

Johnson County Public Policy Council
2018 Kansas State Representative Candidate Questionnaire

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Political Affiliation: Democrat

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District: 15

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<https://www.facebook.com/haulmarkforkansas/videos/1548219718621394/>

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

Previous to the last 5 years, I worked as an IT Manager in the government sector. The last five years, I focused on national activism.

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:

N/A

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

I am the Kansas Representative for the Deaf Grassroots Movement. I am also the co-founder of the Deaf Grassroots Movement as well.

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

1. Stronger Public School 2. Voting Rights 3. Expanding Medicaid

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

I believe that everyone should pay fair taxes including property, income, sales, and other responsible fiscal taxes. The 2017 Kansas legislature enacted an income tax increase that will affect almost every working Kansan and many businesses. Our state sales tax is one of the highest states in America. This affects every Kansan. In addition, Governor Brownback's failed tax experiment left the State of Kansas budget with a one billion dollar budget deficit in 2017. This has affected Medicaid, State retirement funds, accessibility to food and transportation. We need to become more fiscally responsible.

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

Many Kansan families struggle on the current minimum wage income. The minimum wage should be increased to help those employed to support their families. At the same time, I feel we need more diversity in our workforce. Especially in the 15th District, it's imperative we actively seek employees with different backgrounds, different lifestyles, and different abilities. These groups are often unemployed or underemployed. To strengthen our workforce, we need to actively be more inclusive.

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

The Kansas Supreme Court ruled in October that the more than \$4 billion a year the state spends for public schools isn't sufficient under the Kansas Constitution. And independent research shows an additional \$1.7 billion to \$2 billion increase over 5 years will help improve test scores and graduation rates. Kansas ranks 42nd among the 50 states, according to the NEA, in average teacher salary. As a product of public schools, this is unacceptable.

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

I believe that there needs to be an investment to repair our state's infrastructure. Over the last decade, the Kansas Department of Transportation has cut funding drastically to help cover budget shortfalls. These budgeting missteps are going to dramatically affect our infrastructure.

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 believe that our sales taxes on fuel and tolls should be directly used for our needs to maintain the state transportation infrastructure system. There must be a protection in place to prevent the raiding of this highway budget.

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

There needs to be confidence and faith in our state for families to live here. The families expect steady income in order to stay. If the families live here, economy grows with businesses expanding to meet those families' demands. Businesses expand jobs, products, and are part of the economy cycle.

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)

Kansas should have open arms to immigrants seeking to live here. This means more work opportunities, safe and secure living environment, and reasonable means for them to contribute to our society by paying taxes and integrating in our communities. The HB-1 visa programs are very important to our immigration policy.

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

The tuition costs of the state universities must stay reasonable enough to attract local students. In turn, after completion of education, these graduates would be compelled to stay in Kansas to contribute to our work force with more competitive skills, more experience, and more advanced technological abilities.

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

Every Kansan has basic rights to healthcare coverage. There is a large gap that many Kansan families cannot afford healthcare coverage and are not qualified for Medicaid programs. This gap must be closed.

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

There must not be any form of discrimination based on protective status. There must be protection put in place by the Kansas government to protect the market from manipulative and unfair practices. Large corporations must have regulations for worker safety, preventing harassment, and fair pay and benefits for employees.

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

First and foremost is public education. With the State Supreme Court requesting a fix to the public school budget in 2019, this will be the first issue on all of our plates. It's imperative that would reach a solution that benefits our schools and our students.

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

In 2015, I had this idea to bring together Deaf communities in all 50 states for a rally to support Deaf rights in Washington, DC. This is now known as the Deaf Grassroots Movement and it's still going strong today.

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

This campaign prides itself on its voters, its constituents and its people. I am here to represent them. I am by no means the expert, but there are experts within this District whose voices I need to amplify. There are under-represented communities within this district who need to have a seat at the table. I truly believe the difference in this campaign is in representing those who live in District 15.