The Bay State Banner)

- K. **Governor Baker has not exhibited leadership in addressing climate change and increasing the use of renewable energy in Massachusetts.** Despite recent storm surges that flooded Boston's subway system, the Seaport District, and many coastal areas, Baker's policies reflect no sense of urgency. His Dept. of Public Utilities (DPU) appointees have been characterized as "foxes guarding the hen house." He continues to favor the fossil fuel industry and has slowed progress on the use of clean energy. Baker has jeopardized the growth of solar power generation in Massachusetts. As a result, MA lost 21% of its jobs in the solar industry last year. This was one of the biggest percentage declines of any state; in the U.S. overall solar jobs were down only 3.8%. **Instead of stimulating local wind and solar power generation, the Baker Administration's new regulations focus on using Canadian hydropower.** Baker and Lt. Governor Polito have received over \$185,000 in donations from big utilities and the fossil fuel industry, raising serious questions about their commitment to clean and sustainable energy. These industry donations have paid off: Baker appointed a former power company executive

and a former fossil fuel industry lobbyist to key energy policy positions in his administration. Energy policy decision-making has been opaque and biased in favor of large utilities. The Trump administration recently announced an intention to expand offshore drilling for oil and gas all along the U.S. coasts, but exempted Florida at the request of Florida Governor Scott. Governors of at least 4 other states have spoken up and asked for their states to also be exempted. Governor Baker has failed to speak out in support of an exemption for Massachusetts. (Abel, D., 1/13/15, “Charlie Baker appoints controversial new energy team,” The Boston Globe; Statehouse News Service, 6/13/18, “Gov. Baker gets ‘C’ in environmental report card”; Charles River Watershed Association, Clean Water Action, Conservation Law Foundation, Environmental League of Massachusetts, Environment Massachusetts, Massachusetts Rivers Alliance, and Massachusetts Sierra Club, June 2018, “Massachusetts energy and environment report card, year three”; McGowan, E., 2/26/18, “Massachusetts solar groups say policy changes needed to stem job loss,” Energy News Network; Shallenberger, K., 4/11/16, “Massachusetts Gov. Baker signs bill lifting solar cap, lowering net metering rates,” Utility Dive; Mohl, B., 5/4/15, “Baker opposes lifting net metering cap,” Commonwealth Magazine; Chesto, J., 2/8/18, “Massachusetts lost more than 20% of its solar jobs last year,” The Boston Globe; McGowan, E., 2/26/18, “Massachusetts solar groups say policy changes needed to stem job loss,” Energy News Network; Weigel, D., Fears, S., & Wagner, J., 1/10/18, “Decision to exempt Florida from offshore drilling prompts bipartisan uproar,” The Washington Post)

- L. **Governor Baker appeared at a forum in early April 2018 and strongly defended the Boston-based pharmaceutical company Vertex and its over-priced drugs.** Vertex charges \$300,000 per patient annually for its cystic fibrosis drug treatments, pricing that has been heavily criticized by doctors and scientists who work on cystic fibrosis. At least four countries (the UK, France, Ireland, and the Netherlands) are fighting Vertex over its drug pricing and New York State is also reviewing Vertex’s pricing. The compensation of Vertex’s CEO, which has averaged \$25 million a year over the last 4 years, has also been criticized as excessive. **Vertex executives contributed nearly \$260,000 in 2016 – 2017 to the Baker-supporting Republican Governors Association** (which, in 2014, funneled over \$11 million into Baker’s campaign and is expected to be a major player again this year in his re-election race). **Vertex executives also contributed \$7,500 directly to Baker and his running mate’s campaign committees in late March 2018, shortly before his public statements in support of Vertex.** (Phillips, F., 4/13/18, “Governor defends Vertex drug prices,” The Boston Globe; Thielking, M., 4/10/18, “Baker defends Vertex on pricing,” The Boston Globe; Stendahl, M., 12/2/16, “Vertex boosts pay for two executives,” Boston Business Journal; Silverman, E., 4/24/18, “UK challenges Vertex’s prices,” The Boston Globe)

- M. **Governor Baker sided with big business over small businesses when he vetoed language in an economic development bill that would have cracked down on threats of patent infringement lawsuits against innovators and entrepreneurs. These lawsuits try to squeeze money out of creative small businesses and/or stifle competition from them.** Baker vetoed the language after hearing opposition from several big business groups. (Chesto, J., 8/11/18, “Baker signs economic bill, nixes patent troll plan,” The Boston Globe)
- N. **Governor Baker supports the expansion of K-12 charter schools** and actively worked to expand the number of charter schools in Massachusetts by supporting Question 2 on the November 2016 ballot. **This proposal was defeated with 62% of MA voters voting against it.** It would have allowed up to 12 new charter schools per year in perpetuity. In 2016, \$450 million of state funding for public schools was being diverted to charter schools and this amount is growing each year. Increasing the number of charter schools as the ballot question proposed would have allowed this figure to grow by an additional \$100 million each year. **These efforts by Baker to, in effect, privatize public education are similar to the efforts of Trump’s Secretary of Education, Betsy DeVos, to privatize education.** (Schuster, L., 4/6/16, “Charter school funding, explained,” MA Budget and Policy Center)
- O. **Governor Baker and the Republican State Committee** – which he effectively controls and which largely functions as his campaign committee – share a **joint fundraising operation**, the MA Victory Committee, **with the Republican National Committee (RNC).** It **allows wealthy donors to contribute \$43,800 per year, an end-run around the state’s \$1,000 per year contribution limit.** Through these efforts Baker has raised about \$2 million for the RNC, which is controlled by Trump. At least some of this money is contributed by the RNC to the Republican State Committee. This, although technically legal, is akin to money laundering. Baker has raised about \$5 million using this scheme over the last 3 years. (Capital Source, 12/8/17, The Boston Globe)
- P. **Governor Baker’s office defended the barring of reporters from a meeting of its advisory commission on Latino affairs.** The meeting in Holyoke had a sign posted that read “Closed to the Press” and two journalists were prevented from entering. The Baker administration asserts that the meetings are not covered by the state’s Open Meeting Law. (Around the Region, 2/1/18, “Governor defends closed-door meetings,” The Boston Globe)