



# Big Tech's Misguided Ballot Measure in Massachusetts

## Myth vs. Reality

Big Tech's heavily-funded misinformation campaigns put workers, consumers, and communities at risk. After spending a record **\$224 million** to pass Proposition 22 in California<sup>1</sup>, these corporations are pushing for a similar campaign in Massachusetts. Opposition to initiatives that endanger consumers and strip gig workers of their rights is growing, and one thing is clear: **we cannot let Big Tech buy a law in Massachusetts.**

**MYTH**

vs.

**REALITY**

<b>Workers and Consumers Were Swindled in California</b>	Proposition 22 was created with the intention to provide gig workers with more autonomy. It claimed to provide flexibility, financial stability and benefits for app-based workers.	After California passed AB5 in 2019 <sup>2</sup> , app-based companies were looking for loopholes to avoid granting employment rights to their workers. Rather than following the law, these corporations promoted misleading information <sup>3</sup> to pass a ballot measure that would exempt them from providing labor protections to gig workers. <b>After Proposition 22 passed, drivers lost pay and flexibility, and experienced more deactivations.</b>
<b>Consumers Are at Risk</b>	Initiatives like Proposition 22 claim to benefit app-based workers, consumers, communities, and the larger platforms that connect them.	<b>In the aftermath of Proposition 22, platforms charged consumers increased prices and new fees<sup>4</sup>.</b> A similar initiative in Massachusetts would not only create a financial burden, but could also shield Big Tech from liability following accidents or other incidents.

**MYTH**

vs.

**REALITY**

<p><b>The Flexibility Fallacy</b></p>	<p>Big Tech claims that classifying workers as independent contractors offers flexibility and freedom. It claims there must be a trade-off between employee classification (which guarantees benefits and protections) and a flexible work schedule.</p>	<p>There is nothing in the law stopping these companies from providing their workers with all of the protections that come with employment status and flexibility that these workers value. Uber, Lyft, and other gig companies don't want to pay for protections like expense reimbursement, minimum wage, unemployment, and workers' compensation. <b>Workers don't have to and shouldn't be forced to choose between flexibility and safety and benefits on the job.</b></p>
<p><b>Following the Money</b></p>	<p>Big Tech tried to claim that app-based workers and community advocates pushed to pass Proposition 22 in California and that gig workers were the driving force behind the initiative.</p>	<p>Uber, Lyft, and other gig companies spent hundreds of millions of dollars to pass Proposition 22 in California. By funding groups with misleading names and spending record amounts of money<sup>5</sup> on the campaign. Big Tech deceived voters, consumers, and workers alike. <b>Polls show that California voters were confused and thought workers' rights advocates backed Proposition 22. The Massachusetts initiative is funded by Big Tech companies<sup>6</sup>, not workers.</b></p>
<p><b>Misguiding Civil Rights Claims</b></p>	<p>Their proposal claims it creates new civil rights protections for drivers.</p>	<p><b>Their proposal actually excludes a class of workers from the Massachusetts Civil Rights Act, MGL c. 151B,</b> by removing most anti-discrimination protections for app-based workers and by removing state agency enforcement.</p>

<sup>1</sup> Los Angeles Times. (2020, November 13). California propositions shatter fundraising records with more than \$785 million to spend. Los Angeles Times. <https://www.latimes.com/projects/props-california-2020-election-money/>

<sup>2</sup> Prop 22 was a failure for California's app-based workers. now, it's also unconstitutional. National Employment Law Project. (2021, October 4). <https://www.nelp.org/blog/prop-22-unconstitutional/>

<sup>3</sup> Guardian News and Media. (2021, February 18). 'I can't keep doing this': Gig workers say pay has fallen after California's Prop 22. The Guardian. <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2021/feb/18/uber-lyft-doorDash-prop-22-drivers-california>

<sup>4</sup> O'Brien, S. A. (2020, December 14). Uber rides and food deliveries will cost more in California to cover new driver protections. CNN. Retrieved December 16, 2021, from <https://www.cnn.com/2020/12/14/tech/uber-prop-22-california-fees/index.html>

<sup>5</sup> Manthey, G. (2020, November 3). Prop. 22: Rideshare-driver measure is most expensive in California history. ABC7 Los Angeles. <https://abc7.com/22-california-prop-2020-ca-what-is/7585005/>

<sup>6</sup> Person, & Nate Raymond, T. B. (2021, August 4). Group backed by Uber, Lyft pushes Massachusetts Gig Worker Ballot Measure. Reuters. <https://www.reuters.com/business/autos-transportation/group-backed-by-uber-lyft-pushes-massachusetts-gig-worker-ballot-measure-2021-08-04/>