

VOTER GUIDE: DISTRICT ATTORNEY

District attorneys (DAs) are among the most powerful people in the criminal legal system. They choose whether or not to charge someone with a crime, which crimes to prosecute, and who gets a second chance or who will be incarcerated. But four-in-ten Massachusetts voters don't know that DAs are elected and answer only to the voters. That's why the ACLU of Massachusetts and partner organizations have set out to show *What a Difference a DA Makes*.

Plymouth County voters have the opportunity to vote for their next DA in the Primary Election on September 4 and in the General Election on November 6.

Incumbent DA Tim Cruz declined to answer our questionnaire. You can find John Bradley's full responses at DAdifference.org/Plymouth-County.

RACIAL JUSTICE

From arrests, to charging, to bail and sentencing, racial disparities plague the criminal legal system. The DA's office has a role to play in fixing that. We asked the candidates if they would commit to collecting, analyzing, and reporting data on the race of the people they prosecute.

Tim Cruz



N/A

John Bradley



YES

SENTENCING REFORM

Mandatory minimum sentences are an outdated relic of the failed war on drugs. They take power away from judges, lead to over-incarceration and huge racial disparities, and are often used to sentence people living with addiction to jail instead of allowing judges to refer them to treatment or other services. We asked the candidates if they supported the repeal of mandatory minimum sentences for all drug offenses.

Tim Cruz



N/A

John Bradley



NO

BAIL REFORM

The purpose of bail is to ensure people charged with offenses – who are presumed innocent until proven guilty – return to court on their next court date. In addition to the racial disparities in who is held on bail, many people are held on low amounts of bail simply because they are too poor to pay. We asked the candidates if they were in favor of repealing cash bail.

Tim Cruz



John Bradley



TRANSPARENCY

DA offices receive money from a variety of sources. One of those sources is a process called civil asset forfeiture – or money taken from people charged with a criminal offense. Civil asset forfeiture allows DAs to take millions of dollars from individuals accused of crimes, without having to prove their guilt. We asked the candidates if they'd be willing to regularly disclose how much they collect through civil asset forfeiture.

Tim Cruz



John Bradley



OVER-INCARCERATION

Since the 1980s, the population of incarcerated people in Massachusetts has tripled. Although incarceration rates have been decreasing in recent years, the Commonwealth still has too many people incarcerated and a very high recidivism rate. We asked the candidates if they had a plan to reduce over-incarceration.

Tim Cruz



John Bradley



Learn about the role of DAs and how to get involved: DAdifference.org

Read Bradley's full responses: DAdifference.org/Plymouth-County

