

# Sounding the Alarm

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FEDERAL POLICY IMPACTS ON THE  
MASSACHUSETTS NONPROFIT SECTOR

**A collaborative research project of the Boston  
Foundation, MassINC Polling Group, and  
Massachusetts Nonprofit Network**

BRIEF AUTHORS: LEIGH HANDSCHUH & CARLOS MUÑOZ-CADILLA

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## About the Boston Foundation

**The Boston Foundation** is one of the first and most influential community foundations in the country. In partnership with community members, donors, the public sector, businesses and nonprofits, we aim to repair past harms and build a more equitable future for our city and region. Supported by the Annual Fund for Civic Leadership, we publish research into the critical issues of our time, convene diverse groups to discuss the city's agenda and the region's trends, and to advocate for public policies that promote equity and opportunity for everyone. The Boston Foundation is also one of the largest grantmakers in New England, providing support to nonprofit organizations in Greater Boston through our endowment and working closely with our donors to support nonprofits locally, nationally and internationally.

## About the MassINC Polling Group

**The MassINC Polling Group** is committed to elevating the public's voice in discussions of politics and policy, in Massachusetts and beyond. Since its founding in 2010, MassINC Polling Group (MPG) has earned a reputation as a leader in measuring and interpreting public opinion in Massachusetts. Now, though our roots are in Massachusetts, we serve a nationwide client base. We offer a full range of public opinion research tools and services to clients in the public, private, and social-service sectors. For many years, MPG conducted polling for WBUR, Boston's NPR news station, the longest and most productive media-polling partnership in the Commonwealth. In addition to polling services, we also offer our clients communications and media services to help disseminate their poll results in a way that serves their interests. Our reputation for excellence and accuracy gives our research a high level of trust in the policy community, which many of our clients appreciate as they communicate their results.

## About the Mass Nonprofit Network

**The Massachusetts Nonprofit Network** (MNN) is the voice of the nonprofit sector; a statewide organization that brings together all parts of the nonprofit ecosystem—from nonprofits to funders, community and business leaders, and elected officials—to help nonprofits grow and raise the sector's voice on critical issues. MNN understands that strong nonprofits build strong communities. It is MNN's mission to unite and strengthen the nonprofit sector through advocacy, programming, and spreading awareness.

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Many brilliant and thoughtful people and organizations contributed their expertise and time to the polling research and analysis and the subsequent panel convening that informed this brief, the first study in the state to capture nonprofits' reactions to an incoming federal administration and subsequent actions. The authors wish to express their thanks and acknowledge the team at the **Massachusetts Nonprofit Network**: Jim Klocke, Jessica Seney, Clare Ladd, Molly McCraig, and Megan Murphy; the team at **MassINC Polling Group**: Steve Koczela, Rich Parr, and Zayna Basma-Doyle; the staff at the **Boston Foundation**: M. Lee Pelton, Keith Mahoney, Sam Chambers, Ted McEnroe, Sandy Kendall, Nicolette Cappiello Wheeler, Yamanda Wright, Luc Schuster, Michelle Hinkle, Mimi Huckins, Celia LeBlanc, Vanessa Tran, and Jordan Numme. We are also deeply grateful to our May 5 panelists: Diane Yentel, Shanique Rodriguez, and Mary Skelton Roberts; the statewide survey distribution partners, which include numerous community foundations, United Ways, intermediaries, and sector-strengthening organizations; and finally the hundreds of nonprofit leaders across the Commonwealth who responded to the survey, lending their powerful perspectives to this research at a critical time for the nonprofit sector in Massachusetts.

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Since the inauguration of President Trump's second term on January 20, a blizzard of executive orders and policy decisions have reshaped the relationship between Massachusetts' nonprofit sector and the federal government. Given the resulting uncertainty, Massachusetts Nonprofit Network, in collaboration with the Boston Foundation and MassINC Polling Group, surveyed nonprofit professionals to better understand the challenges they face. On May 5, 2025, hundreds of nonprofit staff gathered for a Boston Foundation forum to discuss the survey results regarding the real and anticipated impacts of the Trump administration's policies on the sector and the communities they serve. The following report is split into three sections highlighting the survey process, main takeaways, and recommended next steps to help nonprofit leaders navigate a shifting policy landscape.

**Section 1 explains the survey design and respondent profile.** More than 500 nonprofit workers across the Commonwealth responded to the survey from February 25 to March 21, though most were located in Greater Boston. More than half of respondent organizations have budgets under \$2.5 million and employ 25 or fewer staff. Demographic data shows that while most of the respondents hold leadership positions, the nonprofit sector in Massachusetts is majority women-led. Data also shows how nonprofits serve a range of vulnerable populations through diverse service and programmatic areas. Respondent profiles show that the survey results were representative of the local sector.

**Section 2 reviews three main findings from the survey.** These are contextualized given the rapidly evolving policy landscape, which has turned some of the survey respondents' fears into reality. The first takeaway is that more than 90% of respondents believe the communities nonprofits serve, and Massachusetts as a whole, will be worse off under the Trump administration. The second is that most respondents anticipate losses to their funding, negatively affecting their financial health and ability to provide services. The third is that nearly all respondents anticipate that there will be a greater demand for their programs and services, and that the Trump administration will make it harder to provide these to communities who need them.

**Section 3 identifies next steps as the sector navigates the years ahead.** This guidance is based on survey results and recommendations from nonprofit leaders during the May 5 forum "[The Shifting Federal Landscape: Massachusetts Nonprofits Sound the Alarm](#)." The first recommendation concerns the need to strengthen the sector's infrastructure to ensure safe advocacy, coalitions, and movement building. The second recommendation focuses on the need to increase resources to support nonprofits' missions, including those that support improved collaboration.

This inexhaustive summary begins to make available tangible next steps and insights for further advocacy during these uncertain times.

## Section 1: THE SURVEY

Massachusetts Nonprofit Network, in collaboration with the Boston Foundation and MassINC Polling Group, administered the *Massachusetts Nonprofits Federal Impacts Survey* among nonprofit staff across the Commonwealth between February 25 and March 21, 2025. The survey and outreach language was translated into Chinese (simplified), Haitian Creole, Portuguese, Spanish, and Vietnamese. 523 nonprofit staff, working in organizations across the Commonwealth, responded to the survey. The perception survey captures reactions to the realized and anticipated impacts of the Trump administration's policies on Massachusetts's nonprofits and the communities they serve.

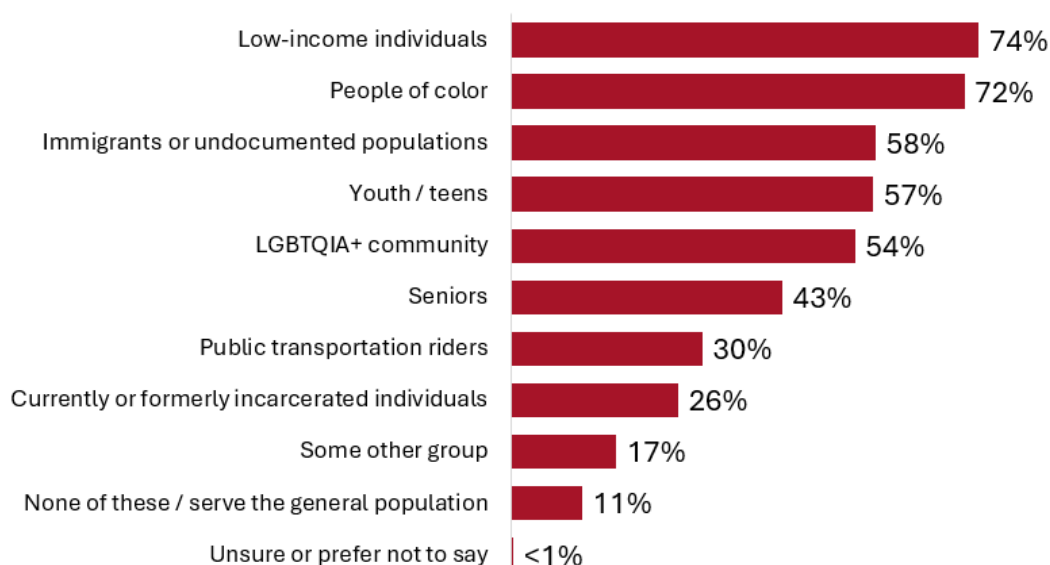
More than half (55%) of respondents' organizations have annual budgets under \$2.5 million and 62% have 25 employees or fewer (**Figure 1**). While 58% of respondents work in organizations serving the city of Boston and inner cities near Boston, a significant number of respondents serve communities across Massachusetts, including 29% whose organizations serve communities statewide.<sup>i</sup> Survey demographic data shows that 79% of respondents hold senior leadership roles, identifying either as executive directors, presidents, or CEOs (51%), or other senior leadership positions (28%). Personally, 72% of respondents identify as a woman, 20% identify as BIPOC, and 16% identify as LGBTQ+.

**Figure 1. More than half of respondents work in small to mid-sized organizations with lean staffing**



Respondents work in a range of focus areas including human services, arts and culture, education, environment, health, community development, housing, and more.<sup>ii</sup> Lastly, respondents' organizations mostly serve vulnerable populations, including low-income individuals, people of color, immigrants or undocumented populations, youth/ teens, LGBTQIA+ community, and individuals with disabilities (**Figure 2**). Responses point to a diversity in organization size, focus area, and communities served that reflects the nonprofit ecosystem across the Commonwealth.

**Figure 2. Respondents work in organizations that mainly serve a combination of vulnerable populations**



Q: And which of the following populations, if any, does your organization serve?

