



# SHAPING *our* FUTURE

ANNUAL REPORT 2018



PIONEER INSTITUTE  
PUBLIC POLICY RESEARCH



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Pioneer Institute, founded in 1988, is an independent, non-partisan, privately funded research organization that seeks to improve the quality of life in Massachusetts through civic discourse and intellectually rigorous, data-driven public policy solutions based on free market principles, individual liberty and responsibility, and the ideal of effective, limited and accountable government.

Pioneer promotes high-quality public schools, affordable healthcare, effective government, economic opportunity and social mobility by publishing research and engaging the public through media campaigns, educational forums, and information sessions with influential thought leaders.

*Pioneer Institute, Inc. is a tax-exempt 501(c)(3) organization. To ensure its independence, Pioneer does not accept government grants.*



Supports excellent school options for all children, world-class liberal arts-based academic standards, and accountability for results in public education.



Advances high-quality and cost-effective care through price transparency, reforms to public programs, and innovation in healthcare delivery and treatments.



Promotes government that delivers high-quality public services, focuses on core functions, and is transparent to Massachusetts residents.



Pursues reforms in Pioneer's core policy areas that can take effect only through public interest law initiatives.



Advocates policies to expand opportunity across the Commonwealth, and reforms to transportation, housing, taxation, and regulation that will increase Greater Boston's competitiveness.

## CHOOSING OUR FUTURE

**W**ith the start of 2019, we enter the quiet aftermath of a stormy election season. The policy priorities we espouse now are as important as the selection of political leaders.

Greater Boston's extraordinary explosion of jobs and growth has been a function of deliberate choices rather than a question of luck. What now? Will we build on these successes with policies that expand the circle of prosperity across the state, or will we focus on our festering divisions? The choice is ours.

Some claim that what distinguishes humanity is our ability to manipulate tools. They are wrong. We create tools because we desire to do something we cannot achieve without them. What distinguishes us is our ability to choose; to desire. In the phrase "the pursuit of happiness," the Founders expressed their grasp of desire both as a core element of humanity and its close tie to liberty.

As citizens, we demonstrate our full humanity, and hope, when we fix our intent, focus and sacrifice on building a better future—even in periods of great trial. The famed Anglo-American poet W.H. Auden noted this in 1940, a time of war, when he hailed "Eros, builder of cities."

Pioneer has always understood the role of desire and ambition in building a better Commonwealth. The history of Massachusetts is, for the most part, fair and caring. Through private associations, our people seek ways to do good and also to do well. State and local governments should facilitate and learn from these private actions. Over a quarter century, our elected leaders have generally supported this vision through policies that have introduced more and better school options, broadened access to affordable healthcare, improved public services and infrastructure, and attracted and retained innovators and capital.

We must choose to advance these policies even further. In Pioneer's 2018 Annual Report, we share our work to drive this agenda in education, in the Commonwealth and across the country, as well as to keep Massachusetts moving ahead in the life sciences and on healthcare price transparency. We share progress at the MBTA, cognizant of the fact that much work remains. Finally, you will find a strong record of success in expanding economic opportunity and turning back counterproductive efforts to drive capital away.

In this report back to you, our community of supporters and advisors, we change our format to focus on impact. We do this understanding that we cannot control the future any more than one controls one's luck. Our work is to shape probabilities for success, with an emphasis on liberty and giving more and more individuals and families opportunity to pursue happiness.

None of this work and the impact it is having would be possible without you. Pioneer is, as Alexis de Tocqueville put it, a voluntary association of free individuals. Your choosing us, placing your trust in and committing resources to Pioneer, is sincerely gratifying.



**JIM STERGIOS**  
Executive Director



**STEPHEN D. FANTONE**  
Chairman

### By the Numbers

#### 31 PUBLICATIONS

Research Papers, Policy Briefs, Testimony, & Event Transcripts

**123,545**  
**TOTAL DOWNLOADS**  
of Pioneer research in 2018

#### 2,410 MEDIA HITS

Articles, Interviews, & Editorials in Newspapers, Trade Journals, TV & Radio in Massachusetts & Across the Nation

**783M**  
**TOTAL MEDIA REACH**

#### 53 EVENTS

Featuring Pioneer

**108**  
**ATTENDEES**  
Average per Pioneer Event



## BUILDING THE FOUNDATION FOR SUCCESS

**E**ducational advancement has the power to transform lives, creating a ripple effect on an individual's path to prosperity. That's why Pioneer is committed to policy solutions that fulfill the promise of equal opportunity in K-12 classrooms, whether that means preserving Massachusetts' nation-leading curriculum standards, holding school leaders accountable for results, or expanding the menu of options to lower income families so their children can gain a foothold on the ladder of success. Pioneer's major initiatives in 2018 resulted in greater access to charter schools and other non-traditional models, broader public awareness of legal barriers to school choice, legislation requiring more emphasis on civics instruction, and increased investment in career training programs.

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### Delivering a Variety of School Options

Pioneer Institute recognizes that no single education environment can serve the needs of all children. Parents deserve the chance to choose the academic program most responsive to their child's individual abilities and challenges. For the hundreds of thousands of families who live in the state's economically depressed communities, charter public schools have been a beacon of hope, helping low-income and minority children, and increasing numbers of children with special needs and language barriers, meet or exceed the academic performance of their more affluent suburban peers.

In New Bedford, Massachusetts, Pioneer's targeted multimedia campaign helped open up nearly 500 additional charter school spots for families despite the fierce opposition of a mayor backed by special interests who nearly thwarted the expansion plans of a successful local charter school, Alma del Mar. In over a dozen op-eds placed in regional and statewide news outlets, three videos that earned over 50,000 views in

the New Bedford area, and through a feature column Pioneer helped secure in *The Wall Street Journal*, Pioneer showed the stark contrast between Alma's excellent student performance and the school district's ranking among the fourth-lowest performing in the state. As a result of the added scrutiny, public outcry, and political pressure, policymakers engineered a compromise that allowed Alma to move forward with its expansion plans.

Pioneer also continued its popular video series showcasing charter public schools across Massachusetts. Adding to its library of on-site interviews with school leaders and faculty in Lowell, Lawrence, Springfield, East Boston, Roxbury, and Chelsea, which garnered nearly 500,000 views in 2016, Pioneer produced new segments in Fall River, New Bedford, Plymouth, Marlborough, and Worcester, that have already earned over 300,000 views among parents in those locations. Pioneer's video and social media promotion on charter schools has resulted in a dramatic increase in charter applications, 62% in Boston and 30% in Lawrence.

Another proven method of improving student outcomes for low-income minority students, primarily in Boston and Springfield, is the METCO program. In several reports, op-eds, videos, and radio and TV appearances since 2011, Pioneer has publicized data demonstrating the program's high demand and success at boosting enrollees' performance relative to their sending district peers. Following Pioneer's campaign for expansion, legislators increased the program's FY19 budget by \$2.5 million.

