

**Johnson County Public Policy Council**  
**2016 State Senator/State Representative Candidate Questionnaire**

Name: Vicki Hiatt District: 10 Political Affiliation: Dem

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Campaign Website: www.hiattforkansas.com

Campaign Video Link:

Occupation/Work History (last five years - 25 words or fewer):

Special Education Teacher for 30 years. Retired in 2012.

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

Candidate for House District 39 in 2014 election  
CASA Volunteer

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:

None

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

1. Repeal the 2012 tax cuts and implement a fair system of taxation.
2. Fully fund public education and get rid of tax credits for private schools.
3. Expand Medicaid to save rural Kansas hospitals and provide health care to more Kansans.

What are your views on state tax policy? (100 words or fewer):

The current state tax policy is very unfair by putting a greater tax burden on the low and middle income families of Kansas. We should not be moving toward a zero income tax level and an increased sales tax and property tax level because this takes more money out of the pockets of those who can least afford it. The current state tax policy does not provide enough revenue for the state to pay its bills and continues to place an excessive burden on local governments to provide services that the state can no longer afford.

If Kansas faces a significant revenue shortfall in meeting its budget, how would you proposed to balance the budget? Please be specific. (100 words or fewer):

A significant revenue shortfall would require more cuts to quickly balance the budget. However, cutting services is not the long term answer since too many Kansans are suffering from these cuts and I believe the people of Kansas are willing to pay the taxes necessary to receive a higher quality of life. Returning to the revenue source of income tax for all and finding new sources of revenue would be a priority.

What are your views on K-12 school funding? In anticipation of a new funding formula/process, what are your priorities?(75 words or fewer):

I believe K-12 school funding should be equitably and adequately funded as required by the Kansas Constitution. As a native Kansan, I have been proud to have the educational opportunities that my state has offered. Strong public schools have been a major draw to people moving in from other areas of the country. My priority to remedy the school funding formula would be to return to the previous formula and work through any portions of that process that may need to be updated to remain true to the requirements of the constitution. It is unrealistic to deny that the cost of educating students has not increased.

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

Access and affordability of public higher education is necessary to provide a thriving work force in Kansas. Young people who have grown up in Kansas are more likely to stay and contribute to our state if they have access to quality higher education and they can take advantage of the in-state tuition break to make it more affordable. We must be able to compete with other states in the area of higher education.

What is your position on individual tax credits and other voucher-like programs for private school tuition? (50 words or fewer):

I am very opposed to individual tax credits and voucher-like programs for private school tuition. The constitution states that taxpayer money is to go to public education. By allowing tax credits and vouchers, the money to fund public education becomes less and we are constitutionally required to adequately fund our schools.

What type of economic development policies will you support to encourage job growth and business expansion in Kansas? (50 words or fewer):

I would support policies for economic development such as STAR bonds and other initiatives as long as they were appropriate and fair. I think it is important to protect local governmental control for tax incentives since the local leadership understands the needs of the community better than the state government.

Do you support or oppose maintaining the current dedicated sales tax transfer to the state highway fund for the purpose of funding transportation projects, or should transportation be subject to the appropriations process where legislators determine funding levels entirely? Explain. (75 words or fewer):

I support maintaining the current dedicated sales tax transfer to the state highway fund for transportation projects but I want that fund to be protected and not used as an alternate source of revenue for the general fund. Maintaining our roads and bridges is necessary for the safety of transporting people and goods.

What is your policy position on the state's role regarding immigration and do you support employment-based immigration reforms to assist with workforce shortages in specified industries such as engineering? (50 words or fewer):

I would need to do more research on this issue, but I feel that I would support employment-based immigration reforms to assist workforce shortages in certain industries. Again, I would want to see data and I would not want this to be at the expense of local workers and their pay.

What role should state governments have in determining workplace employment practices and benefits offered to employees?(50 words or fewer):

I think the state government should have a role in determining workplace employment practices, especially issues of safety for workers. The state should provide some guidance to employers regarding the minimum level of benefits offered to employees.

What do you believe is the most pressing issue or challenge facing Kansas today and how would you address it? (75 words or fewer):

I believe the most pressing issue or challenge facing Kansas today is developing a balanced state budget and a sustainable source of revenue to pay for the operation of government and services to Kansans. Without this, we cannot maintain good roads, good schools, and good services to care for the neediest of our citizens.

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

I believe my greatest asset as a Senator will be my ability to listen to people's concerns and problem solve with the resources available to provide the most desirable outcome. I am not afraid to negotiate on issues. I am very willing to work collaboratively with members of both parties. I do not believe my opponent has demonstrated skill in any of these areas and has even refused to collaborate with members of her own party. I believe it's time for voters to elect more moderate thinking legislators who are willing to use common sense in solving the problems of our state.