

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

Name: Brett Parker District: HD 29 Political Affiliation: Dem

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Campaign Website: www.BrettParkerforKansas.com

Campaign Video Link:

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

Olathe Public Schools - Teacher

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

Olathe NEA - Vice President, Executive Board, Negotiations Team

Founded Dressed to the Nines Day at Kauffman Stadium (Fundraiser for Negro Leagues Baseball Museum)

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. Balanced budget with revenue reform
2. Adequately fund schools and transportation infrastructure
3. Restore local control to local government

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

The 2012 tax policy is the root cause of our fiscal problems. I support a return to the 2011 policy or the creation of a new tax policy that still returns to the balanced "three legged stool" approach. Likewise, I support a repeal of the LLC exemption. Taxes are best when low, broad based, and progressive. For many taxpayers, Kansas's policy fails on all 3 counts.

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 believe that any shortfall should force a dialogue about the tax policy that has created our fiscal crisis. We cannot continue to go month to month on short term fixes. That said, new tax policy is a long term solution and shortfalls demand immediate action. In conference with the legislative research team, my colleagues and I would have to protect core functions of government while limiting the severity of cuts to non-core functions.

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):

My priorities are adequate funding for all Kansas schools and respect for the control of local school boards. Many of our Johnson County districts (and our state as a whole) are facing growing numbers of students living in poverty, with special needs, and with language needs. Given this reality, a new formula must continue to account for the costs of meeting these needs.

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

The continued decline in the percentage of public higher education funding that comes from the state is concerning. Higher tuition costs limit access for Kansas students and limit our ability to attract talented students to study and work in Kansas.

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

I oppose these programs. High quality public schools benefit the entire community and drive long term economic growth. The use of public money to private schools diverts resources which could be used to maintain and better public schools.

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

I support the HPIP, PEAK, and Angel Investor Tax Credit programs. I am always open to additional tools with measurable impacts that may further support strong economic growth and improve quality of life.

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 dedicated sales tax transfer. Transportation infrastructure is a long term investment and should be protected from law makers tempted to make short term decisions to the detriment of our long term vision.

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):

This is a federal issue and I don't believe that the state legislature needs to be involved.

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

Local authorities should largely determine what fits the needs of their communities.

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

Our continued revenue shortage is our most pressing issue. Kansas needs to move forward from the current administrations failed tax policy with a new revenue plan that enables the funding of critical investments. Solving our revenue problem will foster a more stable climate for Kansas moving forward.

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

I am an independent, pragmatic leader who puts reality on the ground level over ideology. I dialogue with the mayor and city councilmembers about issues of local government. I meet with school board members and superintendents about education. I speak with chamber of commerce staff and local business owners about economic development and pro growth policies. I will consider myself accountable to the voters of my district over the Speaker of the House (or minority leader) or special interests groups like ALEC.