Over the years, Pioneer has held many public forums and published research highlighting the improved student outcomes and high demand for the quality education provided at Catholic and Jewish day schools, options more families would consider if not for legal barriers that present financial obstacles. Pioneer released a 30-minute documentary film last year profiling

four families struggling to send their children to parochial schools in Massachusetts, Michigan and Georgia, where there are punitive anti-aid amendments that prevent parents from receiving tuition scholarships. The film, *Big Sacrifices, Big Dreams*, was viewed 1.1 million times and received 500,000 trailer views.

A Pioneer study revealed that these anti-aid amendments in Massachusetts have also been used as the state Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's justification for depriving thousands of private and religious school students hundreds of millions of dollars' worth of special education services that they are owed under federal law. The report received coverage in *Politico*, and leaders from Catholic and Jewish organizations are working with the U.S. Department of Education on a resolution.

While Catholic schools are rapidly closing their doors all across the country, declining by over 60% since 1965, one promising program, the Chicago-based Cristo Rey Network, is growing. Pioneer held an event, featuring Pope John Paul II biographer George Weigel, to release its new report highlighting this innovative model that provides largely low-income students with a college preparatory education combined with a work-study component to teach them job skills and defray tuition costs. Thirty-one schools have opened in 21 states and D.C., with eight more expected in 2020. After Weigel's appearance at the Pioneer forum, he publicized the study on the Cristo Rey Network in his weekly column,

"The Catholic Difference," syndicated to 85 newspapers and magazines in seven countries.

A Pioneer report helped raise awareness about a little-known option for Massachusetts parents seeking alternatives to their local public school — the state's inter-district choice program, which allows students to attend better schools in neighboring towns, spurring healthy competition among districts. Demand has grown steadily, from less than 1,000 students in 1992 to over 16,000 in 2017, and at its current pace, may exceed the program's enrollment cap within the next five years. Report author Roger Hatch was interviewed on *WGBH News Radio*, and the report received extensive coverage in *The Cape Cod Times* and *The Springfield Republican*. There is a new state legislative push to raise the tuition cap.

### Preserving High Standards

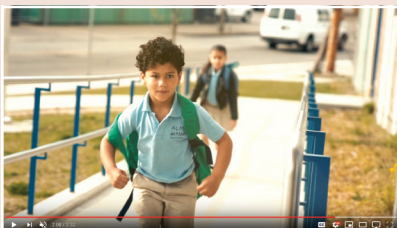
Since 2010, Pioneer has published more than 20 reports and the book, *Drilling through the Core: Why Common Core is Bad for American Education*, and made presentations in 33 states, leading the national movement for high-quality, state-based K-12 education standards. In 2018, Common Core-aligned national tests continue in less than a quarter of their original member states. After extensive Pioneer research and outreach to policymakers and editorial boards at the most influential news outlets across the Commonwealth, Bay State leaders rejected participation in the Common Core-aligned testing consortium in favor of an improved version of the

**“Special interests have swarmed those disrupting the status quo — the vocational technical schools, charters, the state’s accountability agency, and others who brought change. The new commissioner has to bring urgency and an ability to rein in the department’s reform-blocking apparatchiks.”**

— JIM STERGIOS,  
COMMONWEALTH  
MAGAZINE

Because of Pioneer's

## RESEARCH & MEDIA EFFORTS:



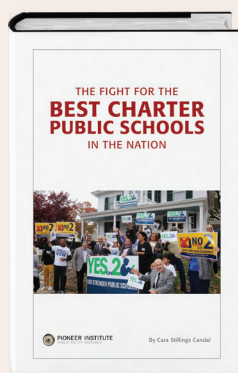
**A 5-PART  
VIDEO SERIES  
PROMOTING  
CHARTER  
SCHOOLS EARNED  
300,000 VIEWS**

- ▶ A new book sharing the lessons from Massachusetts' successful charter school movement was widely distributed to state policy leaders and media across the U.S.
- ▶ Common Core-aligned national tests continue in less than a quarter of their original member states
- ▶ Vocational-technical schools have received over \$50 million
- ▶ The METCO program's budget increased by \$2.5 million
- ▶ Massachusetts has a new law strengthening civics education
- ▶ Following strong support from Pioneer and other allies, the Commonwealth selected an effective new Commissioner of Education
- ▶ A New Bedford charter school can serve 450 additional students
- ▶ The *Big Sacrifices, Big Dreams* school choice film and trailers were viewed 1.6 million times
- ▶ A study on the Cristo Rey Network was publicized in a nationally syndicated column

## THE FIGHT FOR THE BEST CHARTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN THE NATION

Pioneer Senior Fellow Cara Stillings Candal has made numerous public appearances to promote Pioneer's new book, *The Fight for the Best Charter Public Schools in the Nation*, which traces the path of one of the most successful education reform experiments in modern America. Pioneer held a successful book release event to revive the charter school conversation at Harvard's Kennedy School, with Dr. Candal, former Massachusetts Governor William Weld, state education commissioner Jeffrey Riley, former Senate President Tom Birmingham, and a distinguished panel of education experts representing diverse viewpoints.

To share the lessons from Massachusetts' top-performing charter schools, Dr. Candal has made appearances at policy events in Maine, Florida and Texas, where legislative action on charters is pending, and in print and broadcast outlets in California, Connecticut, Illinois, and D.C., including *Boston Herald Radio*, *Bloomberg Bay State*, *The Lars Larson Show* (nationally syndicated radio talk show host), *KLBJ Texas*, *WTIC Radio* with Todd Feinburg, *WGBY's* "Connecting Point," *ChoiceMedia TV*; *EducationNext*, *CommonWealth* magazine's Codcast, AEI's "The Report Card" with David Osborne, Pacific Research Institute's "Next Round" with Lance Izumi, *Education Next*, *The 74*, and many regional news outlets across Massachusetts.



state assessment known as MCAS. However, a Pioneer study revealed a growing performance gap between Massachusetts students in more advantaged schools, and those in the rest. National Assessment of Educational Progress test results for 4<sup>th</sup>-grade reading and 8<sup>th</sup>-grade math show that overall improvement has stalled in the last decade, while the percentage of students scoring in the top category has steadily increased.

In a report covered in *Forbes*, *The Daily Caller*, the *Washington Examiner*, *Townhall*, *Breitbart News*, and *The Federalist*, Pioneer partnered with the Cato Institute to bring attention to the negative impact of Common Core on school choice programs, which are increasingly hamstrung by regulations that require private schools to adopt a single curriculum standards-based test as a condition for receiving public funding. Co-authors Neal McCluskey of the Cato Institute, and Ted Rebarber of AccountabilityWorks presented findings, and Jamie Gass served as a panelist, at a Heritage Foundation forum in Washington, D.C. A Pioneer video featuring the co-authors generated over 15,000 views.

