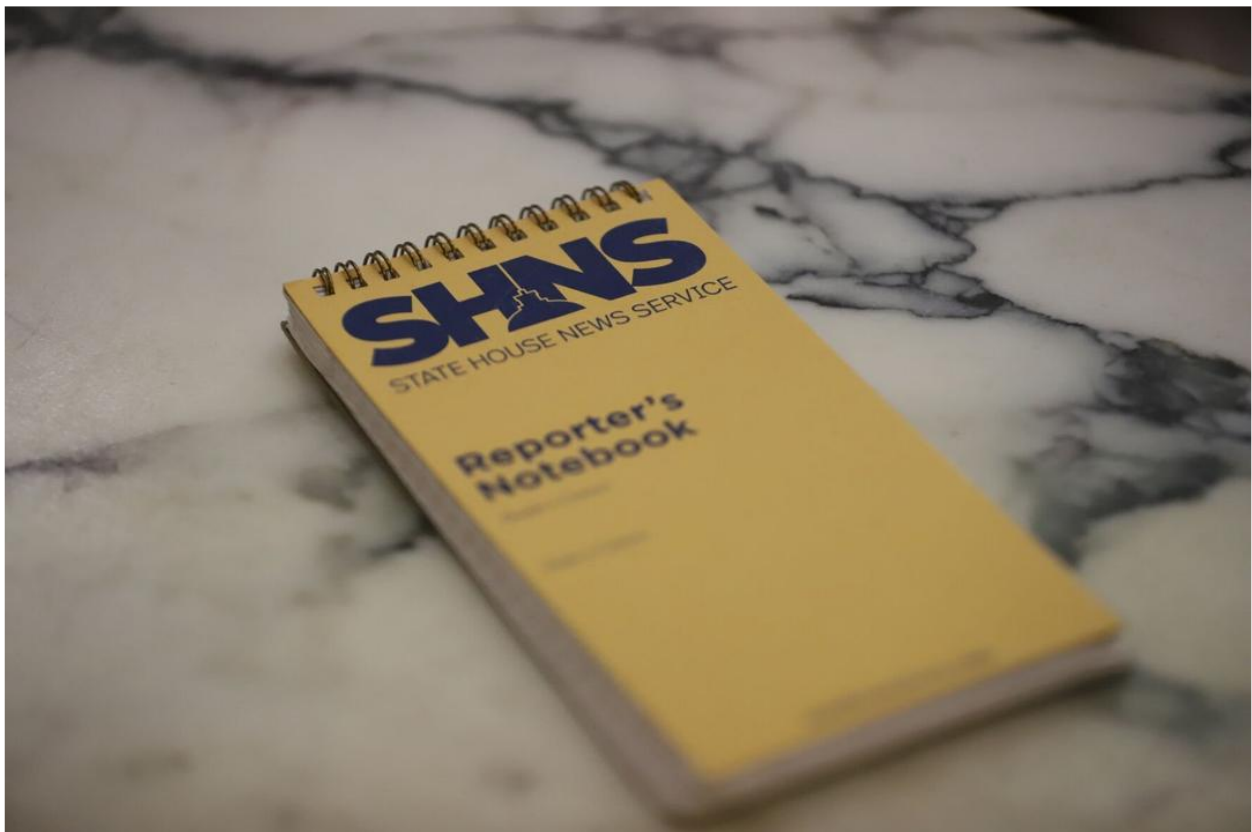


Campaign Notebook: Minogue's Money | Education Funding Fall-out? | Dionne Audit Plan | Wormtown Pols for Healey

PUBLISHED FEBRUARY 18, 2026 BY STATE HOUSE NEWS SERVICE



SHNS reporter's notebook on Dec. 3, 2025 at the State House.