Massachusetts nonprofits have contributed to perception surveys during uncertain times, most recently during the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>iii</sup> Yet, this is the first study in the state to capture nonprofits' reactions to an incoming federal administration and subsequent actions. Nationally, the Center for Effective Philanthropy has surveyed nonprofit leaders to gauge how they are experiencing the Trump administration and what they are looking for from funders at this time.<sup>iv</sup> At the state and local level, the New Jersey Center for Nonprofits and the San Diego Foundation have surveyed nonprofits in their respective geographies to better understand the potential impacts of the current administration's federal policies on community-based organizations in those areas.<sup>v</sup> Massachusetts is home to around 12,000 registered nonprofits that employ more than 550,000 professionals, accounting for 17.6% of the state's workforce.<sup>vi</sup> Given the size of the state's nonprofit sector

and its historically strong relationship with state and federal government, the survey is an opportunity to highlight the effects of federal policies on nonprofits' work and the people they serve.

Since the inauguration of President Trump's second term on January 20, a flurry of executive orders and policy decisions have reshaped the sector's relationship with the federal government. Grants freezes aimed at bringing programs into compliance with new federal policies disrupted nonprofits' ability to serve communities across Massachusetts.<sup>vii</sup> Executive orders to eliminate government agencies were followed by cuts to education, public health services, disaster relief, and more, reducing nonprofits' access to critical financial resources.<sup>viii</sup> Policy decisions enacted against vulnerable populations, like the detention and deportation of U.S. citizens, legal residents, and visa holders, created panic across communities that prompted legal action against the federal government.<sup>ix</sup> President Trump's actions reveal his strategy to use federal funds and organizations' tax-exempt status to bring entities into alignment with his administration's ideologies. Survey results reflect nonprofit leaders' realities as they navigate a shifting landscape.

The following survey summary achieves two goals. First, it documents meaningful survey findings regarding the observed and anticipated impacts of the Trump administration's policies on nonprofits and the communities they serve. The summary incorporates qualitative data from Massachusetts nonprofit leaders, insights from national studies on the nonprofit sector, and data on the impacts of federal policies on the local nonprofit sector since the survey closed on March 21. Second, it proposes a series of recommendations on which nonprofit and philanthropic organizations can act to strengthen the sector and meet the needs of communities across the Commonwealth. This guidance is sourced from survey findings and local and national nonprofit leaders' recommendations to support the sector and communities navigating a chaotic policy landscape during the May 5, 2025 forum *The Shifting Federal Landscape: Massachusetts Nonprofits Raise the Alarm*. This brief begins to formulate tangible next steps and insights for further advocacy.

## Section 2: TAKEAWAYS

Survey results capture nonprofit staff's perceived impacts of the Trump administration's policies up to March 21, when the survey closed. The data can be divided into three issues:

1. federal policy impacts on Massachusetts and on the people living in the state;
2. realized and anticipated consequences of the federal administration's actions on nonprofits' financial health and ability to access government funding; and
3. nonprofits' ability to address increasing demand for programs and services amid a changing policy and financial environment.

The following analysis details the quantitative and qualitative survey results and contextualizes Massachusetts nonprofits' experiences with findings from other national studies and federal action since this poll was administered.

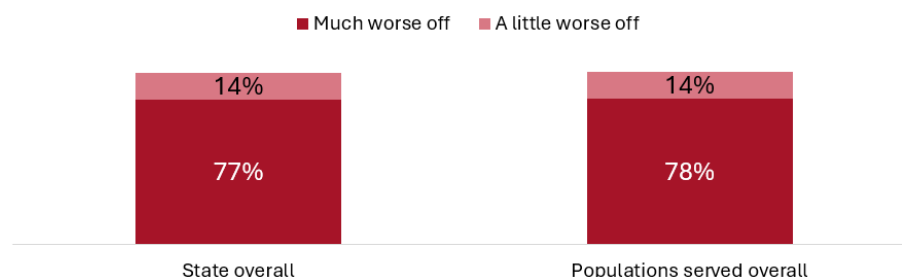
### Takeaway 1

*Respondents believe the communities that nonprofits serve, and Massachusetts as a whole, will be worse off under the Trump administration.*

Survey results show that Massachusetts nonprofits have a negative perception of the Trump administration's potential impacts. These can be divided into two areas. First, nonprofit respondents believe that the Trump administration's policies will negatively affect the state. Second, respondents believe that the federal administration's actions will negatively impact the populations nonprofits serve.

A vast majority (91%) of survey respondents believe that Massachusetts will be a little (14%) or much (77%) worse off under the Trump administration (**Figure 3**).<sup>\*</sup> This concern remains consistent for organizations throughout the Commonwealth and across organizational budget size.

**Figure 3. Most respondents say that Massachusetts overall and the populations they serve will be worse off under the Trump administration**





Survey results show that respondents whose primary focus is education, arts and culture, social justice and equity, environment, and community development and housing have a slightly more negative outlook than those working in human services and health.<sup>xi</sup> Differing sentiments may be attributed to the fact that organizations focused on human services and health tend to be much larger and have greater financial stability than those working in the other focus areas.<sup>xii</sup> Significantly, in the months following the close of the survey, the passage of the “One Big Beautiful Bill Act”<sup>xiii</sup> took health care away from vulnerable populations via Medicaid cuts, and has likely worsened human service and health sector organizations’ outlook for community health overall. One respondent mentions that despite preparing for the Trump administration’s actions since before the election, they “know [the Trump administration] is poised to decimate access to reproductive health care. ... It is exhausting and all-consuming.” The fear, uncertainty, and economic instability that federal policies have had on the state also contribute to respondents’ negative outlook.

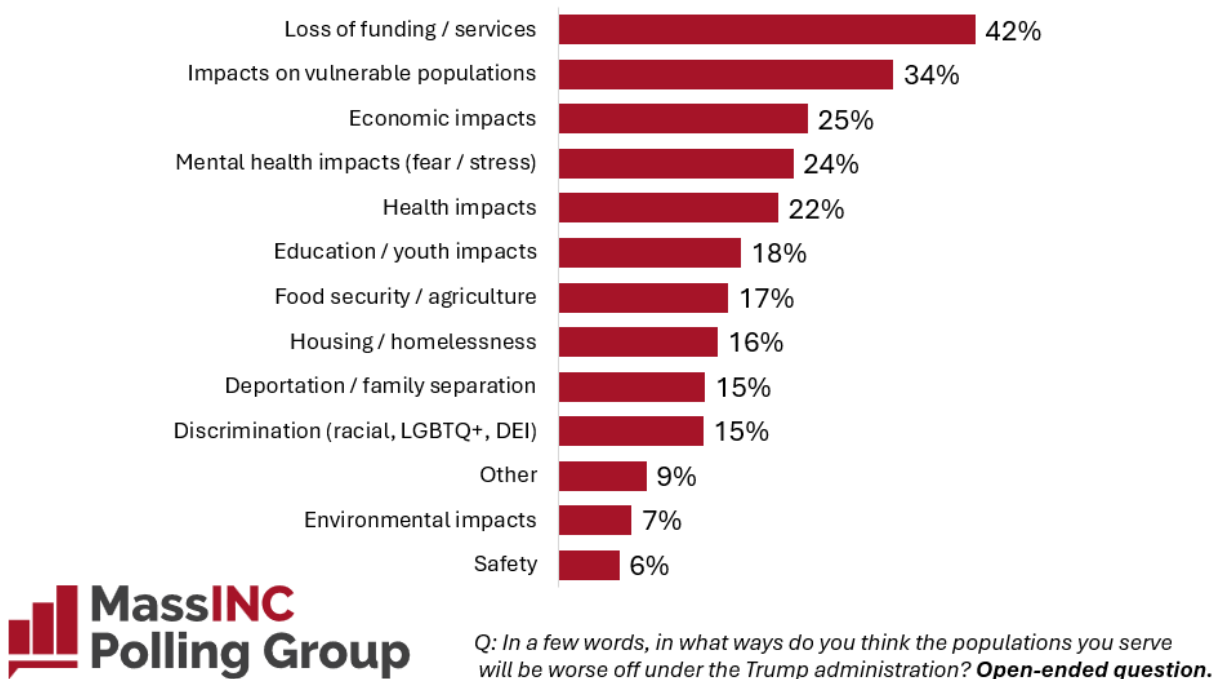
Considering populations served, 92% of respondents believe that theirs will be worse off—by a little (14%) or much worse off (78%)—under the Trump administration (Figure 3, above). Results remain consistent across organizational budget size, populations served, and geographic area served. Those whose primary focus is social justice and equity, community development and housing, environment, and education demonstrate near unanimous concern for the potential impacts on the populations they serve.<sup>xiv</sup> While about four fifths of respondents working in health, human services, and arts and culture believe the communities they serve will be worse off, they are more uncertain about the potential policy impacts than respondents working in other focus areas. Data shows that the Trump administration’s policies now threaten nonprofits’ critical role in communities providing people with essential services, developing civic capacity, and fostering resilience.<sup>xv</sup>

“Under the Trump administration, [our] community faces increased fear, division, and distrust, making it harder to access resources, build stability, and advocate for their rights. With priorities shifting from policy to rhetoric fueled by hate, many feel uncertain and excluded, leading to hesitancy in seeking support. This erosion of trust, coupled with misinformation and restrictive policies, limits opportunities for education, workforce development, and civic participation, leaving our communities more vulnerable to exploitation, economic hardship, and social isolation.”

—Nonprofit Respondent

Survey results highlight several reasons why individuals believe that Trump’s policies will negatively impact the populations they serve (**Figure 4**). Of nonprofit workers responding, 42% expect that the federal administration’s policies will most likely lead to loss of funding and services. This includes concerns for the loss of education programming, housing, food security, health services and more. Thirty-four percent expect policies to impact vulnerable populations directly. Respondents cite the potential economic impacts; safety concerns; discrimination due to people’s race, gender, and sexual orientation; deportation and family separation; and the health implications of living under stressful and fearful conditions.