A well-informed citizenry is indispensable to a vibrant democracy. Over the past decade, Pioneer has been actively promoting K-12 history and civics instruction through public forums with noted scholars and bestselling authors, public polling, research, and the placement of dozens of opinion pieces highlighting historical figures, key moments, and government institutions that students should know about. Last year, Pioneer published a close analysis of Massachusetts' proposed new History and Social Science Curriculum Framework. Authors David Randall, National Association of Scholars; Will Fitzhugh, *The Concord Review*; and Jane Robbins, the American Principles Project called on state leaders to restore the 2003 version, and illustrated that the new frameworks allotted too much time to protest movements at the expense of comprehensive coverage of European and American history. They offered recommendations that would bolster civics requirements.

Pioneer Distinguished Senior Fellow Tom Birmingham wrote op-eds in *American Heritage* and *CommonWealth* magazines warning about policymakers' efforts to weaken Massachusetts' nation-leading History education standards. Pioneer commissioned a public opinion survey by respected pollster David Paleologos showing that strong majorities of parents, history and social studies teachers, and legislators in Massachusetts support restoring passage of a U.S. History MCAS test as a high school graduation requirement. Jamie Gass appeared on *WBUR's* RadioBoston to disseminate the poll results to a wider audience. In 2018, a statewide coalition drew on recommendations from Pioneer to pass new legislation on civics education that included protections for students with diverse points of view.

Op-eds by Jamie Gass covered the life of Civil Rights activist Fannie Lou Hamer, the accomplishments of Founding Father Thomas Jefferson, and Poland's working-class revolt against Communism, and appeared in national outlets

including *The Federalist*, *The Daily Caller*, and regional newspapers across the state. Pioneer also released a video celebrating *The Concord Review*, now in its third decade, a journal that publishes exemplary history research by secondary students from around the globe.

### Preparing for College & Careers

Massachusetts' distinctive approach to improving its vocational-technical schools, stemming from its landmark 1993 education reform law, has focused on academic quality and accountability while providing first-rate training in the trades. As several Pioneer reports, video promotion campaigns, and dozens of op-eds dating back over a decade have demonstrated, these schools have

become a national model, reporting increased demand, low dropout rates, and partnerships with businesses to help meet the skills shortage and strengthen the state's economy.

After Pioneer's efforts to underscore the efficacy of VTE, the Massachusetts Governor has committed over \$50 million through the Skills Capital Grant program to increase these schools' job-training offerings — the first such state investment in 35 years — and has expanded VTE enrollment by 3,000 spots.

**“The key focus of previous academic standards was on America's founding documents, state history, labor union history, the intent of which was to have the kids acquire a basic understanding of the major eras of American history. A lot of the things that they've added are really more current events rather than looking back 100 or 200 years to see how we got to where we are today.”**

— JAMIE GASS, *THE LOWELL SUN*

## BETTER GOVERNMENT COMPETITION AWARDS GALA

**“Making Higher Education and Career Training Options Affordable and Effective”**

**P**ioneer Institute's 27<sup>th</sup> annual Better Government Competition highlighted programs that help address America's student debt crisis and growing skills mismatch. John Sexton, President Emeritus of New York University, delivered the keynote address, following remarks by Massachusetts Governor Charlie Baker.

The winning entry was Purdue University's "Back a Boiler" program, in which tuition repayment is made as a percentage of a graduate's income in lieu of student loans. Nearly 800 students have benefited from the program, receiving a total of over \$9 million. 2018 Better Government Competition finalists included the Harold Alfond College Challenge, which invests \$500 toward future postsecondary education costs for every child born in Maine; the American Institute for Innovative Apprenticeship, which would increase apprenticeship opportunities with Massachusetts organizations; Kentucky's Federation for Advanced Manufacturing Education, training students for careers as technicians, engineers, and business leaders; and the Wisconsin Bureau of Apprenticeship Standards, connecting high school students with job opportunities.

The 2018 winners were selected by an independent panel of judges with backgrounds in higher education, law, public policy, and career training: Peter Alcock, Massachusetts Board of Higher Education; Brian Broderick, Hemenway & Barnes; Charles Chieppo, Pioneer Institute; Stefano Falconi, Berkeley Research Group; and Bob LePage, Massachusetts Executive Office of Education.

At the awards gala, Dr. Sexton called for a renewed commitment to higher education, to provide the hope and opportunity that previous generations of young Americans have enjoyed. Governor Baker described his administration's multi-million-dollar investment in skills training to help Massachusetts students find positions in high-demand industries in a rapidly changing economy.



**“Let's accept the fact that being born in the right place and right time comes with real moral obligations and the first is treating others and their children with the same dignity and hope that a college education and a job opportunity afford, and that every human being deserves.”**

— DR. JOHN SEXTON,  
PRESIDENT EMERITUS,  
NEW YORK UNIVERSITY





## CREATING SPACE FOR INNOVATION, VALUE & FAIRNESS

**A**merica is witnessing a revolution in information technological and biopharmaceutical advancements, with laboratories full of entrepreneurs and researchers developing path-breaking cures and therapies for once-fatal diseases. We as a society are also changing the way we interact with medical professionals, seeking and using more flexible service models to meet the needs of our increasingly mobile lifestyle. A next-generation healthcare marketplace is one in which everyone can access new treatments, and individuals behave as active consumers, engaging more fully in decision-making around their health and wellness.

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In recent years, Pioneer has promoted this transformation by advancing exciting trends in the delivery of healthcare services encouraging providers to practice telemedicine, removing barriers to walk-in clinics in Boston, and reforming scope of practice laws to increase access to oral care. In 2018, Pioneer continued offering solutions aimed at giving patients the tools and incentives to opt for less expensive, higher-value services and treatments, and bringing accountability, fairness, and sustainability to public programs like Medicaid.

### Shopping for Value

Pioneer advocates for consumers to shop for lower-cost, high-value medical services the same way they do for homes, cars, furniture and many services. To empower them, the Commonwealth can release more healthcare price information, and insurers can make the information more accessible. In 2018, following years of Pioneer research and advocacy for greater transparency, the state's Center for Health Information and Analysis (CHIA) released wider tranches of insurance claims data from 2015, enhancing public knowledge of cost variations in the healthcare system. Pioneer's hope is that making all-payer claims data public could put downward pressure on high-cost providers, and reduce overall healthcare costs. Pioneer research and advocacy applauded progress made on this front, while also calling for stepped-up efforts to reach more consumers.

An April Pioneer study found significant improvements in the online cost estimator tools created by Massachusetts' largest health insurers, including enhancements in both user-friendliness and in the scope of the information provided. However, only ten percent of the carriers' market has been using these tools. Pioneer also commended the carriers for using incentive programs to encourage employees to select lower-cost, high-quality providers. The report received

*Because of Pioneer's*

### RESEARCH & MEDIA EFFORTS:

- ▶ The Life Sciences industry is holding in-depth conversations about broadening access to new therapies and protecting incentives to innovate
- ▶ The state legislature rejected a bill that would implement *de facto* price controls on new drug therapies
- ▶ Massachusetts now saves over \$250 million annually after fixing its Medicaid eligibility and fraud review process
- ▶ The state's Center for Health Information and Analysis releases more insurance claims data, improving public knowledge about cost variations in the healthcare system



coverage in the *State House News Service* and the *Boston Business Journal*.

