

Johnson County Public Policy Council
2018 Kansas State Representative Candidate Questionnaire

Name: Brandon Woodard

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Political Affiliation: Democrat

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Campaign Video Link: N/A

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Occupation/Work History (last five years – 25 words or less):

I'm currently a higher education fundraiser, making college affordable for students at the University of Kansas. I've worked in Kansas for the last 11 years.

If you are or have been affiliated with a chamber of commerce or other business organization please list which organization(s) and any leadership positions you have held:

I am a member of the Council for Advancement and Support of Education, an international organization for advancement professionals.

Other recent political/community experience (25 words or less):

JoCo Citizens Academy, Election Worker, Chair of the Johnson County Young Democrats, 2-term precinct committeeman, Jayhawks for Higher Education, KU Student Body VP

As a candidate, what are your top three policy issues? (10 words or less per issue)

Reducing the sales tax on food, with a path to elimination

Investing in public K-12 education, restoring cuts to higher education

Expanding Medicaid

What are your views on state tax policy, being as specific as you can? (100 words or less)

I support a balanced tax structure with all incomes paying their reasonable fair share. I will support a more progressive tax structure where those who make more pay more, including an additional tax bracket for single earners making more than \$500,000 per year. Further, I believe we should reduce the sales tax on food, which would be an immediate tax cut for all Kansans.

With record low unemployment rates, what would you do to grow and develop the state's workforce? (75 words or less)

Investing in higher education programs, both at four-year universities and vocational/technical programs, are wise investments to create a skilled workforce. Often times when unemployment rates are low, wages are forced to go up to retain talent. Additionally, investments in higher education allow our post-secondary institutions the ability to meet the demands of the ever-changing workforce.

What are your views on funding K-12 education? (75 words or less)

I believe we must adequately and equitably fund public K-12 education. Public K-12 education gives students a foundation for success, so we must invest in resources for our school districts to: increase

teacher salaries, decrease classroom sizes, and provide necessary nursing, counseling, social workers, and invest in education infrastructure. Investing in public K-12 education will have a positive long-lasting impact on the Kansas economy.

What would your priorities be in any new statewide transportation plan? (50 words or less)

I will support investment in transportation infrastructure to improve the three major highways that pass through the 30th District. Additionally, I will oppose transfers out of the State Highway Fund.

Do you support maintaining the current dedicated sales tax transfer to the State Highway Fund for the purpose of funding transportation infrastructure, or should transportation be subject to the appropriations process where legislators determine funding levels entirely? (50 words or less)

I support preserving the dedicated sales tax transfer to the State Highway Fund to fund transportation infrastructure and I oppose transferring those monies from the SHF for any purpose other than transportation projects.

What types of economic development policies will you support to encourage job growth and business expansion in Kansas? (50 words or less)

I support reforming our incentive structure to bring new jobs to the region, rather than back and forth between Missouri and Kansas. I would support investing in public education to train a workforce that attracts businesses to expand and create jobs in Kansas.

What are your views on the state's role regarding immigration and do you support employment-based immigration reforms to assist with workforce shortages in specified industries? (50 words or less)

To welcome all to Kansas, I support appropriating funding for immigrant and refugee services, and educational programs to assist these families in their transition to our state. I support employment-based immigration when employers can show they've been unable to hire Kansans to fill open positions.

What are your views on the state's role with respect to access and affordability of public higher education? (50 words or less)

Kansas should reverse the cuts made to higher education which have caused rising tuition at our four-year universities. I support increased investments in higher education to develop the future workforce that contributes to the Kansas economy. All Kansans should be able to afford a post-secondary education.

What are your views on healthcare policy and Medicaid expansion? (50 words or less)

Expanding Medicaid in Kansas will provide health coverage to 150,000+ Kansans in the coverage gap and bring our federal tax dollars back to Kansas to cover a significant majority of the expansion costs. Greater healthcare insurance coverage reduces uncompensated care at our hospitals making healthcare more affordable for Kansans.

What role should state government have in determining workplace employment practices and benefits offered to employees? (50 words or less)

The state government should ensure that employers promote safe work environments for their workers, offer competitive compensation and benefits to recruit and retain a strong work force, and provide necessary accommodations for all Kansans to contribute to our local economy.

What do you believe is the most pressing issue or challenge facing Kansas today and how would you address it? (50 words or less)

Average Kansans continue to struggle with the effects of the failed Brownback tax plan. When I'm in Topeka, I'll join the effort to make investments in our public education system, move to a more stable tax and budgeting structure, and work in a bipartisan way to solve Kansas' problems.

What project have you been most proud to work on? (50 words or less)

Founding the Johnson County Young Democrats is one of my proudest accomplishments. We created an organization for young people to channel their post-2016 election energy into action through effective advocacy and meaningful dialogue. We also helped elect several school board, city council, and county-wide elected officials in 2017.

What do you believe most distinguishes you from your opponent(s) in this race? (75 words or less)

As a lifelong Kansan, coalition builder, and proven community leader, I have the temperament and poise necessary to effectively represent the people of Olathe and Lenexa in the Kansas House. I am the only candidate that: voters chose to put on their August ballot, has a multi-year history of advocating on issues in Topeka, and has dedicated their adult life to motivating people to get involved in the political process. I'm ready to serve.