**Figure 4. Populations served could lose services and face direct impact**



Survey results show that fear, economic instability, and uncertainty have contributed to nonprofits' negative assessment of the Trump administration's impact on Massachusetts and the people who live in the Commonwealth. The policies or executive orders issued have already made these concerns a reality. For example, one commented, "Our organization assists economically disadvantaged military veterans with legal problems. Our clients have a lot of interaction with the federal government and receive essential benefits and services from the Department of Veterans Affairs, Social Security, Medicaid, HUD, etc. A reduction of the federal workforce or disruption in these services or benefits would likely be catastrophic for them and cause a sharp increase in the need for our services. ... We lose 22 veterans a day to suicide. Stripping these resources will only increase the number of veterans [whose] lives will become more unbearable without this support." And equally dire outcomes were foreseen by a respondent serving another community: "The current administration's attacks on vulnerable populations, especially LGBTQ+ youth, will cause a further erosion in community acceptance and support of LGBTQ+ youth. Those youth will face unprecedented levels of bullying, isolation, stigma, and abuse. LGBTQ+ youth suicide is sure to spike."

"Funding is unstable, uncertain. Program sustainability is unstable because of that. The needs have risen because of instability in people's lives and the economy, but our resources are fewer. We have to put more energy and time into advocacy now. Yet we're afraid of painting a target on our backs by doing so. SO MUCH FEAR."

—Nonprofit Respondent

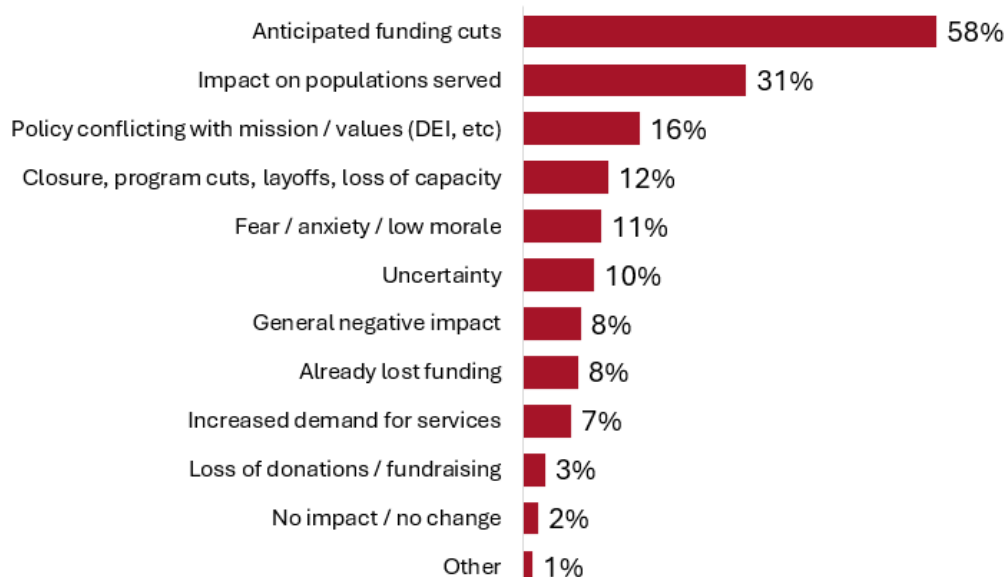
## Takeaway 2

*Nonprofits are anticipating losses to their funding, negatively affecting their financial health and ability to provide services.*

The current attacks on the sector and the resources meant to serve communities coincide with the depletion of COVID-19 pandemic funds, which were designed to meet increasing demands for services.<sup>xvi</sup> The shift away from federal government funds is likely to have negative impacts on the nonprofit sector and reduce the programs and services available to communities across the Commonwealth. One nonprofit respondent says that they are on tenterhooks every day, “wondering if [they will] still exist at the end of the year and what will happen to the students and community [they] serve if [they] need to close programs.” The success of many nonprofits and programs across the Commonwealth is tied to the availability of government financial resources to meet the needs of communities.<sup>xvii</sup> Survey results reflect nonprofits’ recent challenges amid abrupt changes to their government funding and the resulting financial instability organizations experienced.

Anticipated funding cuts remain top of mind for more than half (58%) of nonprofit respondents (**Figure 5**). While 8% of respondents state that they have already lost funding, the Trump administration’s sweeping changes to funding policy since the close of the

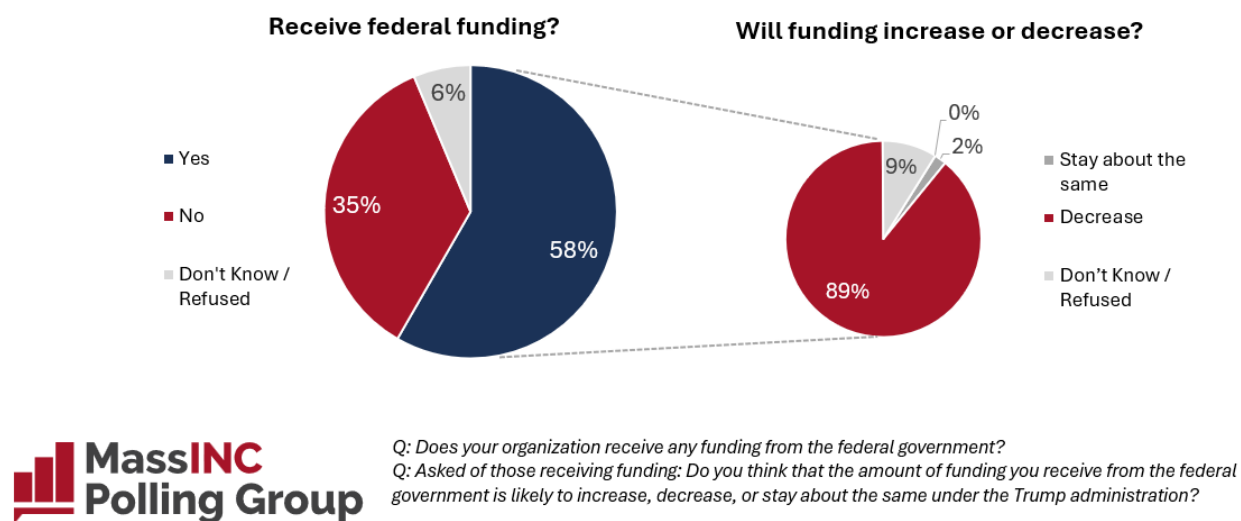
**Figure 5. Most organizations anticipate funding cuts and impacts to the populations they serve**



survey on March 21 suggest that this number would now be higher. Though state governments and nonprofit advocacy coalitions are tracking the federal funding cuts, the true scale of impacts on the sector are difficult to measure accurately.<sup>xviii</sup>

More than half of survey respondents (58%) report that their organization receives funding from the federal government, showing a correlation between the frequency of government grants and organizations' budget size (**Figure 6**). This is consistent with similar studies on government funding. For example, Urban Institute's analysis of form 990 data shows that in

**Figure 6. Nearly all federal funding recipients expect cuts**



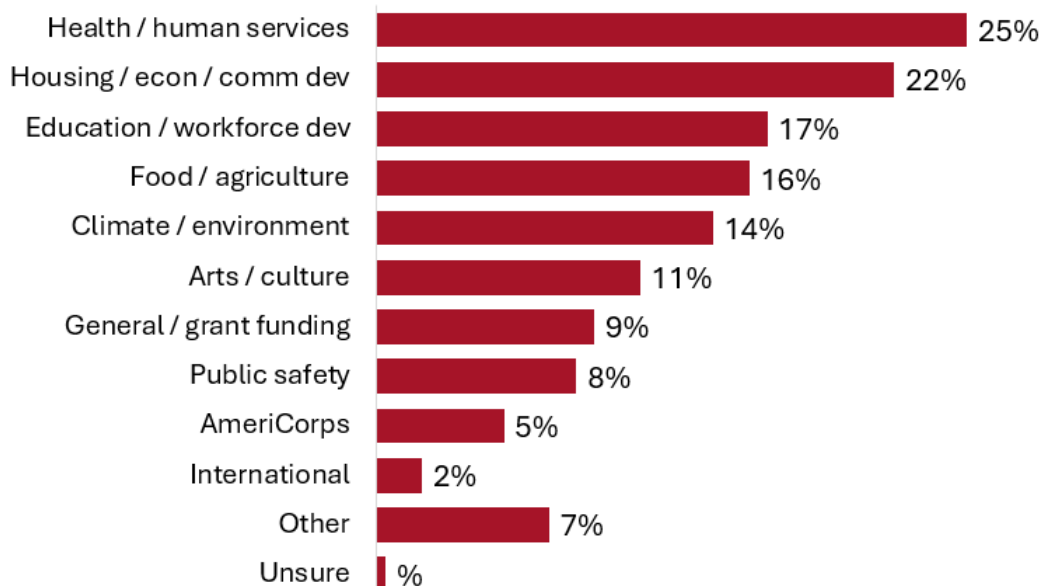
2021, approximately 60% of Massachusetts nonprofits received some government grant or contract.<sup>xix</sup> Urban Institute's latest published update, *Massachusetts Nonprofits' Government Grants and Contracts in 2023*, reveals that in 2023 as many as 73% of Massachusetts' nonprofits reported receiving some form of local, state, or federal grant or contract.<sup>xx</sup> This fact sheet shares that 25% of Massachusetts nonprofits received federal funding in 2023, less than half of what our survey showed for 2025.<sup>xxi</sup> While the discrepancy may be attributed to differences in respondent profiles or changes in the availability of federal funding over the years, it may also highlight nonprofits' increased awareness of government funding sources given the effects of recent federal actions on organizations' budgets.