A July Pioneer study drew on recently released data from CHIA to review prices across the state for the same procedure, an MRI of the knee. The authors found wide variation; insurers paid, on average, \$213 for an MRI in Worcester but \$1,787 in Nantucket. Patients' out-of-pocket costs in Worcester averaged \$60, while those in Berkshire County were \$176. The study's findings were publicized in the *Worcester Telegram & Gazette*, *Worcester Business Journal*, *State House News Service*, and *WBSM*.

### Paying for Life-Saving Treatments

Some are calling for government action to control drug costs, but Pioneer understands that such "remedies" are likely to increase long-term costs, decrease patient access to therapies, and harm an essential industry. New England is home to the greatest cluster of life sciences companies in the world, many of which are developing specialty therapies that treat rare diseases with smaller patient populations. Now more than ever, we must educate the public about the benefits of market competition to generate cures, drive down costs, and improve the quality of life for millions of people.

Pioneer research in 2016 presented a case study of the drug Sovaldi, showing this cure for hepatitis C, which was expensive initially, quickly saw dramatic markdowns when competitors entered the market. Pioneer's public testimony and media campaign prompted the Massachusetts legislature to reject a bill calling for *de facto* price controls and onerous requirements to disclose proprietary information.

In 2018, Pioneer significantly bolstered this effort, launching the New England Life Sciences Initiative (NELSI). Under the leadership of Pioneer Visiting Fellow William Smith, NELSI research will focus on cost effectiveness and policies that are beneficial or detrimental to patients and the dynamism of the region's biopharmaceutical sector. NELSI is already stimulating industry conversations about financing and pricing models for orphan treatments.

In reports, op-eds, and media appearances, Smith has been offering specific policy recommendations for alternatives such as value-based reimbursement and other reforms that ensure discounts are reaching patients. Smith's op-eds have appeared in *Morning Consult*, *The Daily Caller*, the *Boston Business Journal*, and *CommonWealth* magazine. Pioneer Board Director Pamela Layton also co-authored an op-ed in *Morning Consult* that urged policymakers to protect innovation and fix the broken reimbursement system in the genetic diagnostics industry.

### Making Public Programs Fair and Sustainable

Healthcare costs are consuming an increasing share of state and municipal budgets, crowding out resources for other important services such as education and public safety. MassHealth, the Commonwealth's Medicaid program, accounts for over 40 percent of the state's annual budget. MassHealth experienced gross mismanagement for a period

of time as a result of efforts to comply with the Affordable Care Act, extending benefits in 2014 to over 300,000 ineligible recipients. Enrollment ballooned to over two million, costing taxpayers over \$650 million.

After Pioneer published ground-breaking eyewitness accounts from whistleblowers revealing the dysfunctional eligibility system, the FBI launched an investigation. Since then, Governor Charlie Baker ended temporary coverage and MassHealth implemented enhanced eligibility measures to stabilize the program, conducting 1.2 million manual eligibility redeterminations. In total more than \$1.2 billion was saved, mostly from ending coverage for those who did not qualify, but \$250 million derived from enhanced verification checks through automated matches.

## HEWITT HEALTHCARE LECTURE

### "Paying for Innovation in the Coming Age of Breakthrough Therapies"

**A**t the 2018 Hewitt Healthcare Lecture, Former Massachusetts Governor William Weld, Chair of the NELSI advisory board, introduced the Keynote Speaker, Mark McClellan, the Margolis Professor of Business, Medicine & Policy at Duke University, and former Commissioner of the U.S. Food and Drug Administration.

Dr. McClellan discussed some of the challenges around healthcare cost, financing, and access, and the role of breakthrough drug development to improve health outcomes in recent years.



**"The big challenge in health policy today is how to keep supporting biomedical breakthroughs but not lose sight of the ultimate goal of making sure those treatments plus other factors that influence health also get adequate support."**

**— DR. MARK MCCLELLAN, DIRECTOR, DUKE-MARGOLIS CENTER FOR HEALTH POLICY**



## LAYING THE GROUNDWORK FOR EFFECTIVE & ACCOUNTABLE PUBLIC SERVICES

**E**ach year, PioneerPublic generates dozens of research and multimedia products on issues that affect all Massachusetts residents. Most recently, we have advocated for a transit agency that responds to the needs of commuters and taxpayers; a public higher education system that is accessible to families and students across the Commonwealth; and a Beacon Hill culture of openness, where politicians are fully accountable to the citizens who elect them. We recognize that reforming large-scale public entities such as UMass or the MBTA won't happen overnight; it often requires an incremental approach. In 2018, PioneerPublic continued its steady drive toward building a lasting legacy on these important fronts.

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### Promoting a Next-Gen Transportation System

Pioneer's transportation reform proposals over the last two decades have been rooted in our vision of giving people choices. With a vibrant economy, more individuals are seeking faster commutes, better fuel efficiency, and a cleaner environment. To meet these demands, government and business leaders must work together to maximize efficiencies and identify smart, future-oriented investments in infrastructure. We need an MBTA that commuters view as their most attractive option; road repairs that are streamlined and reduce delays; and tolling innovation that doesn't punish turnpike drivers. For the health of our economy and our quality of life, improvements in these areas are both necessary and feasible.

Even with the plethora of private transportation options available today, public transit remains the primary mode of travel for over a million Greater Boston commuters. Pioneer's campaign to reform the MBTA stems from a commitment to modernizing and improving the customer experience, to provide incentives for

increased ridership. Pioneer's remarkable progress in overhauling MBTA governance in just the past 5 years will shape the future of public transit in the Commonwealth for decades to come.

In 2018, for the first time in a decade, the T balanced its operating budget, thanks in large part to cost savings stemming from Pioneer's 2015 proposal to establish a Fiscal and Management Control Board. Another Pioneer recommendation, to suspend the Commonwealth's anti-privatization Pacheco Law, has allowed the agency to save hundreds of millions of dollars through outsourcing its cash handling, warehousing of parts, and call-center and in-station customer service; and strategically, through renegotiating its contract with its most powerful union. As Pioneer reports urged, the T also reduced its administrative workforce, and modernized its fare collection process. The Institute's research and public outreach helped pass a transparency law opening the books on the MBTA Retirement Fund, an important step in Pioneer's long effort to put the system on a sustainable footing.

In 2018, Pioneer proposals resulted in the privatization of the agency's payroll system; upgrades to its arrival and departure information; incentives for wider use of the corporate pass program; and weekend discounts and variable rates at T parking lots to increase commuter rail ridership.

