

Kansas Senate/House of Representatives 2020

Response ID:118 Data

1. Candidate Information

1. Candidate Name

James Rexford

2. Political Party Affiliation

Democrat

3. District Number of Office Being Sought

KS House District 121

4. Address

Street Address/Apt/Suite : 2335 W Johnston St

City/State/Zip : Olathe, KS 66061

5. Phone Number

913-390-3506

6. Email Address

RexfordforKansas@gmail.com

7. Campaign Website

TBD

2. Candidate Background

8. Occupation/Work History (last 5 years - 25 words or less)

Lawyer in private practice.

9. 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

10. Other recent political/community experience? (25 words or less)

A modest amount of party/campaign volunteering and leading an adult Sunday school class.

3. Issues and Policy

11. As a candidate, what are your top three policy issues? (30 words or less)

Enhancing the equal treatment and dignity of all people under the law.

Medicaid expansion.

Rational state fiscal policy grounded in empirically-based policies, with a bias toward the least-well off.

12. How would you propose to balance the state budget? What specific budget cuts would you support and what revenue enhancements would you consider, if any? (100 words or less)

I would need to give more thought to which particular budget cuts would be wise, but it seems very possible that the economic stress caused by the COVID-19 virus will mean that such cuts may have to be part of the solution to the fiscal effects of the pandemic. I would consider expansion of income tax brackets in order to potentially enhance revenue and hopefully mitigate the need for spending cuts.

13. What are your views on state tax policy, being as specific as you can? (75 words or less)

I generally support the balancing of state revenue sources across income, property, and sales taxes. But my least favorite leg of that stool is the sales tax, because it is a regressive tax that places a higher experienced burden on the least well-off people in our state. I would support and sponsor a bill to reduce, or potentially even eliminate, the sales tax on groceries, and perhaps other survival necessities.

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

I believe that our system of public education is very important for the well-being of our state, not just economically, but also in helping to form good citizenship. We must continue to work to ensure that our public schools are fully funded and receive the financial support they need to educate the children of Kansas. I support the recent interpretations the Kansas Supreme Court has given to this issue in cases before that Court.

15. What are your priorities in the new statewide Eisenhower Legacy Transportation Program? (75 words or less)

I generally support government-funded infrastructure projects. According to the American Society of Civil Engineers our country is in dire need of additional funding to expand, maintain, repair, and expand our country's infrastructure. Building up our transportation, communications, and energy networks in an environmentally responsible manner is good for the economy, by laying a strong foundation for production and distribution of goods and services, as well as acting as a stimulus for useful economic growth.

16. What types of economic development policies will you support to encourage job growth and business expansion in Kansas? (75 words or less)

We need to maintain rationality in our revenue choices regarding the state budget. We must make revenue decisions that are supported by empirical data, and not found them on ideological wishes. Although there is no avoiding some change from year-to-year in fiscal decisions even in normal times, part of our goal should be to provide a reasonable measure of stability and predictability in budget decisions, in order to facilitate a stable business environment.

17. What would you do to grow and develop the state's workforce? (75 words or less)

Keeping our K-12 public education system fully funded is part of the answer. We also need to restore lost public funding at the post-high school level. Strengthening our vocational institutes and colleges helps us to build and maintain a strong labor force. It is also important to work on justice and equality issues so that all people, no matter how they self-identify, feel safe and respected in Kansas and will wish to live here.

18. What are your views on the state's role with respect to ensuring access and affordability of post-secondary education? (75 words or less)

I believe it is the state's responsibility to strongly fund post-secondary educational institutions so that access is broad, and cost is minimized to the student. Strong institutions such as vocational training entities and colleges help to strengthen our workforce. I also believe they enhance the overall quality of our lives, not just our work lives.

19. What are your views on healthcare policy and Medicaid expansion? (75 words or less)

I support expanding Medicare in Kansas. Not doing so not only means leaving federal dollars on the table, but it also means we forgo what I believe is our duty to assist the least well-off members of our state. There are hospitals in Kansas, such as Cushing Hospital in Leavenworth, that may have survived if we had already done this. Forgoing Medicaid expansion has made us weak and less prepared to deal with COVID-19.

20. What role should state government have in determining workplace employment practices and benefits offered to employees? What workplace changes, if any, would you support? (75 words or less)

I believe that state government has an important role in regulating employment practices so that everyone is treated equally under the law with dignity and respect. I would support adding additional protection categories to our anti-discrimination laws to include gender identity and sexual orientation. People should have opportunities to work based on their skills, experience, and willingness to work. Those opportunities should not be blocked because of any type of self-identification.

21. How control over decision-making is divided among the state legislature and local governments (including local school boards) on issues such as taxation, economic development, and education has been a matter of debate. What are your views on this issue? (75 words or less)

I generally support devolving decision-making to local boards. But some matters, such as not discriminating against anyone based on how they self-identify (whether by religion, sex, gender, race, nationality, ethnicity, sexual orientation, etc.), must be uniform across the state.

22. What do you believe most distinguishes you from your opponent(s) in this race? (50 words or less)

We should run government with an eye toward justice and pragmatism. Although never perfect, government is the primary tool we use to order our social and political world. We can't build utopias with government programs, but we can pragmatically better our lives with them.

4. Thank You!

Your response has been successfully submitted.

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