Survey results show varying reliance on federal funding by subsector. For example, nearly twice as many organizations working in community development and housing (79%) are likely to receive federal funding than those working in arts and culture (42%). Organizations that focus on the environment, health, and human services are more likely to receive federal support than those working in education or social justice and equity.<sup>xxii</sup>

Respondent data shows that the Massachusetts nonprofit sector relies on grants and contracts from different federal agencies and programs to effectively serve its communities

(Figure 7). These include the National Institutes of Health, Centers for Disease Control, Department of Education, Department of Veterans Affairs, Department of Housing and Urban Development, Environmental Protection Agency, United States Department of Agriculture, National Endowment for the Arts, the Department of Justice, AmeriCorps, and more. The Trump administration's sweeping policy changes to funding policies affects organizations working across all subsectors.

**Figure 7. Health, housing, education among top anticipated funding to decrease**



Q: Asked of those who receive federal funding: What specific types of federal funding that your organization receives do you think might decrease under the Trump administration?

The end of pandemic ARPA funding and declines in charitable giving since 2023 present a challenge for organizations of all budget sizes.<sup>xxiii</sup> Reduced access to resources has negatively affected organization's ability to maintain staffing capacity to meet the demand for services since the pandemic.<sup>xxiv</sup> At the time of the survey, 89% of the respondent organizations who receive federal funding anticipated that these resources would decrease under the Trump administration (Figure 6, above). These results are consistent across organizational budget sizes, focus area, population served, and geography. Fifty-nine percent of respondents believe that their financial situation will be worse a year from now. Nonprofits are concerned as

"Thirty percent of our revenue is federally funded. The government claims that our program will continue—but we have seen no proof of that and currently they owe us \$225K from services rendered in 2024. I have already had to lay off about 40% of my staff."

—Nonprofit Respondent

they continue to provide services to communities at the same time as they look for alternative revenue sources to keep the lights on.

In the months since respondents completed the survey, the Trump administration has canceled many grants programs. For example, in the housing and community development subsector, the Department Housing and Urban Development carrying out DOGE policy attempted to terminate the Fair Housing Administration Program, affecting \$30 million in grants to Massachusetts organizations, but a US District Court Judge has since ordered the program to be reinstated.<sup>xxv</sup> In late April, the Department of Justice canceled more than \$800 million in grants, more than \$50 million of which were meant for Massachusetts-based nonprofits.<sup>xxvi</sup> These grants funded programs to support youth, reduce gun violence, provide treatment to domestic violence survivors prevent hate crimes, and more.

“Our small, grassroots arts organization will not be able to provide arts education to economically disadvantaged youth if federal funding is cut. The arts will become available only to the children of rich people.”

—Nonprofit Respondent

As of May, grant cancellations through the National Endowment for the Arts, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and the Museum and Library Services have frozen millions of government dollars on which nonprofits rely.<sup>xxvii</sup> The Trump administration’s actions have impacted after-school programs, affordable music classes for children, arts education in Boston Public Schools, and more. Despite the temporary reinstatement of some grants, Trump’s Fiscal Year 2026 budget details significant reductions in domestic spending that would negatively affect organizations’ ability to fund community programs and services.<sup>xxviii</sup>

On April 25, the Trump administration terminated nearly \$400 million in AmeriCorps grant program funding.<sup>xxix</sup> The sudden termination ended the service of more than 32,000 AmeriCorps members working in over 1,000 nonprofit programs serving communities across the country. In Massachusetts, this decision affected over 1,000 nonprofit employees funded through AmeriCorps. While Massachusetts Attorney General Andrea Joy Campbell and a coalition of 23 attorneys general and two governors ultimately prevailed in preserving funding for AmeriCorps<sup>xxx</sup>, with the White House Office of Management and Budget (OMB) agreeing to release more than \$184 million in funding to AmeriCorps service programs across the country, the interruption in funding left many organizations unable to plan and retain such programs and staff. Uncertainty and potential ideological restrictions the Trump administration attempted to impose on the funds prompted 826 Boston, a Boston-based education nonprofit, to preemptively withdraw its application for funding for the 2025-26 AmeriCorps program year, totaling around \$250,000.<sup>xxxi</sup> Given reduced giving trends and dwindling financial resources, hiring new staff to fill the sudden vacancies of AmeriCorps members may not be an option for many nonprofits. The COVID-19 pandemic



showed the negative impacts of nonprofit staffing shortages on communities and nonprofit workers' longevity, a reality that may be forced upon the sector once again.<sup>xxxii</sup>

Looking at nonprofits' funding reserves highlights varying levels of financial resiliency in organizations across the Commonwealth. Forty-three percent of respondents have at least six months of cash on hand to maintain operations if they stopped receiving revenue. Meanwhile, 35% of organizations have less than six months of operating funds on hand.<sup>xxxiii</sup> These results remain consistent when analyzed by organization budget size, focus area, population served, and geography served. Given the anticipated reduction in federal support, 88% of nonprofits are either contingency planning (40%) or intend to do so (44%).

"Ten of our 11 programs receive federal funding as a major part of their operation. ... The administration has already tried to freeze current funding for awarded grants, and there is no way to predict what is in store. ... Fifty percent of our funding is federal funding that we receive through the city and state. If we lose this funding, we would have to do major layoffs of staff, which means we wouldn't be able to serve our community."

—Nonprofit Respondent

The shifting funding and policy landscape will test organizations' financial resilience. Grant cancellations, recissions, and funding cuts put at risk nonprofits' ability to serve communities across the Commonwealth and keep their organizations open. Eighty-seven percent of survey respondents affirmed that donations from individuals are now more important than ever to their organization's budget. This new reality forces the sector to rethink how it has traditionally resourced nonprofits and how to strategize to address the challenges of a shifting landscape.

### Takeaway 3

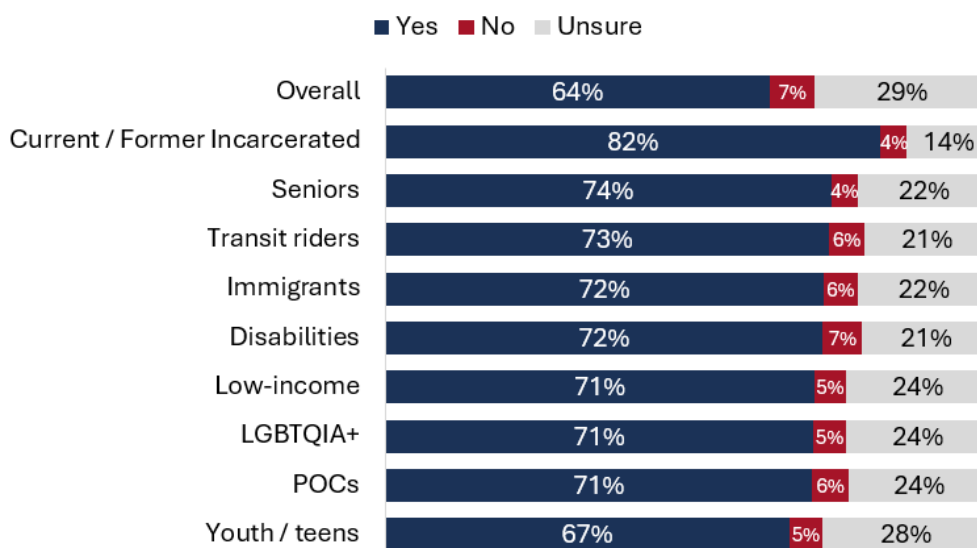
*Respondents anticipate that there will be a greater demand for their programs and services and that the Trump administration will make it harder to provide these to communities who need them.*

Nonprofits believe that the Trump administration will negatively affect their ability to carry out their work for two reasons. First, respondents anticipate that demand for programs and services will increase. Trump's reduction and elimination of funding to essential government programs and services will likely drive people to seek support from nonprofit organizations. Second, respondents believe that the administration will make it harder for nonprofits to deliver programs and services. As has been the case with Harvard University and other tax-exempt organizations, it appears that President Trump will continue to clash with organizations that work in areas that come into conflict with his administration's policies or ideologies. Simultaneously, as nonprofit workers continue to face layoffs due to federal funding cuts, the sector is seeing a loss of highly skilled, experts, often with lived experience or shared identities with the communities their organizations serve, resulting

in diminished capacity for nonprofits to meet demand and do so in a way that is informed by community voice. While there are several efforts to track the impact of this administration's policies on the nonprofit workforce, the full scale and scope of employment impacts will likely not be fully tabulated in the near term.<sup>xxxiv</sup>

Nearly two-thirds (64%) of respondents anticipate increased demand for their services in the coming years (**Figure 8**). Results are consistent across organization budget size, population served, and geography but show some variation across focus areas.

**Figure 8. Most organizations expect demand for services to rise**



Q: Do you anticipate an increased demand for your nonprofit's programs or services under the Trump administration?

Respondents working in social justice and racial equity (82%), human services (76%), and community development and housing (75%) anticipate the highest increase in demand.