Pioneer is also focused on opportunities to serve future riders. In a *Boston Globe* op-ed calling for more transparency around the Allston Multimodal Project, Pioneer urged the Massachusetts Department of Transportation to preserve the option of adding a fifth commuter rail stop, West Station. This station could connect to Cambridge and ultimately encourage more transit-oriented development west of Boston. Pioneer has also promoted wider use of water transportation. An earlier Pioneer report calling for expanded ferry service received extensive news coverage and continues to stimulate public and private industry

conversations about this appealing option.

Innovative thinking is also in demand now more than ever to address congestion on our roadways. The average Boston-area driver wastes 60 hours per year in traffic, in addition to the cost in lost productivity, fuel expenses, and environmental pollution. The few metropolitan areas in the U.S. with worse traffic than Boston have smarter tolling policies. Last summer, Pioneer supported a legislative pilot program to test out tolling discounts as an incentive for off-peak driving, calling for additional data to inform decisions in a *Boston Business Journal* op-ed and an appearance on *Bloomberg* radio. In addition, Pioneer is canvassing the entire country for proposals to improve transportation infrastructure, the theme of our 2019 Better Government Competition.

### Ensuring Fairness in Public Higher Education

Massachusetts' state colleges and universities have traditionally offered a more affordable alternative for students and families who struggle to cover skyrocketing tuition at private schools. But too many have been deprived of this public option, due to misguided management decisions that PioneerPublic uncovered through its eye-opening series of reports on the state university system. Pioneer's findings highlighted UMass's excessive spending on administrative

staff and facilities expansion, significant debt burden (tripling over the last decade to nearly \$3 billion), and growing dependence on revenue from tuition and fees (increasingly from out-of-state students), as well as state appropriations (over \$700 million in 2017). Pioneer's work led to close scrutiny of the university system, with ongoing coverage on WCVB-TV and in *The Boston Globe*. After the Pioneer series was released, the state education secretary implemented a new evaluation process for the system's capital projects and allocation of funds.

In 2018, Pioneer continued monitoring UMass' management decisions, raising more questions about the Amherst campus' enrollment of out-of-state students. A May report drew on public records data over seven years to demonstrate a pattern of holding lower admission standards for non-resident applicants. Pioneer also published analysis challenging UMass-Amherst's \$75 million acquisition of the 74-acre Mt. Ida College campus in Newton. These findings garnered widespread media attention from the *Associated Press*, *The Boston Globe*, *Boston Herald*, *WFXT*, *NECN*, *WBZ*, *WBUR*, *WGBH*, and *WHDH*. In addition, Mary Connaughton, Pioneer's Director of Government Transparency and a report co-author, was interviewed on Sharyl Attkisson's nationally syndicated television news program, "Full Measure."

**“Massachusetts students are no doubt very well-prepared for SATs and for standardized testing in general. But the question is: Should they be penalized for being well-prepared? If their academic standards are higher than those from out of state, shouldn't they get first dibs on a seat at UMass Amherst?”**

— MARY Z. CONNAUGHTON, WBUR

Because of Pioneer's

## RESEARCH & MEDIA EFFORTS:



- ▶ The MBTA leveraged Pioneer's public advocacy in favor of competitive contracting to renegotiate bus maintenance services, saving millions and gaining new performance metrics

- ▶ The MBTA privatized its payroll system, and modernized its arrival and departure information system
- ▶ The MBTA established weekend discounts and variable rates at T parking lots to increase commuter rail ridership

- ▶ The University of Massachusetts was forced to answer for its flagship campus' long practice of holding lower admission standards for out-of-state students
- ▶ Lawmakers listened to testimony at three State House hearings against the constitutionality of the legislature's public records law exemption
- ▶ MassAnalysis.com, a web-based benchmarking tool for municipal financial performance, saw a four-fold increase in use



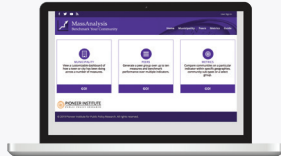
## Restoring Public Trust

Public transparency laws requiring open meetings and access to public records promote more effective, accountable, and responsive government, and encourage citizen engagement. Sadly, in Massachusetts, these laws remain deeply flawed, due to exemptions for the state legislature and the Office of the Governor. In legislative hearings, open letters, and op-eds placed in news outlets across the Commonwealth, Pioneer publicized its contention, supported by legal analysis, that the public records exemption is unconstitutional. A 2016 public records reform law failed to adequately address the exemptions, but established a special legislative commission to further investigate transparency issues. PioneerLegal sent an open letter to the commission's chairs, and the Institute's activism on this issue was featured in the *Associated Press*, *The Boston Globe*, *Boston Herald*, *State House News Service*, *MassLive*, *The Lowell Sun*, the *Salem News*, *WGBH*, *WFXT*, and *WBUR*.

Every year, Pioneer instills its commitment to open government in future generations, through a unique and rewarding internship program led by Mary Connaughton. She recruits and trains a team of promising college students in the investigative and writing skills required to research, analyze and post in-depth and substantive commentary on state and local issues. Pioneer's 2018 Government Transparency interns hailed from some of the top colleges in the U.S., including Amherst, Bates, Colby, Lehigh, and Wellesley. Using Pioneer's MassWatch suite of online government transparency applications, these students published dozens of blog entries on topics of importance to citizens across the Commonwealth, including income and education gaps in Worcester County, Boston's bid for Amazon's second headquarters, eye-popping Department of Corrections' employee salaries, and Cape Cod's struggling workforce. Through their content generation and other digital marketing efforts, Pioneer quadrupled the website traffic for its municipal research application, MassAnalysis.

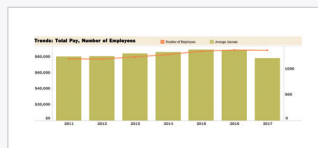


**A SUITE OF FREE WEBSITES THAT ALLOW THE PUBLIC TO ACCESS INFORMATION ON STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS.**



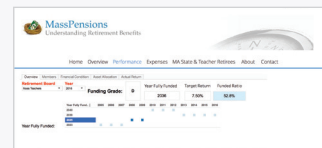
### Mass Analysis

Are you a local official who wants to benchmark your community against its peers or are you a resident who wants to know more about your town's finances? The information you need will be at your fingertips in just a few clicks.



### Mass Open Books

Find out what state employees earn, how much state retirees are receiving in pension benefits and what the payments are to the people and companies that do business with the state.



### Mass Pensions

Learn how much debt your community's public pension system is saddled with and how many years it will take to repay it. We've graded each of the state's 105 public pension systems — what grade did your town get?

### MBTA Analysis

Learn how the MBTA's performance stacks up against its peer transit agencies. Which agency is the most efficient? Do some modes of transit perform better than others? How can the MBTA improve?



### Muni Share

Why re-invent the wheel? Visit this innovative clearinghouse where best municipal practices are shared by local leaders and thinkers. Our document archive may have just the answer you've been looking for!



### Mass Report Cards

Compare and rate your schools and districts based on MCAS performance, teacher quality and other key metrics.

