

# Kansas Senate/House of Representatives 2020

Response ID:24 Data

## 1. Candidate Information

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### 1. Candidate Name

Dr. Joy Koesten

### 2. Political Party Affiliation

Democrat

### 3. District Number of Office Being Sought

Senate, District 11

### 4. Address

Street Address/Apt/Suite : 3310 W 137th Street

City/State/Zip : Leawood

### 5. Phone Number

9139727883

### 6. Email Address

jkoesten@gmail.com

### 7. Campaign Website

<https://www.joykoesten.com/>

## 2. Candidate Background

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

Faculty member at KU - department of Communication Studies, consultant for Aspyre Wealth Partners, and former state representative.

### 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.

Member and former member of Leawood and Overland Park Chambers.

Legislative Leadership (2017-2018)

Served as co-chair of the Mental Health Caucus, a founding member of the Early Childhood Caucus, and a member of the Women's Caucus.

Worked with agency stakeholders across many disciplines to draft and submit two bills to the Health and Human Services Committee relating to mental health and addiction.

Children's Mercy Hospital (2019)

Lead fundraising efforts to raise \$1.5 million for an Endowed Professorship in Developmental and Behavioral Health

Jackson County CASA (2014-2018)

Trained Advocate and Board Member, Volunteer

Committee of Hope, Member

Jewish Community Mental Health Coalition (2010-2013)

Founding Member, Volunteer Research Coordinator, State Advocate for Legislative Action

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

Legislative Committees:

Corrections and Juvenile Justice

Government, Technology, and Security

Transportation and Public Safety Budget

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**3. Issues and Policy**

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

COVID-19 has shown us we are woefully unprepared for a disaster. It's time we think collectively and strategically about the future of our economy, our infrastructure, and education.

**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)**

COVID-19 has changed everything, including our budget. Our biggest focus right now should be on making sure we get the Federal support we need to shore up our state revenue while we get Kansans back to work safely. Our efforts will have to include examining all opportunities for revenue enhancements and cuts, being strategic and with an eye for the long term health and well-being of our state. There won't be any easy answers, but there must be bi-partisan collaboration across the state to find the best path forward.

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

The best tax policy is a balanced tax policy & I will work in a bi-partisan way to ensure that we craft policy that acknowledges current economic realities, maintains a competitive edge for businesses choosing to locate in the state & provides adequate services to all Kansans. This will be especially challenging as we address the huge budget shortfalls, due to COVID-19. I stand ready to work with all stakeholders to find a path forward.

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

As an educator myself, I know all-too-well how funding affects our ability to prepare students for an ever-changing workforce. And, without a well educated workforce our economy will falter. That is why I will always be a champion for funding K-12 public schools at the appropriate levels, including funding for special education needs. Local school boards must have flexibility and control of their budget dollars as well as have the ability to maximize local funding.

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

Preservation and expansion are both important priorities under the Eisenhower Legacy Transportation Program, as both will lead to strengthening our infrastructure, create good paying jobs and provide access for movement of goods and services. Local programs, such as improvements to U.S. 69 are long overdue and warrant investment. Investment in broadband and transportation technology across the state will be a boon to our local economies while providing much needed access for tele-health, education, and logistics.

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

Now, more than ever, we must work together to ensure our economy is robust enough to keep businesses strong, our citizens

safe and healthy, while protecting the prosperity we've come to enjoy. As we re-imagine the future of Kansas we must be willing to promote innovative jobs in infrastructure, logistics, energy, technology and emerging industries. Economic development after COVID will require bi-partisan collaboration and working with business leaders to find our path forward.

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

Education and innovation will be the driving force in the years ahead of us, especially as we recover from COVID-19. Business leaders, local chambers, educators, and other stakeholders must come to the table to re-imagine what kind of workforce we need after the public health crisis is behind us. I look forward to being part of that strategic team of legislators.

**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)**

As an educator myself, I believe that public education at all levels is vital and necessary for a healthy democracy. We must prepare our students to be competitive in a rapidly changing world by training them to be resilient learners, effective communicators and collaborators, while being globally and culturally competent citizens. Our state's commitment to ensuring access and affordability to secondary education must endure, especially now.

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

COVID-19 has highlighted what we have long known, access to affordable health care is critical, regardless of employment status. Our public health system has been woefully underfunded over the years. Medicaid expansion would improve our ability to manage this public health crisis and save lives. The refusal to expand Medicaid has cost Kansas 3+ billion of our tax dollars, prevented the creation of thousands of jobs, and put many health care facilities in jeopardy.

**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)**

In collaboration with all stakeholders, State government should develop and enforce workplace employment practices to ensure the safety and well-being of our workforce across all business enterprises in Kansas. Workplace benefits are more challenging from a legislative perspective, since so many of our small businesses have fewer than 20 employees. That said, I believe the State has a vested interest in making sure Kansas workers have a minimum level of employee benefits.

**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)**

Local control is always the favored approach to decision-making. As we have seen over the past few months this is especially critical during times of natural disaster or public health crisis. On taxation, economic development and education local control should prevail as well.

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

During the time that I served in the Kansas House, I prided myself on being accessible to chamber leaders, school administrators and business organizations to hear their points of view and priorities. I also believe in collaboration and relationship building as core principles to developing sound policy.

**4. Thank You!**

**Your response has been successfully submitted.**

**Candidate responses will be posted at [www.VoteJoCo.com](http://www.VoteJoCo.com) once advance voting begins.**