... He's got money and he's not afraid to give some of it away. Republican candidate for governor Michael Minogue in January donated exactly \$100,000 to the Republican State Committee. Party officials blasted out the news to let everyone know they are grateful and singled out the governor's race in their response, noting "our shared mission to take back the Governor's Office this November." The party said Feb. 11 that each gubernatorial campaign — Michael Kennealy and Brian Shortsleeve are the other GOP candidates – were offered "identical partnership opportunities ... as part of a broader effort to strengthen party fundraising and help build the foundation

for victory." Massachusetts Republican Party Chair Amy Carnevale said: "This significant investment strengthens our statewide ground game, bolsters support for down-ballot Republicans, and enhances the resources necessary to compete, and win, at every level." The Kennealy and Shortsleeve campaigns alleged that Minogue was attempting to buy convention superdelegates ahead of the party's April nominating convention, according to The Boston Herald. Mary Jo Quirk of Quirk Auto Dealers and RMR Group CEO Adam Portnoy also each gave \$5,000 last month to the GOP state committee ... - Michael P. Norton

... Gov. Maura Healey on Sunday warned that a proposed ballot measure to lower the state's income tax rate would result in sweeping cuts to education funding, saying voters would see "65% of all funding for education go away" if the measure is approved. Healey, who is against the ballot question, presented the figure during an appearance on WCVB's "On the Record." "You're going to see 65% of all funding for education go away. You're going to see all the funding that we give to cities and towns be significantly reduced. It's going to be very, very harmful," she said. The News Service asked the governor's office how it calculated the 65% reduction, and Healey spokesperson Karissa Hand said the figure represents a comparison between projected tax revenue loss and the size of the Chapter 70 school funding account. "According to DOR testimony at the FY27 Consensus Revenue Hearing, the income tax reduction could take up to \$5 billion out of the state budget. Ch. 70 school aid totals \$7.6 billion in House 2. \$5 billion is ~65% of \$7.6 billion," Hand said. Hand did not reply to a follow-up question about whether the governor was suggesting that her administration would apply the entire revenue reduction to school aid, should the income tax cut pass and she be reelected in November. Revenue reductions are typically offset against the budget broadly. Tax policy think tank MassBudget speculated that balancing the state budget with about \$5 billion less tax revenue "would require deep cuts to a wide range of public programs and infrastructure investments, such as local aid, higher education, health care, and public safety." ... - Sam Drysdale

... Republican candidate for treasurer Elizabeth Dionne pledged in an interview this week that she would "get rid of tens of millions of dollars of wasteful spending" following a complete audit of all Treasury departments if she is elected this fall. During an appearance on InsideLowell's Daily Pulse, the Belmont Select Board member said she was among the 72% of voters who supported the 2024 ballot question to give the auditor the power to audit the Legislature and said she is frustrated it has not happened. "But as treasurer, I have the power to walk in on day one and audit all 12 of those departments so that we know where the money's going, where the problems are," Dionne said. "Again, every dollar saved is a dollar that can go back to taxpayers or cities and towns. So I've pledged to get rid of tens of millions of dollars of wasteful spending." Dionne said there is precedent for such an investigation: she said Republican Joe Malone, who was elected in 1990 after the Treasury was under Democrat Bob Crane's leadership for more than a quarter-century, brought in Bain and three of the major auditing firms to conduct "a complete audit and strategic plan for the treasurer's office at no cost." She said she

would also cooperate with the state auditor, should that office turn its attention to the Treasury. "But that said, I can do this on my own," she said. Dionne added, "There are lots of avenues that we can go, and it's actually always helpful to have multiple sources of information. So I would absolutely pledge to work cooperatively with the auditor. But if her budget is being cut, she might not have the resources that she needs to do the full audit, so maybe I do need to go seek private partnerships." The Treasury includes more than a dozen departments: the Alcoholic Beverages Control Commission, Asian American & Pacific Islanders Commission, Cash Management, Debt Management, Defined Contribution Plans, Office of Economic Empowerment, Massachusetts School Building Authority, State Retirement Board, Massachusetts Clean Water Trust, Massachusetts Lottery, Pension Reserves Investment Management Board, Unclaimed Property Division, and Veterans' Bonus Division ... - Colin A. Young

... Several Worcester-area lawmakers have endorsed Healey and Lt. Gov. Kim Driscoll's reelection campaign. The endorsements early in the election year and in a Democratic stronghold came after a meeting Healey and Driscoll held with area business leaders, lawmakers and Mayor Joe Petty on how to leverage bio-manufacturing and research hubs across the state. During the meeting last week, Healey and Driscoll also promoted state investments in Worcester for housing and manufacturing, some of which are expected to create 1,000 new jobs, according to Healey's office. Along with Petty, other endorsers included former Mayor Joe O'Brien, Sens. Robyn Kennedy and Michael Moore, Reps. John Mahoney, Jim O'Day, Mary Keefe and Daniel Donahue, and Governor's Councilor Paul DePalo ... – Katie Castellani