

Kansas Senate/House of Representatives 2020

Response ID:88 Data

1. Candidate Information

1. Candidate Name

Linda Featherston

2. Political Party Affiliation

Democrat

3. District Number of Office Being Sought

Kansas House, District 16

4. Address

Street Address/Apt/Suite : 11007 W 100th St

City/State/Zip : Overland Park, KS 66214

5. Phone Number

913-735-3635

6. Email Address

Linda4Kansas@gmail.com

7. Campaign Website

www.Linda4Kansas.com

2. Candidate Background

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

I have owned and operated an independent piano studio for twenty-seven years.

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.

I have no chamber of commerce or other business affiliations. I have served my state professional organization as president and my local professional organization as treasurer.

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

I was a core team member for Rep. Cindy Holscher's campaigns and am an active volunteer in my profession and community.

3. Issues and Policy

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

My top three issues are: fully funding our public schools, Medicaid expansion and working across the aisle to create common sense budgets.

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)

The best thing we can do to balance the state budget is to generate more revenue by expanding Medicaid. I would also support expanded tax brackets that do not burden the middle class to expand revenue. I do not support across the board funding cuts that have no regard to agencies' and Kansans' needs.

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

The state needs to be funded by a well balanced combination of sales, property and income tax. The Brownback experiment showed us that relying too heavily on the first two creates an imbalance that doesn't work. Kansas needs to adjust the current two bracket tax system. There is plenty of room to add a bracket above our current \$60,000 top bracket. The next higher bracket should be substantially higher to protect the middle class.

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

Public schools are the basis of our economy and must be fully funded. Every child in Kansas deserves a high quality public education regardless of their social-economic status. I appreciate that the courts have ruled that we are adequately funding our public schools, but that is the bare minimum and our children deserve more than the bare minimum.

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

I am the child of retired KDOT employees and am thrilled to see the passage of the bi-partisan Eisenhower Legacy Transportation Plan. Not only do transportation projects improve safety and our quality of life, they generate jobs. As an Overland Park resident who travels west regularly, I am pleased to see US 69 and K-10 expansions included in this plan.

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

As the school system is the largest economic stimulus program in Kansas, I support fully funding our public schools, including our trade schools, community colleges and universities. Fully funding these schools will create a well prepared and well educated workforce which benefits businesses. I support Medicaid expansion which will return tax dollars to our Kansas economy and create jobs in health care as well as the retail and construction industries.

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

Before the COVID-19 virus struck, the entire Kansas higher education system didn't graduate enough people to fill our job openings. We need to work to control tuition and restore funding to our universities, community colleges, and trade schools so that we can keep our best and brightest students here in Kansas. In addition, passing a statewide non discrimination ordinance would open the entire state to more workers.

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)

Higher education budget cuts led to dramatic tuition increases from 2012 to 2017, which drove many students out of Kansas. We need to restore funding and highlight the value of our community colleges. I have seen first hand the value of high school students earning college credit through Johnson County Community College and college students being able to take less expensive classes at JCCC during the summer.

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

Medicaid expansion is the issue that finally pushed me to run for office. Kansas has lost over \$4 billion by not expanding Medicaid, and we cannot afford to loose another dime. We have 150,000 Kansans that lack access to affordable health care. People that lack access to regular healthcare are often forced to use the emergency room as their primary healthcare source. This is neither economically beneficial nor medically appropriate.

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 support the state returning due process rights to all teachers, so we can attract and retain the best teachers. I support fair employment practices that do not preclude any qualified worker from the workforce. I support predictable scheduling, so workers can maximize their earning potential while balancing their job/jobs with family responsibilities.

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)

In general, I think local school boards, counties and cities should be able to maintain the control they currently have on issues such as taxation, economic development and education. They know their communities best and have the most direct contact with those they serve. What works well in one part of Kansas may not work as well in another.

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

I am a lifelong Kansan and 21 year Johnson County resident. I raised my family in District 16 and have been an active volunteer within my community and profession. I am a strong proponent of public schools, and I have been a teacher and small business owner for 27 years.

4. Thank You!

Your response has been successfully submitted.

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