

WORKING FAMILIES PARTY

EXPLORING A MASSACHUSETTS WFP

COMMITMENT TO GOVERNING POWER

At the Working Families Party, we are building a political vehicle to build and wield governing power. With the chaos and cruelty currently coming out of Washington, robust governance at the state level has never been more important. Our primary intervention is elections, but beyond elections we build the muscle, the practice, and the support for progressive governance too. Focusing on governing power allows us to make concrete differences in the lives of working people—white, Black, and brown—while never taking our eyes off the goal of the future where we don't have to fight to get working people's needs on the agenda, where they are a top priority from the start. We believe that demonstrating this kind of governance both actually improves people's lives and politically improves the alignment and power of working class voters to build the majority we need to block fascism.

With its deep blue hue, Massachusetts looks like a place where that kind of governing power should be easy. But we know that the interests of organized capital are still too powerful at the State House, with most Democrats committed to appeasing them. In recent years, the left has struggled to mount effective challenges to moderate Democrats. This is the landscape we've entered into in many blue states, and although each path is different, through sustained year round political work and smart policy and organizing fights, we've been able to build influential WFP blocs and make concrete plans to win governing power. We think we can bring something important and additional to Massachusetts, which will help us all be sitting in a very different place politically in a decade.

BUILDING A MULTI-RACIAL WORKING CLASS PARTY

Our analysis of Massachusetts, similar to many of the other states we work in, is that the status quo is failing to inspire and organize working class voters—white, Black, and brown—and significantly limiting electoral success. We are committed to winning but also to growing the engagement with and base of voters who can see Working Families candidates as their champions. Given the historical trends of class dealignment across the country this is no easy task. But we think that by putting great candidates, especially working class candidates, front and center, running on accessible themes, mounting great campaigns, and continuing to engage after the election is over, we can change the voting base and build the majority we need.

PARTY AS INFRASTRUCTURE

We have seen all too clearly in work in blue states that the Democratic Party fails to build organizing and political infrastructure. We are deepening our commitment to building the infrastructure of the WFP so we have our own activists, own candidates, own data, own tools and experts, and our own voters that we can mobilize when we need to beat back Republicans and consistently push back on corporate Democrats.

Party infrastructure isn't just the infrastructure to win elections when they come around but also to recruit candidates year round, engage activists and leaders in picking the right races, and train, orient, and organize new WFP electeds so they can govern. As we have more and more WFP electeds, we'll also need to help them communicate about their agenda and accomplishments and build an overarching narrative about why progressive governance matters.

PATH TO WORKING FAMILIES MAJORITY NATIONALLY

It feels far away, but we are ambitious to win and govern at the federal level too. Governing the whole country is harder and takes longer, of course. But if we are serious about that goal, and we are, we will need Massachusetts to send not just pretty good Democrats to Congress but real Working Families Party champions. Within the next decade, we expect the Commonwealth to send a whole new generation of leaders to Washington, and we need them to be working people's heroes and sheroes in the mold of Ayanna Pressly. Our interest in Massachusetts comes in part directly from where it sits on the path to progressive governance nationally.

STATE SPECIFIC PATHWAY

We have big ambitions for the state and federal government, but we also want to build carefully and collaboratively. Each state WFP is different in some important ways as we adapt to the time, place, and conditions on the ground.

In Massachusetts, we would want to start in 2025 with supporting some excellent municipal candidates outside of Boston and invest significantly in building some lasting infrastructure around them. This first move helps build progressive infrastructure where it is weakest and allows us to jump right into organizing the multi-racial working class. This approach allows us to be immediately useful, get our hands dirty winning some races, and build relationships with others doing the work. We'd also be working behind the scenes to explore and set up key federal election fights for 2026. We will start to work with aligned organizational partners where we can immediately, but it will probably take a few years of good work to get to a place where we would officially charter a Massachusetts Chapter.

Massachusetts is a big place and the goal of progressive governance is still a ways off, but we think the WFP model can be an important piece of the puzzle and we are excited to create it with you.

JOIN US!

If you are interested in discussing the possibilities of this work, or contributing directly to it, please contact Georgia Hollister Isman, New England Regional Director, at ghollisterisman@workingfamilies.org or 413-695-1786.