**UPDATE: COMING SOON!**

**STAY INFORMED & GET CONNECTED! [Pioneerinstitute.org/MassWatch/](http://Pioneerinstitute.org/MassWatch/)**



## WORKER FREEDOM, TAX FAIRNESS & OPEN GOVERNMENT

In 2018, PioneerLegal, the public interest law initiative of Pioneer Institute, stepped up its efforts to advance effective public policy solutions within and beyond the Commonwealth. Generous and dedicated attorneys at Boston's most prestigious law firms expended countless *pro bono* hours on many of Pioneer's core policy areas. Through their work, Pioneer contributed to momentous victories in the fight for worker and first amendment freedom across the country, and locally, to stave off a graduated income tax.

PioneerLegal, along with the Pacific Legal Foundation, filed successful friend-of-the-court briefs urging the U.S. Supreme Court to hear *Janus v. AFSCME*. Upsetting 40 years of precedent, the Court held that compelling public employees who choose not to join a union to pay an "agency fee" violates their First Amendment rights.

The Massachusetts Legislature attempted to nullify the ruling through an amendment that would have granted unions the sole right to negotiate lesser pay and reduced benefits on behalf of non-members, represent non-members in administrative appeals even if they hired their own representation, and veto power over any settlement. The amendment would also have given unions access to employees' workplaces

and personal information, tactics Pioneer publicly denounced as "coercion and intimidation." The amendment failed, but legislators have already signaled plans to revive anti-*Janus* efforts.

Pioneer published numerous op-eds in the *Boston Herald*, *CommonWealth* magazine, and *WGBH News* on the implications of *Janus* in Massachusetts, and a policy brief revealing that only 16 percent of dues paid by the average union member affiliated with the Massachusetts Teachers Association actually stays local, while the remainder flows to the state and national labor organizations. The report earned coverage and editorial endorsements in several regional news outlets across Massachusetts. In anticipation of renewed anti-*Janus* legislation, Pioneer has mounted a digital outreach campaign to inform teachers and other public sector employees of their opt-out rights.

Other PioneerLegal initiatives included hosting a forum with WilmerHale and Deloitte, on the implications of the Trump administration's federal tax law. In February, PioneerLegal partnered with the D.C.-based Tax Foundation to file an amicus brief successfully challenging the constitutionality of Massachusetts' Proposition 80 graduated income tax ballot initiative.

PioneerLegal also assisted, though unsuccessfully, with efforts to overturn the state's charter school cap, and to eliminate legislative exemptions to transparency laws.

### *Because of Pioneer's*

## RESEARCH & MEDIA EFFORTS:

- ▶ The U.S. Supreme Court ruled in favor of worker freedom in the landmark *Janus v. AFSCME* case
- ▶ Public unions' efforts to intimidate employees through proposed post-*Janus* legislation were exposed, and ultimately blocked
- ▶ The Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court rejected the constitutionality of Proposition 80, a ballot question that, if passed, would have harmed the state economy



## SHARING THE BENEFITS OF A THRIVING ECONOMY

**A**ll of Pioneer's initiatives, from education and healthcare to effective public services, improve and widen opportunity for Massachusetts residents. The Institute recognizes that a job and self-sufficiency are critical to the dignity of individuals. For Pioneer, prosperity means abundant job opportunities that encompass the entire skills range; incentives for savings, investment, and increased productivity; and a booming economy for the whole state, not just in Greater Boston. Our goal is to ensure that all residents have access to a good education, affordable and innovative health, housing options, and the transportation and economic policies that will drive long-term growth and raise our standard of living.

(headquartered or affiliated), location, movement in or out of state, industry, sub-industry and more — MassEconomix will provide municipal, regional, and state policymakers with the timely and consistent information they need to formulate and execute on effective job creation strategies.

MassEconomix will use data visualization features such as heatmaps, and analytical functionality, including "compare," "measure," and "snapshot" tools. The application will allow the Institute to generate user-friendly, highly visual mini-reports and position us as a constant presence on economic issues across the entire state. Through a robust marketing effort to spread awareness of the application, Pioneer will point the way for the Commonwealth to more effectively fulfill the untapped potential of our older, industrialized communities outside Boston.

### Equipping More Communities for Success

In 2018 Pioneer embarked on the development of a new product that will serve as the chassis off of which Pioneer's future work on economic opportunity will be organized, and which will position the Institute as the go-to resource on all aspects of the Massachusetts economy. In collaboration with the Business Dynamics Research Consortium at the University of Wisconsin, Pioneer is developing an exciting online tool, MassEconomix. Drawing on over two decades of data on every firm in the Commonwealth — including sales, employment, business status

### Protecting the Keystone of Prosperity

Wealth migration came to the fore as a topic of national debate in 2018, with the emergence of several initiatives across the country to raise taxes on high earners as a means of addressing income inequality. In Massachusetts, the fight was waged primarily in the courts — the constitutionality of a ballot proposal, known as the "Fair Share Amendment" and the "millionaire's tax," to raise the tax rate on income over \$1 million, was taken up by the Supreme Judicial Court (SJC). But all court battles depend on facts. Justices read newspapers and blogs, watch TV, and listen to

*Because of Pioneer's*

### RESEARCH & MEDIA EFFORTS:

- ▶ State policymakers, municipal leaders, and everyday citizens will be able to access critical information through Pioneer's new online tool, MassEconomix, to drive growth
- ▶ The state's Supreme Judicial Court rejected a ballot proposal to raise the income tax on top earners that would have resulted in wealth migration
- ▶ More state and local policymakers are exploring the removal of regulatory barriers that limit the housing supply



## FRAMING THE DEBATE ON WEALTH MIGRATION

Pioneer Institute led a sustained research and advocacy campaign to frame the debate on the proposed ballot measure to raise the income tax on Massachusetts' top earners. The state's highest court rejected the misguided initiative in June.

**“The millionaire's tax would have been a catastrophe for Massachusetts' economy. Look at what happened when Connecticut raised taxes — it's now at the bottom on state job growth rankings.”**

— GREG SULLIVAN, *BLOOMBERG RADIO*



the radio. PioneerLegal partnered with the Tax Foundation to file an amicus brief with the SJC in support of the plaintiffs, prior to oral arguments, and Pioneer ensured that our research, rooted in real-life impacts and legal questions, countered proponents' misleading narratives and drove the public conversation about the harmful implications of this proposal.

During the months prior to the SJC's decision, Pioneer produced seven reports demonstrating that passage of the tax would accelerate out-migration of businesses and high-net worth individuals, especially as a result of recent changes to the federal tax law; affect an increasing share of the population due to inflation; generate less than the projected \$2 billion annual revenue; leave Massachusetts with the nation's second highest capital gains tax rate; and lead to a Connecticut-style employer exodus. Pioneer also challenged the methodology of Stanford Sociologist Cristobal Young, the most prominent resource for ballot proponents and media outlets convinced that tax flight is a myth. Pioneer's reports were covered in the *Associated Press*, the *San Francisco Chronicle*, *CommonWealth* magazine, the *Boston Herald*, the *Boston Business Journal*, *Bloomberg Radio*, and regional news outlets across the state. The Institute also disseminated findings to community and business leaders, elected officials, and the general public through social media. These efforts paid off: in June, the SJC rejected the ballot measure on constitutional grounds, handing down a major victory to the Commonwealth's residents and employers. However, Pioneer will redouble its

campaign on this front; activists have revived their graduated tax proposal, this time working through the state legislature.

