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

Name: Helen Stoll

District: 17

Political Affiliation: D

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Campaign Video Link:

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

Currently I am a Student Development Specialist at JCCC assisting students with enrollment and records. Past employment includes 15 years as a commercial real estate lender followed by a period as a stay-home parent.

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

Treasurer for a house candidate in 2014; Game On for Kansas Schools; Mainstream Coalition; my children's school PTAs; Ethnic Enrichment Festival; Kauffman Center for Performing Arts

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

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

1. Fiscal Policy - Above all as it affects everything. Revenue stream needs to be stable and reliable

2. Education - All public education from early childhood - post-secondary should be adequately and fairly fu

3. Infrastructure - Well maintained transportation system for safety and economic development

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

Due to the 2012 tax policy changes the state's finances have been thrown into chaos. The burden has been shifted to localities and lower and middle income Kansans and is no longer adequate to fund the state's obligations. Its goals of economic growth and job development have not come to fruition.

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):

I advocate a return to the tax policy that was working for the state prior to 2012. This would include putting the hundreds of thousands of entities paying zero taxes back on the rolls and returning to the prior brackets, or something close to it. To offset some of these increases I would propose making the sales tax increase sunset as was originally promised and also advocate a reduction or elimination of the sales tax on food.

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):

The supreme court has found that the current funding was inequitable and will soon rule on whether it is adequate across the state. Funding has not kept up with inflation and I believe that it is imperative that we fund our schools at the level that makes our students competitive. This includes technology initiatives and providing adequate resources to allow ALL of our students to reach their full potential.

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

The state should maintain funding levels that support higher education and avoid excessive tuition increases. I would like to see a review of scholarship programs once funding sources are stabilized.

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

I am strongly opposed to any diversion of public funds for private education. Public tax dollars should only be used for public institutions with public oversight.

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

Reasonable and appropriate tax increment financing avoiding border war situation where no real net growth occurs.

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 the current system. We have seen that the current legislature does not allocate all funds as intended and our infrastructure should have reliable and stable sources to plan projects and maximize efficiency.

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 think that this is primarily a Federal policy issue and the state should have minimal need to interfere. There are current methods addressing needs in specific areas, but I would be open to learning what the issues are and if modifications are appropriate would support them.

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

Employees have the right to expect a safe and fair employment environment. The state should provide minimal oversight to address violations.

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

It is absolutely the unbalanced, unreliable and unsustainable fiscal policy. Returning to a reasonable model will give public institutions the ability to make the best use of state funding and plan for efficient and appropriate execution of their duties and obligations.

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

If my opponent is the incumbent, I will differ by being an independent thinker and not rubber stamping bad policy on political grounds. I have learned that the best way to have a successful life is to strive for balance and that is how I operate. This will manifest itself in this office by working to return our fiscal policy to a more balanced, fair and reliable model and will enable the state to balance its obligations and ensure that all areas receive appropriate funding.