

Johnson County Public Policy Council
2018 Kansas State Representative Candidate Questionnaire

Name: James Todd

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Political Affiliation: Republican

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District: 29

Campaign Website: N/A

Address/City/State/Zip:

Campaign Video Link: N/A

9812 W 118th St #3

Overland Park, KS 66210

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

Attorney, Liquor Store Manager

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:

Kansas BAR, Missouri BAR Association

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

Two Terms as State Representative from District 29

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

1. Budget Stability 2. Development of a new transportation plan. 3. Advocacy for individuals with disabilities and long-term health issues.

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

Kansas needs a period of stability without dramatic fluctuations in tax policy. The next issues that should be considered regarding taxes would be a lowering of sales tax which was raised to fill budget holes when income tax reform was not politically possible.

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

Kansas has a quality education system that is producing intelligent and productive workers and entrepreneurs. Unfortunately, too many of those peoples leave to join the workforce of other states. We need to find ways to attract and retain talent. Restoring stability and a reputation for good governance to Topeka can be a part of making Kansas a desirable place to establish a life and career.

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

A quality education system is instrumental to economic health. The state government should continually review it's monetary commitment to ensure educational dollars are being used as efficiently and meet the educational needs of the students.

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

The immediate priority needs to be on streamlining a catch up program on any maintenance that was delayed the budget crisis of the last couple years. Specific projects should then be determined by a review of current infrastructure needs.

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 voted to maintain the dedicated sales tax transfer.

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

There are a variety of economic development programs available at the state and local level. I support their use as long as it is done transparently and with due diligence.

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)

I believe the state should do all it can to encourage legal migration of workers to fulfill needs in the states workforce. Specifically, Johnson County's professional service industry is in need of educated workers, engineers for example, to meet their needs.

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

Kansas makes a substantial investment in higher education. I am lucky to be a graduate of both Johnson County Community College and the University of Kansas. Institutions of higher learning not only provide educated workers but also the entrepreneurs of tomorrow that will develop new economic ideas.

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

Healthcare is expensive and confusing. I lost my health insurance when Blue Cross left the Kansas City private marketplace. Unfortunately, many of the issues with healthcare arise from the federal government and there does not seem to be any momentum for reform. Expansion needs serious consideration.

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

Private employers are best positioned to develop employment agreements with the input of their particularly employees. The role of the state should be as minimal as possible, while providing institutions to protect workers from bad actors.

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

Budget instability. During the period of tax cuts and tax increases we have swept funds, transferred

from KDOT, and delayed pensions payments. I will push to ensure an ending balance that can absorb fluctuations in the economy.

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

While in the legislature before, I was part of a group of legislators that created an MS Caucus to bring attention to the disease of Multiple Sclerosis and advocate for issues that impact individuals living with MS.

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

I have experience in the legislature and a history of working productively with my colleagues. I will be best positioned to be the most productive representative.