



The [COWOP coalition](#) is a growing statewide network that aims to bring together worker co-ops and developers, grassroots organizations and labor unions, and funders and investors to resource and coordinate the advancement of a worker ownership movement across Massachusetts.

We aim to grow infrastructure statewide to advance worker ownership by reducing barriers for marginalized constituencies, and by increasing efficiencies and supports for those seeking assistance and community among like-minded partners.

## 2021-2022 Policy Platform:

### Grants & Loan Guarantees

\$4 million capital pool to facilitate the development of new worker-owned and self-directed enterprises, particularly during the vulnerable start-up phase. This fund would be administered by the Cooperative Fund of New England, which already administers grants and loans in the sector. We aim to resource this fund via the federal Covid relief (ARPA) supplemental budget(s) in 2021 or 2022, and Sen. Julian Cyr has agreed to be a primary sponsor of this effort in the Legislature.

### Technical Assistance

\$250,000 fund for technical assistance providers to support new cooperative enterprises, proposed to be administered by the Massachusetts Growth Capital Corporation (MGCC), under its Small Business Technical Assistance program. Again, we propose to resource this fund via amendments filed by Sen. Julian Cyr to the federal Covid relief (ARPA) supplemental budget(s) in 2021 or 2022.

### Advisory Board for MassCEO

An Act Enabling the Massachusetts Center for Employee Ownership. Among other things, this bill formalizes the role of the Massachusetts Center for Employee Ownership (MassCEO), firmly establishes employee ownership as a community economic development priority for the state, and creates a statewide Advisory Board on Employee Ownership. The Board, with seats for 19 stakeholders and relevant state agencies (including 13 combined for ESOPs, worker cooperatives and advocacy groups), would advise the Governor and MassCEO's director on matters related to employee ownership policy.

### Workers on Corporate Boards (Co-determination)

COWOP supports the passage of S.1223, An Act Ensuring Fair Worker Representation on Corporate Boards of Directors filed by Sens. Jason Lewis and Jamie Eldridge, which would require at least 40% of the board of directors be elected by employees at MA corporations with over \$100 million in annual revenue. This form of workplace democracy could enable major advances in equity and corporate accountability as well as worker morale and retention.

Coalition member organizations and allies are contributing resources needed to advance this platform, including media capacity, legislative mobilization, technical resources and so on. We welcome all those who share our goal of increasing workers' agency over their economic lives to help democratic workplaces flourish across our commonwealth.

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