



A Vision for Boston: Questions for the 2009 District City Council Candidates

PILOTS

What is the basis by which private nonprofit institutions should make payments-in-lieu-of-taxes (PILOT) to Boston? What do you believe is the appropriate level of payments in lieu of taxes by non-profits? What is your strategy for achieving that level without making Boston unfriendly to non-profits?



District 7

Chuck Turner

- A) Launch a publicity campaign focusing on the unfairness of state and federal sharing of the tax revenues, given the fact that Boston cannot tax its residents or those working in Boston. On the state level focus on tax cuts for businesses in the 90s that led to local aid cuts of 2003-4. On federal level focus on how war spending is taking resources. The only long term solution for our financial problems is to have a fairer distribution of resources by the feds and state. Fair property tax payments by the state and the feds are the tip of the iceberg.
- B) Negotiate an agreement for hospitals and educational organizations to pay 25% of the property tax that they would pay if profit making.
- C) Negotiate an agreement with hospitals and educational that each year a minimum of 25% of their entry level jobs go to Boston workers (with 50% of the jobs going to people of color and 50% to women) and that each of the organizations develop a career path for Boston workers.
- D) Negotiate an agreement with educational organizations that a specific number of scholarships be given each year to Boston students.

District 8

Oscar Brookins

This is a sticky issue because ultimately nonprofits will resort to constitutional protections if pushed too far on this matter. Their willingness to pay is in their hands so the city cannot spend too many of its resources pursuing this as source of revenue. Clearly the revenues derived here will not be reliable enough to develop any significant permanent governmental programs based on this source. We can and should make sure nonprofits are indeed operating as such and make sure they deliver on the services they promise to our citizens.

Michael Ross

The City of Boston is home to world-renowned non-profit institutions, many of which are in my district. I respect that these hospitals and universities bring jobs and innovation to our city. But I also know that some of these non-profits are faring better than many for-profit companies in our city, and they need to pay their fair share to keep Boston safe and clean. I support the task force created by Mayor Tom Menino, which At-Large Councilor Stephen Murphy sit on, to bring further reform to the PILOT system.

District 9

Mark Ciommo

Boston is fortunate to be home to world class hospitals and universities; however, with almost 50% of the land area covered by tax exempt institutions, residents and businesses shoulder most of the property tax burden. The pilot system must be reformed to increase revenue for the city and to ensure that local non-profits, especially our local colleges and universities, pay for a fair share of the city services they benefit from. Expanding the PILOT program will create a more consistent basis for payments and strike a balance between residents, local businesses and tax exempt organizations. I support the Mayor's appointed task force and await their findings to evaluate a more fair and equitable system to assess PILOT payments.