More than half of respondents working in health (66%) and education (58%) anticipate such increases. About half of respondents whose organization's focus area is environment and arts and culture are unsure how the administration's policies will affect their work. Importantly, since the close of the survey, elimination of key Inflation Reduction Act initiatives, particularly those that were environmentally focused, have significantly impacted nonprofits in the conservation, climate, and energy fields.<sup>xxxv</sup>

The Trump administration's actions since this survey closed justifies respondents' fears. On April 1, Health and Human Services Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. announced the reduction of the department's workforce, eliminating the Administration for Community Living and closing the New England regional office for the Administration of Children and Families.<sup>xxxvi</sup> This action affected programs that supported around 150,000 low-income

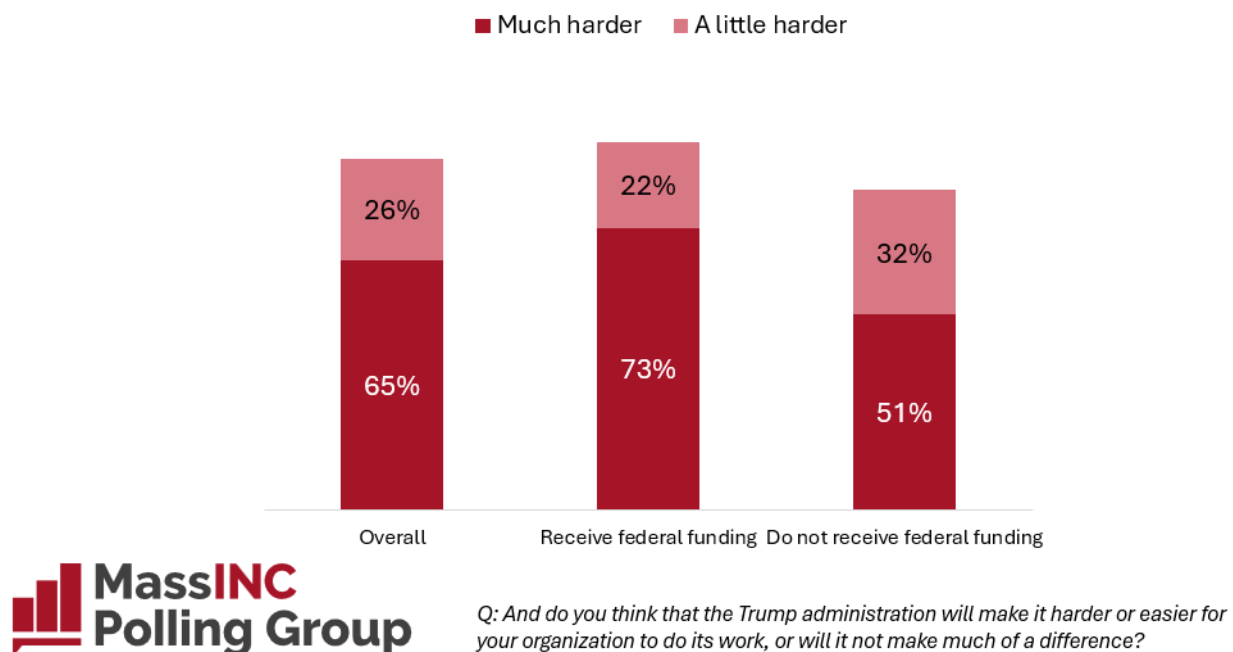


families with energy bills, more than 10,000 children participating in Head Start programs, thousands of aging adults and people with disabilities, and other community members across the state.<sup>xxxvii</sup>

Cuts to the Emergency Food Assistance Program and the Patrick Leahy Farm to School State Agency Grant Program negatively impacts thousands of children, older adults, and working adults statewide who access food and locally grown produce through schools, food banks, and nonprofits.<sup>xxxviii</sup> Recent data shows the correlation between the availability of free or reduced cost nutritious food and improved health and education outcomes. In recent years, increased access to free or reduced-cost meals in public schools across Massachusetts has led to lower rates of chronic absenteeism and may be associated with increased graduation rates.<sup>xxxix</sup> National studies on the impacts of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) show that these food assistance programs improve life expectancy, reduce incarceration rates, stimulate the economy, and have a \$62 return on every dollar invested throughout a child's lifetime.<sup>xl</sup> Cutting government support to address basic needs likely will hurt communities across the state, placing a greater burden on nonprofits to fill needs short-term, and create conditions for increased needs in the future.

Nearly all survey respondents (91%) believe that the Trump administration will make it a little (26%) or much (65%) harder for their organization to do its work (**Figure 9**).<sup>xli</sup>

**Figure 9. Most say Trump administration will make their job harder**



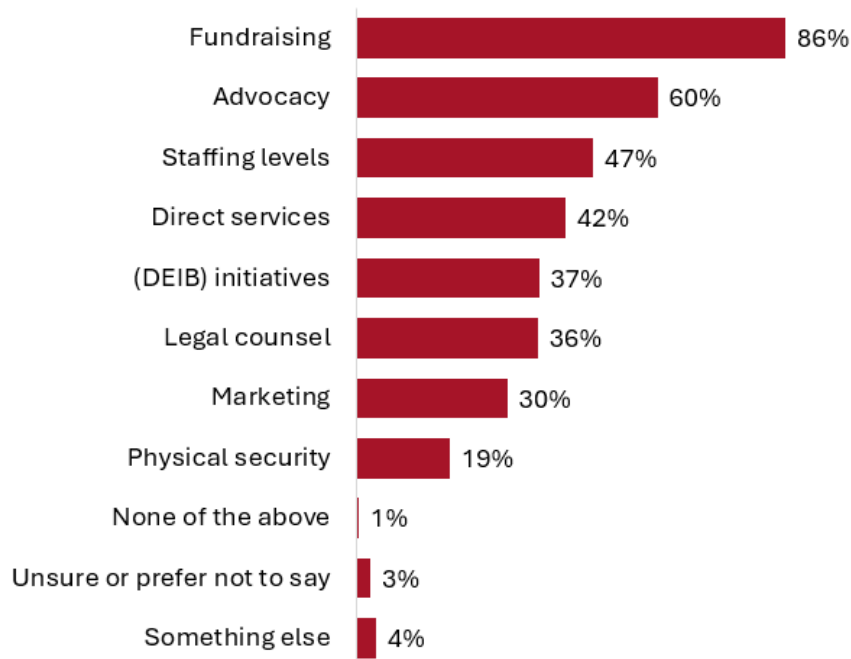
Survey data shows that respondents believe that the federal administration's policies will directly impact the populations they serve (31%); come into conflict with nonprofits' mission and values (16%); and force organizations to close programs, lay off staff, or close

entirely (12%) (Figure 5, above). For example, on April 15, President Trump urged the IRS to rescind Harvard University’s nonprofit status after the university rebuffed his demands to change its hiring; admissions; and diversity, equity, and inclusion practices.<sup>xlii</sup>

Passage of the “One Big Beautiful Bill Act” in July—with its cuts to programs like SNAP and Medicaid, as well as changes to charitable giving law—has already begun to cause hardship and uncertainty for vulnerable populations and the organizations that hold up the safety net.<sup>xliii</sup> (It’s small comfort that the bill ultimately dropped some especially harsh policies targeting the sector, such as authorizing the Secretary of the U.S. Department of the Treasury to unilaterally revoke nonprofit status from “terrorist supporting organizations,” without requiring the Secretary to share full evidence or ensure due process.) These and other actions jeopardize organizations’ financial resources and security.

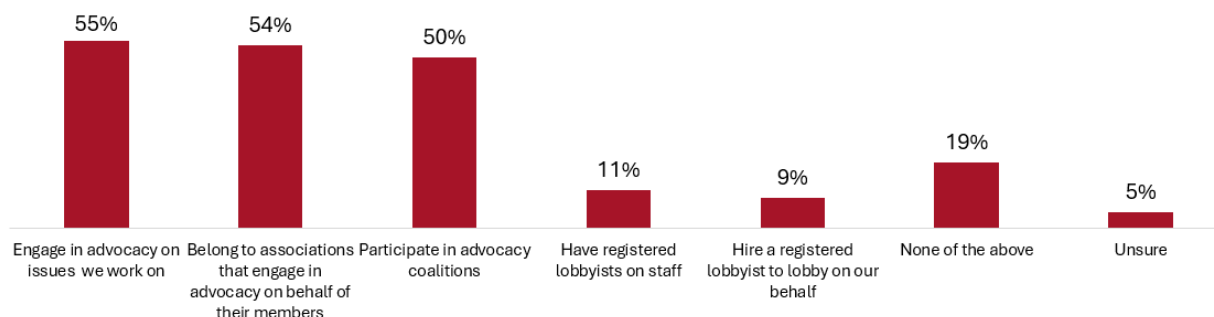
Nonprofits have had to divert time and resources away from their core programming to address the impacts of federal policies. One respondent commented that their organization has had “to take time away from our existing projects and workstreams to provide rapid response resource and information on the threats of cutting educational resources, protecting immigrant students, and pushing back against attacks on DEI initiatives.” A reality many organizations face as they navigate uncertain times. While fundraising is a top priority for 86% of respondents, 60% anticipate increased need in advocacy support as a way of addressing federal policy issues (**Figure 10**).<sup>xliv</sup>

**Figure 10. Nonprofits see increased need for fundraising, advocacy**



About half of respondents engage in advocacy on issues affecting their focus area, belong to associations that engage in advocacy, or participate in advocacy coalitions (**Figure 11**).

**Figure 11. Majorities are engaged in advocacy, but lobbying is much rarer**



*Q: The next few questions are about advocacy and lobbying. Does your organization do any of the following? **Select all that apply.***

This number is higher than those reported by Independent Sector’s study on advocacy participation, which highlights that only 31% of nonprofits nationally engage in advocacy or lobbying over the past five years.<sup>xiv</sup> Survey data suggests that while there is a slight correlation between advocacy engagement and organizational budget size, participation varies by organizations’ primary focus area. It also shows that those working in social and racial equity and environmental issues participate at higher rates than those working in education and arts and culture. Respondents whose organizations work in community development and housing (62%), human services (61%), and health (60%) fall in the middle. Massachusetts nonprofits’ higher-than-average advocacy participation rates suggest that there is an opportunity for deeper investment in advocacy groups and coalition building across subsectors to amplify issues and voices leading policy change.

