



**Massachusetts Food System Collaborative
2022 State Representative and Senator Questionnaire**

Your name: Hannah Kane

Office Sought, including district: State Representative, 11th Worcester district

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What are three of your priorities that reflect your commitment to a healthy food system for Massachusetts and your constituents?

Priority 1

To continue growing and leading the Food System Caucus. I am a Co-founder and Co-chair of the Caucus (FSC) and have helped grow the Caucus to be the 2nd largest Caucus at the State House. I am also a member of the Governor's Food Security Task Force and I use both platforms to advocate for food system priorities and increased funding.

Priority 2

Being the lead advocate in the House for the funding for the Healthy Incentives Program.

Priority 3

Being the lead sponsor of the legislation to encourage the donation of food by providing civil liability protection and a tax credit to farmers for food donations.

How would you support the Healthy Incentives Program?

I have been working since the inception of the Healthy Incentives Program to provide more funding, more awareness and an expansion of the program so that a greater number of farmers and residents can participate in the program. I have been engaged as a member of the MA Food Policy Council and as a Co-chair of the FSC in advocating to the Administration to ensure that HIP is accessible to more people and to prevent suspensions of the program when use is greater than budgeted funding.

I have co-filed legislation that directs DTA and DAR to jointly select a state-wide organization, which engages with both SNAP recipients and Massachusetts farmers, to conduct a survey regarding the healthy incentives program for the purpose of ensuring that said program is best

meeting the needs of both consumers and farmers and to inform future outreach efforts about the program.

Finally, I have been a cosponsor of the legislation to codify the Healthy Incentives Program into state law.

How would you support farmers in adapting to climate change?

One of the three priorities of the FSC has been farmland and with that ensuring that farmers can continue to farm while also mitigating the impacts of climate change. I have cosponsored amendments to increase funding to the UMass Extension and I am also a cosponsor of legislation to develop a statewide Farmland Action Plan which will help ensure more sustainable and equitable farmland protection and address steps we need to take to mitigate the effects of climate change on farmers.

How would you help to ensure that children understand where food comes from, the importance of healthy eating, and other essential food literacy issues?

I am cosponsor of legislation to create the Massachusetts Farm to School Grant Program with the intended purpose of strengthening the Massachusetts food economy, improving student health and nutrition, and building the capacity of primary and secondary public schools to purchase ingredients grown and produced in Massachusetts, prepare scratch-cooked meals, and educate students about the food system.

What policies or investments would you support to protect farmland and increase farmland access?

I support the APR Program. I also support legislation that calls for the development of a statewide Farmland Action Plan using land-use data to guide state investment, policy, and regulation with the goal of ensuring more sustainable and equitable farmland protection, action, and to more effectively meet the Commonwealth's food security, public health, energy, and climate change goals and needs.

I also advocate for allowing greater opportunity to farm in urban areas and to allow gateway cities with populations over 50,000 to adopt an optional property tax credit of up to 100 percent for small parcels (less than two acres) intended for agricultural use.

I have been a cosponsor of legislation and funding to improve soil health.

Another piece of legislation I cosponsored would support farmers/farming by setting up a program to train new farmers, allowing small parcels of non-contiguous farmland that are part of the same farming operation to be taxed as a single farm, including farm stands as part of agricultural land for tax purposes, and other provisions to help farmers stay profitable.

What strategies would you support to reduce food waste?

I have filed legislation to provide civil liability protection so as to encourage more food donation and I have filed legislation to standardize the date labeling of food so as to lessen confusion

around and provide greater clarity to what is ok to still eat, which will again keep more food out of the landfills.

Another piece of legislation I co-filed would require DPH to issue guidance on food donation for businesses in the Commonwealth. Guidelines must include information about liability protection and best practices for food donation and they must be easily accessible. It also instructs DPH to conduct educational webinars for health agents and local boards of health regarding best practices and strategies for implementing effective and safe policies and programs regarding food donation.

How would you work to ensure that food system stakeholders of color - consumers, workers, farmers, landowners, and others - have equitable access to opportunities in all aspects of the food system?

One of the primary reasons we have worked hard to increase funding for the Healthy Incentives Program is so that there is more access across the board to healthy and nutritious, locally grown food. I have also worked with colleagues to address food deserts and to ensure that whether people live in urban, suburban or rural communities they have access to fresh, affordable food. I have also supported efforts to ensure that public transportation, especially RTAs, are properly funded so that people can get to places where food is available or to work if their employment is in the food system.

I am also a co-filer of legislation to establish a Secretariat in the Governor's Administration with a mission to research, educate, and evaluate policies related to all aspects of food management in the Commonwealth. Part of this mandate would be to ensure equitable access.

Additionally, I am cosponsor of legislation to establish a Commission on Agricultural Equity to develop recommendations for supporting racially equitable investments, policies, and practices to promote equity in agriculture in the Commonwealth.