

Johnson County Public Policy Council
2020 Kansas State Senate/Representative Candidate Questionnaire

Name: Beverly Gossage Political Affiliation: Republican District: Senate #9

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

As a health insurance agent and HSA/HRA specialist, I have helped businesses, families, individuals and seniors find affordable coverage that meets their needs and budgets.

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:

Though not a member, I have been an invited speaker at numerous Chamber meetings including the Kansas Chamber and other business organizations, like the NFIB and Rotary. I am a former Realtor and was a member of the Lawrence Realtors Association. I am the past President of the Greater KC and the Kansas chapters of the National Association of Health Underwriters. I'm a Health Policy advisor for Job Creators Network and Physicians for Reform, among other organizations. My campaign is endorsed by the Kansas Chamber.

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

Lexington Township Trustee, Precinct Committeewoman, National GOP delegate 2012, 2016, 2020. Ikkette graduate, Insurance Commissioner candidate. Policy advisor to presidents and state legislators. Volunteer at my church.

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

1. Helping businesses and the economy bounce back after COVID regulations
2. Allow more choices in health insurance plans and transparency in government
3. Balancing the budget in a methodical way without raising taxes

With projected state revenue shortfalls, how would you propose to balance the state budget? What specific budget cuts would you support and what revenue enhancements would you consider? (100 words or less)

State budgets are often "balanced" by shifting dollars from agencies and delaying payments to other programs, like KPERs. Borrowing from Peter to pay Paul. I served on the KS Board of Indigent Defense Services where we reviewed the budget annually. We need to look at the budget line-by-line and assess if our dollars are spent wisely and where cuts could be made. I would recommend we consider a Zero Based Budgeting approach where managers are required to justify all budgeted expenses, not just the changes in the budget of previous year. The baseline would be zero, not last year's budget, protecting taxpayers, and local governments.

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

This past session the Senate passed a fair and transparent policy to address the tax burden in Kansas. Unfortunately, it was vetoed, returning Kansans back to a high tax environment. Today, in the days of pandemic, it is even more vital to keep taxes down or at least steady for all Kansans. As senator, I will pursue every avenue for a fair tax policy rather than raising taxes on hard working Kansas families and businesses.

With revenue shortfalls projected, how would you address funding K-12 education? (75 words or less)

As a former classroom educator, I know the struggles of teachers trying to stretch supplies for their students, while watching waste and top heavy salaries in the administration. I questioned how the funds were used and if the tax payer investment translated to improvements in student outcomes. Recently the Senate voted to end the decades long litigation by passing \$1.5B in funding to our schools. We must hold school boards accountable for verifiable, targeted outcomes.

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

Of course, we should maintain our roadways and perhaps the more flexible project schedule will be better, but I have no specific priorities. As to broadband, I will admit that it is not offered where I live but I do not expect others to pay for it to come to me. I am generally not a fan of private/public programs but am open to reviewing the infrastructure partnership for the rural communities.

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

Economic Development is not more government programs and regulations, but it should begin with stable, predictable, simple tax policy that benefits both small and large business and families. High taxes and uncertainty create population loss. It should ensure that communities have security and stability to grow and invite commerce to give access to needed services like medical care, food, affordable housing, jobs and education. It should be transparent and easy to understand.

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

We must look at the root cause of the growth in college tuition which parallels the growth in government intervention and subsidization. The entire pricing structure should be reviewed. I paid for my college tuition with my savings and minor scholarships. I went to community college and then transferred. College should be affordable without government subsidization and insurmountable student debt. We are beginning to see the free market compete in this arena with on-line resources and concurrent enrollment.

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

Our goal in health care reform should be to ensure that all Kansans have access to an affordable, private, portable, personalized health insurance plan where they only pay for features that they want. I've testified in DC and Topeka to remove barriers to that goal. Medicaid should be preserved for those for whom it was intended, the disabled and low-income seniors, families, pregnant women and children. Expansion to able-bodied, single adults forces people off private insurance and onto Medicaid, crowding out the truly vulnerable and increasing an already inflated budget.

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)

Employment practices and benefits should be at the discretion of the employer and not mandated by any state entity. Government interests should extend to environmental and safety issues only. We should allow employers a ramp off of group health insurance by encouraging our federal legislators to pass HSA reform so that all Americans can have an account from which they can pay for their insurance plan and employers can contribute to that account. I helped craft that bill with Sen Cruz.

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 always lean toward more local control. However, the state government has a role to play in ensuring transparency and in protecting the basic liberties of its citizens and how tax dollars are spent. This is why I support property tax reform and other measures that are common-sense and simply inform the public. The ultimate local control lies with the people.

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

I support limited government, individual liberty, free enterprise, and traditional values. My experience: educator, home-school mom, Sylvan Learning Centers District Manager, business owner (Gossage Real Estate), independent insurance broker, and published author, plus a concerned citizen who's crafted bills and testified on them have prepared me to be ready day one to work for you. And I don't run negative ads.