Of respondents who reported that they do not participate in advocacy, 46% mention that they do not have enough financial resources, 45% indicate that they do not want to jeopardize their nonprofit 501c3 status, and 38% indicate that they do not have enough staff capacity. Survey data reveals that even though half of respondents engage in advocacy, many make their voices heard by other means. Three-quarters of respondents indicate that they have contact or a relationship with their state representative or senator, and more than half say they have contact or a relationship with their federal representative or senator.

Given the Trump administration’s actions, many nonprofits are already feeling the impacts of policies they anticipated when they responded to this survey. Nonprofits prepare to confront the increased demand for their programs and services and challenges to how they work in community. Their consistent participation in advocacy provides one path to confront the challenges that lie ahead.

## Conclusions from Findings

Massachusetts nonprofits face challenges on multiple fronts as they navigate the shifting federal policy landscape. First, nearly all respondents expect worsening conditions for the state and for the populations their nonprofits serve. Second, nonprofit respondents anticipate greater financial precarity for their organizations, affecting their ability to effectively serve communities. Lastly, nonprofit respondents expect increased demand on their services at the same time as they expect the Trump administration to make it harder for their organizations to do their work. Nonprofits' increasing reliance on individual donors amid waning government support and their higher-than-average participation in advocacy point to potential approaches to confront the challenges ahead. Below, insights from the survey data and nonprofit leaders help inform a path forward.

“We are no longer eligible for or interested in receiving federal support which we have been relying on. The culture and values of our organization are not in alignment with the executive orders and the Trump-Vance administration priorities that we have been told we must be in agreement with in order to continue receiving support. We will not remove or update any language in our policies in order to be in compliance because it goes against the guidance of our organization's culture and values.”

—Nonprofit Respondent

## Section 3: LOOKING AHEAD

On May 5, 2025, a panel of nonprofit and philanthropic leaders convened with a hybrid audience of close to 1,200 nonprofit staff, funders, donors, board members, and volunteers from across Massachusetts and beyond. In the forum, local and national nonprofit leaders discussed the survey results and provided recommendations for how to begin to address the monumental challenges facing the sector and the vulnerable communities it serves.<sup>xlvi</sup>

Early in the discussion, Diane Yentel, CEO of the National Council of Nonprofits, made clear that “we [the nonprofit sector] will end the year somewhere on a spectrum of harm, from potentially harmed, somewhat harmed, to really potentially decimated.” However, she emphasized that the sector “can end the year strengthened, not just in spite of, but because of these threats that we face.” Yentel’s stark reflections laid some runway for Philanthropy Massachusetts CEO Mary Skelton Roberts to name that “[the nonprofit and philanthropic sectors] can’t keep trying to solve new problems in old ways. ... What we’re experiencing is unprecedented.”

As nonprofits grapple with the real and perceptible impacts of federal grant cuts, which have already led to layoffs, coupled with worrisome economic indicators that could affect individual and philanthropic giving, they are simultaneously being exhausted by the threats to their work and community members. Shanique Rodriguez, Executive Director of Massachusetts Voter Table, indicated that while there are existential threats to the sector, there are disproportionate threats and harms facing nonprofit leaders of color, especially in the community organizing space and for those who are working with immigrant communities. She said, “These are not people who are far and removed from communities. These are folks that live in community who are leading this work and are trying to fight against a [federal] administration, a system, and policies that are not just impacting communities but impacting themselves as well. So... we’re doing a lot around safety and security.”

The panel elevated two overarching themes drawing on the survey results, panelists’ expertise, and how their organizations are facing the attacks on the sector from the federal administration. These themes strive for action, inquiry, and nuance from both nonprofits and funders, particularly over the next two to four years. The first theme calls on **strengthening the sector’s advocacy infrastructure** to ensure safe and well-resourced advocacy, coalitions, and movement building. The second theme highlights the sector’s need for **increased flexible financial resources** to support nonprofits’ missions and to support mechanisms, like collaboration, to help reimagine *how* they do their work in this new context. In the sections below we explore these two topics with an eye to helping nonprofits navigate uncertainty.

## Strengthening Sector Advocacy Infrastructure

According to the survey, more than half of Massachusetts nonprofits participate in advocacy. Survey data shows that the Commonwealth's nonprofit sector is starting from a place of strength in terms of advocacy, with more than half (55%) of organizations reporting that they engage in advocacy on the issues they work on. Subsector advocacy coalitions, around housing, early childcare, climate, and education, for example, are robust and active, with countless examples of nonprofits partnering with citizen groups, 501(c)(4)s, unions, and private entities to advance policies like pay equity, zoning reform, or ESOL access.<sup>xlvii</sup> Survey respondents indicate that they want to do more.

However, the Massachusetts nonprofit sector is not immune to the rising fears about organizations jeopardizing their nonprofit status or funding if they speak out.<sup>xlviii</sup> Rodriguez noted that in an age when students are whisked off the street for writing an op-ed for a school paper, “folks of color need to be careful of their visibility,” and acknowledged we should ask “how can those people take a silent role so they don’t have to be in public.” On the other hand, she said, organizations taking their first steps into advocacy need to be aware of who’s already in the space. “It’s great to be excited to jump in, but first, look at what is happening already. Maybe join as a supporter rather than seeking to lead the same work. Trusted messengers need to lead—who are the groups on the ground doing the work?”

“National nonprofits that don’t rely on federal funding, and are often White led, have the least risk and so the greatest obligation to speak out against the vilification and all that is not normal in this moment.”

—Diane Yentel

Understanding nonprofits’ exposure to legal risk may help inform their approach to advocacy and role when working in collaboration with other organizations. Yentel highlighted the opportunity for larger, White-led organizations that do not receive federal funding, and may be shielded from the pushback that BIPOC-led organizations face, to be more vocal at this time. She said, “The level of silence is the number one problem. Leaders, organizations, and members of Congress are staying silent, when we should all be speaking out.”

Skelton Roberts added that we often design and fund advocacy agendas and strategy without involving community members, nonprofits, and funders in the process. “I am a big fan of trust-based philanthropy,” she said. “But it starts at the table where you’re designing the strategy, not after the fact, right? And so, what is a strategy that we want to develop? ... If we don’t co-design and then fund for that strategy, I don’t think we get an outcome that looks different than where we are.” Rodriguez noted that this often plays out across Massachusetts nonprofit subsectors as well, saying, “We’re doing the work in silos. ... There’s always alignment in the struggle ... but different sectors work in their little coalitions, and we never sit at a table together and say ... what does it look like to win on these six things?”

Survey data shows that nonprofits serve a combination of vulnerable populations across the state with overlapping needs (see Figure 2 above). The interconnectedness between food security, housing, education, racial justice, and other issues suggests that there is an opportunity to promote cross-sector collaboration. While Massachusetts nonprofits are already consistent participants in advocacy, there is an opportunity to continue supporting the sector's infrastructure so all interested nonprofits can safely advocate on issues affecting the communities they serve.

## **Recommendations for Strengthening Sector Advocacy Infrastructure**

- **Inform nonprofit leaders about the powerful tools of advocacy and lobbying and the legal and regulatory contexts for each.** *Nonprofits can do an UNLIMITED amount of advocacy work. Nonprofits can also lobby, with certain restrictions. Federal, state, and local nonprofit associations offer this type of guidance, knowledge, and capacity support to their members—funders can move resources to these critical infrastructure organizations and nonprofits can ensure they are members of their relevant associations.*
- **Educate state, local, and federal elected officials about the essential work of nonprofits, and how that work directly impacts their constituents.** *Nonprofits can do this individually, engaging with their representative about what their nonprofit does and what's important to the people the organization serves. Coalitions can do this as well, emphasizing the impact of federal funding cuts and cancelled federal grants, for example, on entire subsectors and segments of the workforce. Subsector associations for the arts, environment, community health, immigrants, and more provide another platform to help nonprofit leaders get plugged into advocacy.*
- **Inquire with existing coalitions or advocacy groups about how to best support their established agenda or policy goals.** *What do they need? What skills, resources, or relationships would be additive to their efforts? What is the process of becoming a paying member or funder? How does proximity, cultural competency, power analysis, and lived experience inform and guide their work?*
- **Resource democracy, civil rights, legal, movement safety, and elections work.** *Shanique Rodriguez put a fine point on this, saying, "Elections are happening every year ... but this year specifically, this is the year where lower voter turnout, even with our super-voters, is happening, even more so in a primary. But these are critical races that are impacting communities. These are mayoral races, school committee, these are the folks who will eventually run for state rep ... or even be congressional leaders one day. So, every election matters." For donors and funders unsure of where to give on these issues, look to grassroots funders or intermediaries that already have strong relationships with movement or democracy-oriented groups.*



## Increasing Flexible Resources, Fueling Collaboration

As a top priority for increased investment over the next four years, 86% of nonprofit survey respondents elevated fundraising. While it is not uncommon for nonprofits to name fundraising as the top need in any survey or poll, the current context highlights the imperative for bold action from funders, donors, and nonprofits. As Yentel pointed out, “This is not a moment, this is not a snapshot in time. This is a multiyear effort that we’ve already been in, and that is continuing now. It won’t be over soon.”

