

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

Name: Christopher McQueeney                      District: 20              Political Affiliation: D

Address/City/State/Zip: PO Box 11113, Overland Park, KS 66207

Phone: 913-850-8411                      Email: chris@chris4ks.com

Campaign Website: www.chris4ks.com

Campaign Video Link:

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

Educator at North Kansas City Hospital since 2010. My work focuses on health insurance, healthcare compliance, and electronic medical records.

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

Former seminarian of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America. I have done extensive public service work through the Church both in Kansas City and in Boston, where the seminary is located.

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:

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

1. Supporting Education: adequate and equitable funding, local autonomy, innovative higher ed.
2. Fiscal Responsibility: balanced budgets, fair and responsible tax policy, controlling state debt.
3. Real Job Growth: tax incentives for measurable job creation, expand KanCare.

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

The state tax policy exists to raise adequate revenue to cover state expenses. A tax policy which does not do so is a failed policy. Aside from this core function, state tax policy should: (1) promote the public good and economic growth where possible, (2) cause minimal harm to citizens, especially the most vulnerable, and (3) raise fairly consistent amounts in different economic times. In the context of Kansas, I think the traditional parity between income, sales, and property taxes has many virtues.

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):

The long-term revenue shortfall must be addressed by restoring a responsible tax policy. We should consider eliminating any deduction or exemption which does not contribute measurably to growth. We should also consider adjusting the tax brackets. If the shortfall is too immediate for revenue adjustments to resolve it, we should identify cuts and project delays which would meet the shortfall, with the minimum possible harm to the public. This should involve consultation with the public and key stakeholders.

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):

For any new K-12 school funding formula, I would focus on two major priorities: (1) the system should provide funds adequate to maintain the quality of education and activities we currently have in the Blue Valley and Shawnee Mission school districts, and (2) educational opportunities should be roughly equal throughout the entire state. The latter will necessitate roughly equal per-pupil expenditures, which should be implemented based on roughly equal tax contributions across different districts.

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

It is in the social and economic interests of the state to ensure access to affordable higher education for all qualified Kansans. I believe that it is desirable for Kansas universities to offer competitive tuition rates, in order to attract new residents to the state, and to avoid attrition among our most educated citizens.

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

I believe that tax credits, deductions, incentives, and exemptions should exist to serve the public interest. I would be reluctant to support the use of public money to support private schools, and would prefer that this money be allocated to our public school system.

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 tax incentives and grants for measurable job creation, including tax-increment financing and related tools to promote new development. All such measures should, however, have certain built-in public interest requirements: measurable standards for success or failure, increased transparency, and public involvement in decision-making.

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 and strengthening revenue independence for transportation and infrastructure projects. Our transportation system is the physical bedrock of our economy, and it is not desirable for KDOT and related funds to become a political poker chip tossed around during budget fights. The Legislature must have a role, of course, but it is valuable for transportation to have some level of independence.

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 believe that we should welcome immigration, especially skilled immigration. However, based on experience I am concerned about abuses in these programs, with foreign workers being recruited when local workers are available. State policy should do what it can to increase transparency, while helping to address workforce shortages.

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

The state and local governments should have a strong role in ensuring fair employment practices, and adequate wages and benefits for employees. I believe that state policy should focus on reducing loopholes which allow unacceptably low pay or poor working conditions in Kansas, especially when public money is involved.

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 think the most pressing issue continues to be inadequate and uneven education throughout the state. The recent special session of the Legislature has partially addressed this, but I think the next portion of the Gannon case will highlight systemic problems with funding adequacy. We will need to address this by implementing a new, fair, and efficient funding formula in 2017.

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

First, I am a lifelong resident of the district, and have a strong personal interest in our local school districts.

Second, I am dedicated to making real, measurable improvements that benefit my constituents.

Third, I do not view service in the Legislature merely as a stepping-stone to higher office. I will work for the interests of my district whether or not that benefits any notional future political career.