

**MEDIA ADVISORY**  
**FOR MONDAY, NOVEMBER 21, 2016**  
**8:00 A.M. – 9:45 A.M. (Program @ 8:30 A.M.)**

Contacts:

Darlene Lombos, Darlene@MassCLU.org, 617-910-6208

Lindsay McCluskey, Lindsay@MassCLU.org, 617-758-9681

## **Panel at Harvard to Examine Impact of Right-Wing Think Tanks on Mass. Policy, Privatization Efforts**

**CAMBRIDGE, MA** – A diverse panel of national and local voices will explore the recent impact of right-wing think tanks on Massachusetts public policy, specifically in the context of recent well-funded campaigns to privatize education and transportation services.

Event organizers say they were inspired to convene the panel following [statements made by Massachusetts Senator Elizabeth Warren](#) in which she described the research of corporate-backed think tanks as “thinly disguised lobbying, but lobbying nonetheless.”

While Warren was referencing what she has observed at the federal level, advocates say they see the same pattern playing out among right-wing think tanks at the state level – including those with funding ties to national think tanks with radical conservative and libertarian agendas.

WHO:

**Nia Evans**, Executive Director, **NAACP Boston**

**Steven A. Tolman**, President, **AFL-CIO**

**Prof. Neenah Estrella-Luna**, **Northeastern University School of Public Policy**

**Abby Scher**, Fellow, **Political Research Associates**

**Darlene Lombos**, Executive Director, **Massachusetts Community Labor United**

**Chris Faraone**, Founder, **Boston Institute for Nonprofit Journalism**

**Elena Letona**, Executive Director, **Neighbor to Neighbor**

**Jeremy Mohler**, Communications Specialist, **In the Public Interest**

WHAT: A panel discussion regarding the recent and ongoing impact of right-wing think tanks on Massachusetts public policy

WHEN: Monday, November 21, 2016, 8:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m. (Breakfast: 8:00 a.m., Program begins: 8:30 a.m.)

WHERE: Harvard University Faculty Club, Reading Room, 20 Quincy Street, Cambridge, MA, 02138, [Directions and Parking](#)

## MORE ON WHY:

The event comes on the heels of Massachusetts voters overwhelmingly rejecting an effort to increase the number of charter schools in the state, [despite proponents of the measure having spent \\$24.2 million](#) by the end of October.

Beyond the failed charter school ballot initiative, right-wing think tanks also continue to lobby and campaign aggressively for the broad privatization of public transportation services in Massachusetts, despite mounting evidence that similar privatization schemes have had negative outcomes for riders, workers, and taxpayers across the United States and globally.

In conjunction with the panel, the left-leaning **Political Research Associates** plans to release a new report on Monday morning titled: *"Privatizing Massachusetts: The Right-Wing's Blue State Game Plan."*

Copies of the report will be available at the forum. The forum has been organized by **Community Labor United (CLU)**, a progressive coalition of community and labor groups based in Boston.

# # #

Community Labor United combines the joint power of community-based organizations and labor unions in order to stabilize and strengthen working class families and communities of color in Greater Boston. Through a program of coalition building, strategic research, policy development, public education and grassroots mobilization, we seek greater investments in quality jobs, public transit, affordable housing and sustainable development.