

# Massachusetts 2024 ballot questions: MCAS repeal, minimum wage increase, psychedelic regulation

As the 2024 election approaches, Massachusetts residents may have the opportunity to vote on several important ballot questions that could impact education, labor policies, government accountability, and public health. Here's a closer look at each of the potential initiatives:

**Repeal Passing Assessment Requirement for High School Graduation Initiative:** This initiative aims to repeal the requirement that students must achieve a certain competency level on the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) exam to graduate high school. Supporters argue that the MCAS exam is an unfair measure of student achievement and that graduation requirements should be more flexible. Opponents, however, raise concerns about the potential impact on educational standards and accountability.

**Minimum Wage for Tipped Employees Initiative:** This proposal seeks to gradually increase the wage of tipped employees until it meets the state minimum wage in 2029. It would also still permit tipping in addition to the minimum wage. Supporters argue that this would ensure fair wages for tipped workers, while opponents raise concerns about the potential impact on businesses, particularly small businesses in the hospitality industry.

**App-Based Drivers as Contractors and Labor Policies Initiative:** This initiative considers app-based drivers to be independent contractors and enacts several labor policies related to app-based companies. The specifics of the labor

policies are not provided, but this initiative could have significant implications for the gig economy and the rights of app-based workers.

**Authorization of State Auditor to Audit General Court Initiative:** This initiative would authorize the state auditor to audit the state legislature, known as the General Court. It would also remove some existing regulations regarding the auditing process. Supporters argue that this would increase government transparency and accountability, while opponents raise concerns about potential conflicts of interest and the need for legislative independence.

**Unionization and Collective Bargaining for Transportation Network Drivers Initiative:** This proposal would provide for unionizing and collective bargaining for transportation network drivers, such as those working for companies like Uber and Lyft. Supporters argue that this would give drivers a stronger voice and improve their working conditions, while opponents raise concerns about the potential impact on the app-based economy and consumer prices.

**Regulated Access to Psychedelic Substances Initiative:** This initiative seeks to regulate access to psychedelic substances, such as psilocybin (found in magic mushrooms) and MDMA (commonly known as ecstasy). The specifics of the regulations are not provided, but supporters argue that these substances have therapeutic potential and should be regulated for safe use, while opponents raise concerns about potential abuse and public health risks.

These potential ballot questions represent a range of important issues that could shape the future of Massachusetts. Whether they ultimately make it onto the ballot and how voters will respond remain to be seen, but they are sure to spark lively debate and discussion in the lead-up to the 2024 election.