### Fixing the Housing Crunch

Since 2004, with the launch of a database of environmental and zoning regulations in 187 central and eastern Massachusetts communities, Pioneer has served as a point of reference for fact-based understanding of limitations on housing growth. The shortage of affordable housing has reached a crisis level in much of the country again, and the Commonwealth is among the hardest hit. As advocates sought to update Pioneer's regulatory analyses, Pioneer published research supporting one small-scale approach to this problem — the loosening of restrictions on in-law apartments, or accessory dwelling units. This minimally disruptive option would appeal to young professionals, small families, and seniors seeking independent living. The Pioneer report examined the housing policies in 100 Boston-area communities, and found that adding an average of five units annually in each of these cities and towns would yield 5,000 new apartments in a decade. The study was the subject of a featured column in *The Boston Globe*, an editorial in *The Lawrence Eagle-Tribune*, and the author, Amy Dain, was interviewed in the *Boston Herald*. Municipal leaders in cities like Boston and smaller communities such as Dedham, Acton, and others have embraced the relaxation of requirements for ADUs and there are efforts to bring the question before local voters. Boston is considering a city-wide zoning amendment.

**“As Pioneer Executive Director Jim Stergios said, ‘Accessory units are environmentally smart, limited in their traffic impacts and do precious little to change the character of single-family neighborhoods. If we are even slightly serious about increasing the supply of housing, this is a no-brainer.’”**

— EDITORIAL,  
*THE EAGLE-TRIBUNE*

## GALVANIZING OUR COMMUNITY

Throughout the year, Pioneer stimulates civic engagement through events that range from elegant dinner ceremonies and cocktail receptions, to amphitheater-style lectures and lunch forums open to the public. These programs feature prominent experts and leading thinkers; they challenge us to go beyond our comfort zone. They address the Commonwealth's most pressing issues, and give attendees a chance to interact with key state and local policymakers. These events play an essential role in Pioneer's mission to engender a shared sense of responsibility for improving the quality of life in Massachusetts and beyond.

### Our three annual signature events include:

The **Hewitt Lecture** raises public awareness of topics that include opioid addiction, the impact of the federal health law, and innovations in the delivery of care. In recent years, the Lecture has featured the former heads of the U.S. Food and Drug Administration and the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, the Massachusetts Secretary of Health and Human Services, and others.

The **Better Government Competition Awards Gala** brings Boston's influential executives, policymakers, and media figures together for a celebration of the nation's most promising proposals for tackling critical issues. High-profile speakers have included mayors, governors, members of Congress, syndicated columnists and television personalities, academic leaders, and more.

The **Lovett C. Peters Lecture** in Public Policy is Pioneer's special evening of gratitude for our most generous supporters. Guests are treated to a formal dinner and an audience with a distinguished keynote speaker who is nationally recognized for his or her lasting contribution to society.

## LOVETT C. PETERS LECTURE

### "Seeming Turmoil in a World of Progress"

On December 4<sup>th</sup>, Pioneer celebrated the Institute's 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary at the 2018 Lovett C. Peters Lecture. The keynote speaker was Dr. Steven Pinker, bestselling author and Johnstone Family Professor of Psychology at Harvard University. Dr. Pinker delivered a sweeping overview of the major societal advances — unimaginable not so long ago — that have improved our overall quality of life, from health and working conditions, to financial prosperity, intellectual abilities, happiness, and many other measurable indicators. Given today's political and social climate, Dr. Pinker provided some much-needed perspective on humanity's true condition.

As part of the dinner program, Executive Director Jim Stergios recognized Pioneer's most generous supporters and reviewed some of the Institute's impactful milestones in the areas of education, healthcare, government efficiency, and economic opportunity. Guests were treated to a special performance by "America's Got Talent" finalist Amanda Mena, a 16-year-old immigrant raised in Lynn, Massachusetts, who overcame many challenges to realize her dream of becoming a nationally acclaimed vocal artist.

Each year, the Peters Lecture features original insights from a profound innovator or thinker who is reshaping our world. Past speakers have included digital learning innovator Sal Khan, X Prize Founder Peter Diamandis, U.S. Senator Cory Booker, former U.S. Senator Bob Kerrey, Historian Niall Ferguson, Success Academy Charter Schools Founder Eva Moskowitz, and Gladstone Institute Director Deepak Srivastava.



**"I hope to have convinced you that progress is not a matter of being an optimist; it is not a matter of seeing the glass as half full; it is a matter of knowing the facts. Progress is a demonstrable fact of human history."**

**— DR. STEVEN PINKER,  
JOHNSTONE FAMILY  
PROFESSOR OF  
PSYCHOLOGY AT  
HARVARD UNIVERSITY**

## A STRONG VOICE FOR EVIDENCE-BASED SOLUTIONS

With its experienced team of experts, Pioneer Institute is uniquely positioned as the Commonwealth's most trusted authority on a broad range of policy topics of interest to government officials, the business community, the media, and the general public. Newspaper, radio, and television reporters and commentators regularly consult with Pioneer analysts for their invaluable institutional knowledge and their factual approach to problem-solving.

In 2018, Pioneer continued growing its audience base through traditional and digital media platforms, including op-eds, radio and TV appearances, in-house videos, infographics, blogs, and Facebook and Twitter posts increasingly targeted by geography and interest area. Pioneer's communications victories include enlarging our Facebook following and post shares by 40 percent; our video views by 360 percent; and tripling the number of report downloads from our website.

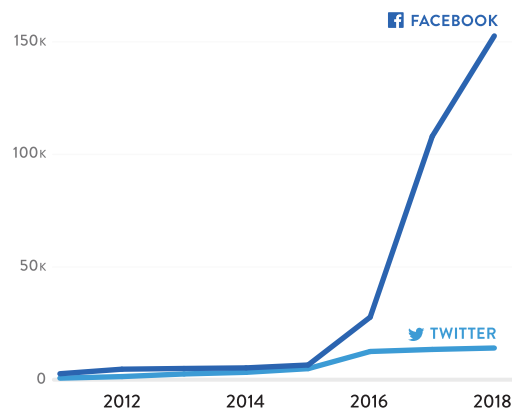
### TRADITIONAL MEDIA

Op-eds	87
Mentions	2,410
Total circulation	783M

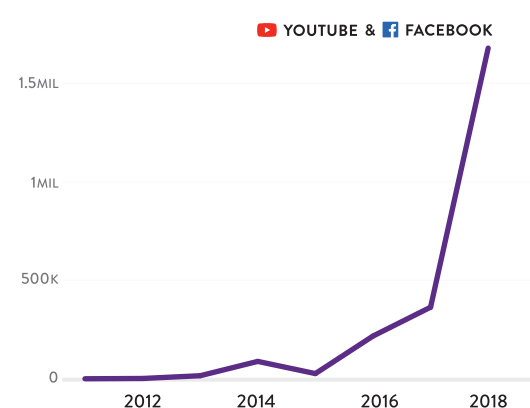
### SOCIAL MEDIA IMPRESSIONS

Twitter	1.76M
Facebook	6.2M

### SOCIAL MEDIA GROWTH



### VIDEO VIEWS



“A recent article in *CommonWealth* magazine by supporters of the mayor and the teachers union criticized Alma del Mar for getting political support from ‘the think-tank crowd’ — a reference to the Boston-based free-market Pioneer Institute, which has promoted the school.”