Most urgent is the need for funders and donors to move money and do so strategically. The unreliable relationship between the nonprofit sector and government raises questions and anxieties about how organizations will meet their funding requirements. Survey data showed that given the cancellation of federal government grants, 87% of respondents affirmed that individual donations will be important for their organizations. Skelton Roberts drove this point home: “Philanthropy is not going to be able to fill the gap when you’re talking about hundreds of millions, maybe even billions of dollars. ... But the good news is, particularly here in Massachusetts, philanthropy has stepped up. Some foundations are paying out early ... other foundations are pooling their funds and getting dollars out the door. National funders, some of them that support us here, for example, MacArthur, [raised its payout to 6% over the next two years].” Furthermore, Rodriguez emphasized the need for funders to take a hard look at which organizations are doing important work but may not have ready access to the funding sources that Boston has.

Panelists stressed that proactive communications are a core part of both retaining and raising new resources. Individual nonprofits can find power in telling their story—naming the one or two things they do really well, their unique role—and reminding their supporters of that. This may require nonprofits to shed work that is no longer aligned with their core mission, work that may have been added in recent years to respond to COVID or, unfortunately, due to inflexible funder priorities. This may mean referring constituents to fellow nonprofits meeting those needs or saying “no” when asked by a funder to add new services, taking the opportunity to affirm their nonprofit’s laser focus and be explicit about the flexible resources needed to truly accomplish lasting change and support thriving communities.

“If you go north of Worcester, say, you’re looking at Leominster, Fitchburg. ... There may be fewer nonprofits or community organizations but all of them are facing all of these issues at the same time. If there’s only one or two in these communities, they’re doing everything under the sun and could use some support.”

—Shanique Rodriguez

Nonprofits’ unique role responding to and addressing community issues should be celebrated. Organizations’ ability to communicate their work is critical to equipping existing supporters with the knowledge and confidence to help them attract additional support for the mission. As Yentel pointed out, “Part of this, like, move quickly and break things [from the federal government] is to distract us all from the work that we should be



doing. ... The day-to-day work that you're doing is important." While organizations should speak out on issues affecting their constituents and get involved in coalitions, nonprofits also can lean on federal and state associations to do their job, especially on the legal defense front, so that nonprofits can remain mission-focused. Increasing demand for nonprofit programs and services and organizations' limited resources to fund additional capacity means the sector and its allies may have to think creatively to keep the sector afloat.

With increased strain on philanthropic and now-weakened federal resources, panelists and audience members debated the role of mergers, shared services, fiscal sponsorship, and other structural collaborations to increase efficiency and preserve impact. Skelton Roberts framed this topic bluntly: "So, in this environment, how do we make sure that as many nonprofits as possible survive this moment and are able to continue to do their work? It's going to require doing some things that are different and that are uncomfortable and hard." Historically, approaches to mergers, for example, have been funder-driven and top-down. This moment calls for a different approach, one that identifies the layered roles that nonprofits, boards, and funders can play in cooperatively planning and implementing a merger or shared services agreement. It's more complex than sharing accounting software and staff; it requires an exploration of varying organizational cultures, alignment, and importantly, the perspectives of the employees and constituents impacted. Since the convening on May 5, a funder collaborative (Masscollab<sup>xlix</sup>) has launched to provide financial and technical assistance to nonprofits seeking to engage in sustained collaboration, providing a multi-year opportunity to fund mergers and strategic collaborations, and identify how deeper collaboration may take hold in this new era for the sector. As one audience member countered, "I think we actually need to change people's thinking about what we have to do to accomplish our mission, and ... not put out a message that we can't fund overhead in the middle of this [crisis]."

Skelton Roberts noted that the way funders structure their funding in the first place, with hundreds of niche strategies and grant programs, helps fuel the expansion of the nonprofit sector and causes a lack of progress on big issues facing communities. She said, "One of the challenges we have in this sector is that we tend to fund a lot of things, and it's 'let's let a thousand flowers bloom' ... But in this moment, we've got to say, what is it that we're trying to accomplish? And what does it look like if we're all sort of steering in the same direction?"

"How do we bring people together to strategize, do scenario planning, understand what is changing? And then more importantly, to rally the sector? And in this specific instance to rally the philanthropic sector to say, 'This is our moment.'"

—Mary Skelton Roberts

The need to fill the financial resource gap left by federal funding cuts remains top of mind for nonprofit leaders. Proactive communication as a tool to amplify and celebrate nonprofits' essential work in community, attract donors, and create funding and advocacy strategy is central to the sector's success. Survey respondents, panelists, and audience

members alike acknowledged that it is time to think differently about how to approach the challenges that lie ahead—adopting new organizational structures, creating operational bridges across nonprofits or even deeper strategic collaborations—to preserve community services.

## **Recommendations for Increasing Flexible Resources, Fueling Collaboration**

- **Move resources urgently, abundantly, and strategically.** There are clear actions funders and donors can take to buoy nonprofit partners and communities in the near term and for the long haul. The [\*Meet the Moment: A Call to Action for Philanthropy in 2025 \(and Beyond\)\*](#) resource is one example of a source for concrete action steps. Pick one, two, a few, or more to try to advance. For funders, you may pitch three actions to your foundation board and one will get approved right now. *Keep trying.* Individual donors, unburdened by bureaucracy, can likely move dollars even more quickly to make flexible donations to help nonprofits retain staff, respond to increasing community needs, and reimagine their work for this new era.
- **Communicate proactively with existing supporters.** Focus on donor retention. Nonprofits can strengthen connections with existing supporters by making clear the one to two things their organization does well and connect it to the current moment.
- **Support alternative operational structures and collaborations.** With government funding especially strained, nonprofits, boards, and funders must grapple with how to navigate mergers, shared services, and other models of organizing the work to adapt to the new landscape. *This is long term work and may not result in cost savings right away*, thus creating space to name and explore outcomes and benefits of collaboration that may not show up on a balance sheet. Funders can pool funds to cover the third-party vendor costs and technical expertise needed to make complex, strategic, and sustained collaborations among nonprofits happen.

## ENDNOTES

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<sup>i</sup> Respondents also serve MetroWest (13%), North Shore (11%), South Shore (10%), the Berkshires (10%), central Massachusetts (8%), Merrimack Valley (7%), Pioneer Valley (7%), and more.

<sup>ii</sup> Respondents stated that they work in human services (21%), arts and culture (11%), education (11%), environment (7%), health (6%), community development (6%), social justice and equity (6%), housing (5%), or something else (19%).

<sup>iii</sup> Surveys during the COVID-19 pandemic include: Massachusetts Nonprofit Network and Philanthropy Massachusetts' ["The Ongoing Impacts of COVID-19 Survey"](#), Mass Cultural Council's ["COVID-19 Recovery Survey"](#) and Cambridge Nonprofit Coalition's ["Cambridge Nonprofit Covid-19 Impact and Financial Relief Survey"](#). See also Urban Institute's ["Massachusetts Nonprofits' Government Grants and Contracts in 2023"](#)

<sup>iv</sup> ["Challenging Times: How U.S. Nonprofit Leaders Are Experiencing the Political Context"](#) Center for Effective Philanthropy, March 2025

<sup>v</sup> ["New Jersey Nonprofits: Trends and Impacts 2025,"](#) New Jersey Center for Nonprofits (2025); Deitrick, Tinkler, Cardenas, Hurt, Manriques, and Nelson (2025). [Federal Impacts on Nonprofits: San Diego County Survey of Nonprofit Leaders](#). San Diego, CA: The Nonprofit Institute, University of San Diego; The Minnesota Council of Nonprofits is [collecting stories](#) from nonprofits in the state to gauge the impact of federal decisions on the local sector.

<sup>vi</sup> See [2022 Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages](#) for the latest nonprofit employment data.

<sup>vii</sup> Executive Orders 14151 ["Ending Radical And Wasteful Government DEI Programs And Preferencing,"](#) January 20, 2025, and Executive Order 14173 ["Ending Illegal Discrimination and Restoring Merit-Based Opportunity"](#) January 21, 2025; In response to the Trump administration's executive orders on DEI policies: [National Council of Nonprofits v. Office of Management and Budget](#) and [New York et al v. Donald J. Trump et al](#); on February 13, a coalition of 16 Attorneys General issued a [multi-state guidance](#) regarding diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility employment initiatives.

<sup>viii</sup> Executive Order 13043 ["Continuing the Reduction of the Federal Bureaucracy,"](#) March 14, 2025 and Executive Order 14242 ["Improving Education Outcomes by Empowering Parents, States, and Communities,"](#) March 20, 2025; In reaction to these executive orders states and organizations have taken legal action to address disruptions to services in education (see [Somerville Public Schools v. Trump](#)) and public health funding (see [Massachusetts Fair Housing Center v. Department of Housing and Urban Development](#); [Commonwealth of Massachusetts v. Kennedy](#) and [Commonwealth of Massachusetts v. National Institutes of Health](#)); Governor Healey responded to cuts to [education](#), [public health services](#), [disaster relief](#).

<sup>ix</sup> [O. Doe; Brazilian Worker Center, Inc; La Colaborativa v. Donald J. Trump et al](#); [City of Chelsea v. Trump](#); [Ozturk v. Hyde](#)

<sup>x</sup> Comparatively, Deitrick, et al. ["Federal Impacts on Nonprofits: San Diego County Survey of Nonprofit Leaders"](#) shows that 72% of San Diego area nonprofit leaders anticipate that the federal actions will impact their work. Nationally, the Center for Effective Philanthropy 2025 survey ["Challenging times: How U.S. Nonprofit Leaders are Experiencing the Political Context,"](#) reveals that 70% of nonprofit leaders believe that the political climate will have a negative impact on their organization's ability to carry out its work.

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<sup>xi</sup> Education (98%), arts and culture (97%), social justice and equity (96%), environment (96%), community development and housing (92%), human services (85%) and health (84%).

<sup>xii</sup> Organizations working in health and human services make up 45% of the respondents with budgets of \$10 million or more.

