

Johnson County Public Policy Council  
2018 Kansas State Representative Candidate Questionnaire

**Name:** Linda Gallagher

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**Political Affiliation:** Republican

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**District:** 23

**Campaign Website:** www.lindagallagher.org

**Address/City/State/Zip:**

**Campaign Video Link:** N/A

7804 Monrovia St.  
Lenexa, KS 66216

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

Current free-lance writer and editor. Executive director of a trade association for heating and cooling contractors for 12 years. Trade publication editor for 10 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:**

Worked 3 temporary stints at Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce in the 1990's, filling in for communications director, and did free-lance writing projects for the Chamber. Also had temp position at Kansas Bankers Association.

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

State Rep, 2 terms. Repub. Precinct Committeewoman, 8 terms. PTA/booster club volunteer at Shawanoe Elem., Trailridge Middle & SMNW High Schools. Girl Scout troop leader.

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

Education - public education should be supported and adequately funded. Economic Recovery - sound fiscal policy and balanced, fair taxation. Social services - adequately fund programs for vulnerable citizens.

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

I voted for the 2017 tax reform bill to roll back the 2012 income tax cuts and stabilize the Kansas financial crisis. This restored balance to the three-legged stool of property, sales and income taxes. Taxes should be fair and equitable for all taxpayers and are necessary to provide the revenues needed to conduct state business. With the U.S. Supreme Court ruling allowing states to tax internet sales, I would support reasonable legislation to do that. It would level the playing field for local stores. I hope taxing internet sales would allow us to lower the sales tax on food.

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

I would support sound fiscal policies to continue our state's economic recovery and create a stable business environment for Kansas employers so they will be able to expand and create new jobs. I support the Kansas Department of Education's Kansans Can vision and program to better educate our students to prepare them for post-secondary education and for the workforce needs of the future. I am glad this includes an emphasis on career technical education.

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

I have been concerned for years that the legislature has not adequately funded public education. I voted for the school funding bills in both the 2017 and 2018 sessions. I am confident the legislature will be able to address the issues raised by the Kansas Supreme Court in its recent ruling and appropriate the necessary extra funding from existing revenues in the next legislative session. I am pleased funding was increased for pre-K and PAT.

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

I voted for the bill to establish a task force to lay the groundwork for the next comprehensive transportation plan. Several Kansas bridges are structurally deficient or functionally obsolete, and some Kansas roads are in poor condition. These must be addressed. A local priority is addressing the I-35/75th Street bottleneck.

**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 maintaining the current dedicated sales tax transfer to the State Highway Fund for transportation projects and I deplore the practice of sweeping transportation funds into the State General Fund to prop up budget shortfalls. Transportation should not be subject to the appropriations process controlled entirely by legislators.

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

I support Promoting Employment Across Kansas (PEAK), High Performance Incentive Program (HPIP), STAR bonds and other Commerce Department programs. Economic development incentives should be used to bring in companies new to the state and that create net new jobs, rather than luring companies across the state line.

**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)

Immigration is a federal issue, and state governments and local law enforcement do not have the authority to usurp the federal government's role. However, I likely would support employment-based immigration reforms to assist with workforce shortages in specific industries, depending on the circumstances and the nature of the proposed reforms.

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

The state's role is to provide funding for public higher education so it is available to all students. I am pleased this year's budget restored two-thirds of the 2017 cuts to higher education but wanted it to be more. I worry tuition may become out of reach for many students.

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

I support expanding access to Medicaid and voted for it in 2017 and then voted to override the governor's veto. I hope we will be able to pass it in the next legislative session. Medicaid expansion would provide health-care access to 150,000 Kansans and would boost economic development.

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

State governments generally should not be involved in determining private workplace employment practices and benefits. But, states do have the right to regulate some employment practices in the case of publicly funded construction projects. I believe in free markets constrained by as few government regulations as is reasonable and necessary.

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

The state's fiscal health is its most pressing challenge. Although things are much better now as a result of the tax reform bill passed last year, it will take years to recover fully. I will support sound budget and tax policy. We can't afford to lose the gains we've made.

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

I am proud to have helped draft and pass legislation to create the Child Welfare System Task Force. It is examining various problems in the child welfare system and will issue a report with recommendations in January. I serve on the task force and am vice-chair of a working group.

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

I have a solid four years of experience in the Kansas Legislature and a good track record of representing District 23, including being vice chair of the House Children and Seniors Committee. I have a 92.5% lifetime voting record with the Overland Park Chamber of Commerce and have been endorsed by KCBizPAC. My opponent lacks experience and her positions on key issues are unknown, as is why she chose to run for this seat.