– TUNKU  
VARADARAJAN,  
*THE WALL STREET  
JOURNAL*

“Healthcare price transparency is still a new idea to many consumers and providers. It’s almost an alien concept — the idea people should know how much their healthcare will cost before they incur the procedure and may opt for lower cost providers. We need to be educating consumers and employers, and providing easy-to-understand information and incentives for people.”

– BARBARA ANTHONY,  
*BOSTON BUSINESS JOURNAL*

“Preparing students to fully engage in civic life was a core purpose behind the creation of America’s public schools. Until we ensure that high school graduates have the requisite historical and civic knowledge for citizenship, we’re risking a future of young people forfeited from the prerogatives of full participation in our democracy.”

– TOM BIRMINGHAM,  
*AMERICAN HERITAGE*

“Pioneer Institute, which last summer signed onto an amicus brief urging the Supreme Court to hear *Janus v. AFSCME*, said in a statement Monday that the case will have ‘important implications’ for Massachusetts. ‘Union membership should never be banned,’ Pioneer executive director Jim Stergios said in a statement. ‘Nor should it ever be compulsory.’”

– STATE HOUSE  
NEWS SERVICE



Thank You To Our

## DONORS

Pioneer Institute is deeply grateful for the generous board of directors, individuals, corporate partners, and foundations who support our work and mission. The following list recognizes those donors for their support of Pioneer Institute from October 1, 2017 – September 30, 2018.

### Thank You!

Pioneer wishes to recognize our longtime supporters, listed in **bold**, for their ongoing contributions of five consecutive years or more.

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# 30 over 30



*In this, our 30<sup>th</sup> year, we are pleased to honor the individuals and foundations that have distinguished themselves for their commitment to Pioneer's mission of expanding prosperity and individual freedom.*

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*Lovett & Ruth Peters Foundation*

**\$1.5 million**

*Edna & Ray Shamie<sup>†</sup>*

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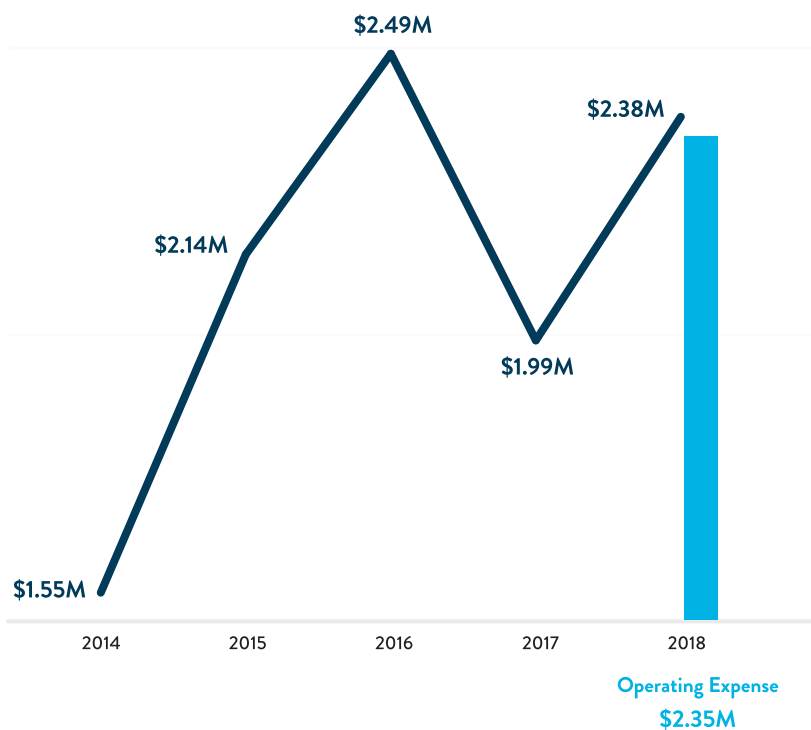
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## REVENUE



## REVENUES &amp; EXPENSES

## REVENUE

Unrestricted Donations	\$1,011,251
In-Kind Donations	68,683
Restricted Donations	1,288,477
Other Revenue	15,627
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>2,384,038</b>

## EXPENSES

Employment Costs	1,295,608
Outside Services	61,315
Research	345,627
Printing & Publishing	57,657
Distribution Costs	140,561
Events & Meetings	194,459
Staff Business Expenses	17,595
Office Operations	94,064
Internet/Website	2,757

**Total Expenses** 2,209,643

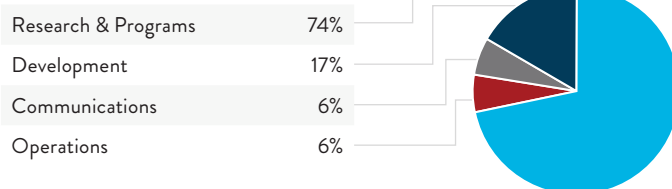
Other Income 98,640

Other Expenses 136,517

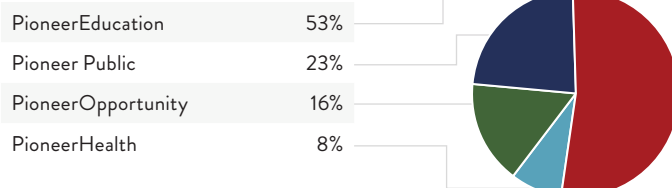
**Increase In Net Assets** \$136,518

## EXPENSES

## BY CATEGORY



## BY RESEARCH AREA



## FINANCIAL POSITION

## ASSETS

Cash	\$245,074
Contributions Receivable	217,887
Investments	2,189,848
Property & Equipment	876,347
Other Assets	154,995
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>\$3,684,151</b>

## LIABILITIES &amp; NET ASSETS

Accounts Payable & Other Accrued Expenses	\$42,151
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>42,151</b>

## NET ASSETS

Without Donor Restrictions	2,585,282
With Donor Restrictions	1,056,718
<b>Total Net Assets</b>	<b>3,642,000</b>

**Total Liabilities & Net Assets** \$3,684,151

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