<sup>xiii</sup> [H.R.1 - One Big Beautiful Bill Act](#)

<sup>xiv</sup> Social justice and equity (100%), community development and housing (98%), environment (96%), and education (97%), health (86%), human services (84%), arts and culture (84%).

<sup>xv</sup> Dunning. *Nonprofit Neighborhoods* (2023) outlines the complex history of Boston nonprofits' growing relationship with the federal government to address community issues since the 1960s by increasingly outsourcing social services to nonprofit organizations and civic leaders who were proximate to socioeconomic and racial issues affecting communities

<sup>xvi</sup> Delaney. "[Pandemic Relief Is Ending, and What It Means to Nonprofits and Foundations](#)," *National Council of Nonprofits*, April 13, 2023; Hilliard. "[As federal pandemic aid dries up, Mass. Nonprofits scramble for new revenue](#)," *Boston Globe*, July 14, 2024

<sup>xvii</sup> Martin, et al. "[Massachusetts Nonprofits' Government Grants and Contracts in 2023](#)," *Urban Institute* (2025), shows that in 2023, 73% of Massachusetts nonprofits received any some kind of government grant or contract and that government funding made up 26% of the sector's revenue. Urban Institute, "[What Is the Financial Risk of Nonprofits Losing Government Grants?](#)" (2025) reveals that the U.S. nonprofit sector contributed around \$1.4 trillion dollars to the nation's GDP in 2021 through services provided, 5.2% of the nation's economy, capitalizing on \$267 billion in local, state, and federal government grants and contracts.

<sup>xviii</sup> Massachusetts' Healey-Driscoll Administration began tracking the [impact of federal funding cuts on the state](#) on May 14; National Endowment of the Arts [Grant Termination Tracker](#) began on May 2; The [Minnesota Council of Nonprofits](#) is collecting stories from nonprofits in the state to gauge the impact of federal decisions on the local sector.

<sup>xix</sup> Tomasko. "[Government Funding Cuts Put Nonprofits at Risk Across the Nation](#)," *Urban Institute*, February 21, 2025; Clerkin, Koob, and Wolcheck, "[How reliant are nonprofits on government grants?](#)" *Candid*, February 6, 2025; Koob and Tomasko. "[Candid and Urban Institute: Decoding our data on government funding to nonprofits](#)," *Candid*, March 18, 2025

<sup>xx</sup> Martin, et al. "[Massachusetts Nonprofits' Government Grants and Contracts in 2023](#)" *Urban Institute* (2025), 3-5

<sup>xxi</sup> Ibid

<sup>xxii</sup> Environment (71%), health (64%), and human services (60%) report receiving federal grants than those working in education (55%), social justice and equity (50%).

<sup>xxiii</sup> "[Health of the U.S. Nonprofit Sector](#)," *Independent Sector*, December 2024; Childress. "[Giving Continues Its Decline, Down 2.1% in 2023. Can Fundraisers Turn the Tide in 2024?](#)" *The Chronicle of Philanthropy*, June 25, 2024

<sup>xxiv</sup> Muñoz-Cadilla and Peña Lyons. "[Trump is making the challenges facing nonprofits even tougher](#)" *CommonWealth Beacon*, April 8, 2025

<sup>xxv</sup> Jennifer Smith, "," *CommonWealth Beacon*, March 27, 2025; , Boston joined the suit over the Trump administration's efforts to cut federal housing and homelessness funding. HUD administrators argued that were carrying out President Trump's policies as a result of guidance under [Executive Order 14158 Establishing and Implementing the President's "Department of Government Efficiency"](#), January 20, 2025

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xxvi [“U.S. Department of Justice Grants Targeted for Termination,” Reuters](#), April 24, 2025

xxvii Veltman. [“Sweeping cuts hit NEA after Trump administration calls to eliminate the agency,” NPR](#), May 3, 2025; [“An Update on NEH Funding Priorities and the Agency’s Recent Implementation of Trump Administration Executive Orders,” National Endowment for the Humanities](#), Press Release, April 24, 2025; Gavin. [“Judge in R.I. halts Trump order targeting agencies supporting libraries, museums, and minority-owned businesses,” Boston Globe](#), May 14, 2025, on May 13 Chief Judge John J. McConnell, Jr., of the U.S. District Court for the District of Rhode Island, issued an injunction on the President Trump’s [Executive Order 14238](#), “Continuing the Reduction of the Federal Bureaucracy,” to eliminate the National Endowment for the Arts, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and the Museum and Library Services.

xxviii [Fiscal Year 2026 Discretionary Budget Request](#)

xxix [“America’s Service Commissions Statement on the Termination of AmeriCorps Grants,” America’s Service Commissions](#), April 26, 2025; This decision is part of the fulfilment of President Trump’s [Executive Order 14222](#) Implementing the President’s “Department of Government Efficiency” Cost Efficiency Initiative, February 26, 2025

xxx [“AG Campbell Prevents \\$184 Million In Cuts To AmeriCorps Service Programs,” Office of the Attorney General](#), Press Release, August 29, 2025

xxxi Yarborough, [“826 Boston’s decision to withdraw our application for federal funding,” 826 Boston](#), April 2, 2025

xxxii [“2023 Nonprofit Workforce Survey Results: Communities Suffer as Nonprofit Workforce Shortage Crisis Continues,” National Council of Nonprofits](#) (2023); Im, et al. [“State of Nonprofits 2024: What Funders Need to Know,” Center for Effective Philanthropy](#) (2024)

xxxiii The remaining 22% either did not know or refused to answer. Results show limited variation when looking at organization budge size, focus area, population served, and geography served.

xxxiv Straus, [“What We Know – and Don’t Know – About the Nonprofit Layoff Crisis,” Chronicle of Philanthropy](#), July 10, 2025

xxxv Jacobson, [“Cuts to Climate, Energy Funding in House Bill Would Mean Higher Costs, Fewer Jobs, Poorer Health,” Center on Budget and Policy Priorities](#), June 10, 2025

xxxvi Sorapuru. [“Boston regional office among five shuttered by health agency cuts,” Boston Globe](#), April 1, 2025; Popkin, et al. [“Sweeping HHS Cuts Will Put Disabled and Older Americans’ Right to Live in Their Communities at Risk,” Urban Institute](#), April 7, 2025

xxxvii Ibid; Haimowitz. [“Statement from Massachusetts Head Start Association Executive Director Michelle Haimowitz on Head Start Regional Office Terminations,” Massachusetts Head Start Association](#), April 1, 2025; Massachusetts was slated to receive \$144 million through the [Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program](#) (LIHEAP) through FY 25.

xxxviii [“Trump Administration Continues to Take Away Food from Massachusetts Families and Students,” Massachusetts Executive Office of Education](#), Press Release, March 28, 2025

xxxix [“Healey-Driscoll Administration Highlights First Year Successes of State-funded Universal Free School Meals,” Massachusetts State Press Release](#), July 1, 2024; Bylander, [“Massachusetts Secretary of Education: Healthy School Meals for All Has Made Positive Change,” Food Research and Action Center](#), July 11, 2024; For the health outcomes of nutrition support, see Hager, et al. [“Medicaid Nutrition Supports Associated With Reductions In Hospitalizations And ED Visits In Massachusetts, 2020–23,” Health Affairs](#), 44, 4 (2025): 413–21; MA legislation instituted universal school meals in 2023, see bill H.714 “An Act Relative to Universal School Meals”



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<sup>xi</sup> Canning and Stacy. [\*The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program \(SNAP\) and the Economy: New Estimates of the SNAP Multiplier\*](#), ERR-265, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service, July 2019; Bailey, et al. “[Is the Social Safety Net a Long-Term Investment? Large-Scale Evidence From the Food Stamps Program](#),” *The Review of Economic Studies*, 91, 3 (2024): 1291–1330

<sup>xli</sup> These results align with the Center for Effective Philanthropy’s national survey “[Challenging Times: How U.S. Nonprofit Leaders Are Experiencing the Political Context](#),” which shows that around 85% of nonprofit leaders cite ways in which the administration is already affecting their work and 94% believe that it will negatively affect their work in the future.

<sup>xlii</sup> For the legal case between Harvard University and the Trump administration, see [President and Fellows of Harvard College v. US Department of Health and Human Services](#)

<sup>xliii</sup> “[Essential of H.R. 1](#),” *Social Current* (2025)

<sup>xliv</sup> Other priorities include staffing capacity (47%), direct services (42%), DEIB initiatives (37%), and legal counsel (36%).

<sup>xlv</sup> Faulk, Kim, and MacIndoe. [The Retreat of Influence: Exploring the Decline of Nonprofit Advocacy and Public Engagement](#). *Independent Sector*, (2023)

<sup>xlvi</sup> [The Shifting Federal Landscape: Massachusetts Nonprofits Raise the Alarm - TBF](#)

<sup>xlvii</sup> See for example the Massachusetts Housing Coalition, Wage Equity Now Coalition, Common Start Coalition, The Early Childhood Agenda, Massachusetts Alliance for Early College, Student Pathways to Success Coalition, Massachusetts Coalition for Adult Education, MASS Creative, Massachusetts Cultural Council

<sup>xlviii</sup> For the legal case between Harvard University and the Trump administration, see [President and Fellows of Harvard College v. US Department of Health and Human Services](#); Barber and Thompson. “[Tax Provision Would Give Trump Administration Unilateral Power to Strip Nonprofit Status](#),” *Nonprofit Quarterly*, May 13, 2025

<sup>xlx</sup> Donnelly. “[Massachusetts Nonprofit Collaboration Fund – Masscollab – to launch fall 2025 with goal to strengthen sector through collaboration](#),” *MassNonprofit News*, May 27, 2025