

Johnson County Public Policy Council  
2018 Kansas Governor Candidate Questionnaire

**Name:** Jim Barnett

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**Political Party Affiliation:** Republican

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**Campaign Website:**

www.barnettforkansas.com

**Campaign Video Link:** above

**Occupation/Work History** (last 5 years – 25 words or less):

Physician, practicing internal medicine 28 years in Emporia and currently at Stormont Vail Healthcare in Topeka.

**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:**

Emporia Area Chamber of Commerce, Chairman of the Diversity Task Force.

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

Emporia Board of Education 8 years, President 4 years. President Shawnee County Medical Society Trustee, Kansas Medical Society

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

1-Economic development (work force, work force training, infrastructure, filling the 50,000 open jobs in our state and attracting young people) 2-Education funding (including post secondary) 3-Medicaid expansion/healthcare access

**What are your views on state tax policy, being as specific as you can?** (100 words or less)

I support the three legged stool. Our long term focus should be to broaden our tax base through economic growth. That should include lowering sales tax on food. Short term, we need to invest in our state and adjust revenues as necessary to invest in infrastructure, education and Medicaid expansion. We have become a state that lives month to month, paycheck to paycheck. We cannot grow as a state, unless we have money in the bank to invest. I support the legislators that had the courage to override the Governor's tax veto and create a new economic foundation for Kansas.

**With record low unemployment rates, what would you do to grow and develop the state's workforce?** (75 words or less)

Change the narrative that a 4 year college degree is not for everyone and focus on career/technical education. Invest in technical/community colleges with more incentives that will train the workforce we need to grow. Change our image from a state that has no money in the bank for roads, cannot stay out of court for schools and can only talk about bathroom issues. Focus on tourism (marketing) and Young Professionals (attracting and retaining young people).

**What are your views on funding K-12 education?** (75 words or less)

I want schools funded equitably and adequately. Education is joined at the hip with economic development. We should invest robustly in early childhood learning to break the generational failure of families occurring across the state. We should stay out of court and change the narrative that

Kanas DOES care about teachers and education. We should change our focus from credits to careers, supporting Kansans Can and developing the workforce needed to grow our economy.

**What would your priorities be in any new statewide transportation plan?** (50 words or less)

We needs a new comprehensive transportation program passed by the legislature and signed by the governor in 2019 with a funding mechanism. This is critical to future economic growth.

**Do you support maintaining the current dedicated sales tax transfer to the State Highway Fund for the purpose of funding transportation infrastructure, or should transportation be subject to the appropriations process where legislators determine funding levels entirely?** (50 words or less)

I support maintaining dedicated sales tax transfer to the State Highway Fund. We will need additional resources to fund our new comprehensive transportation program.

**What types of economic development policies will you support to encourage job growth and business expansion in Kansas?** (50 words or less)

1-Rebuild the basics of work force, workforce training, infrastructure, education, healthcare and quality of life in Kansas. 2-Approach economic development on a regional basis, respecting local control. 3-Focus on high performing/potential industries on a regional basis. 4-Develop a new relationship between business and education that is win/win (enterprising academics).

**What are your views on the state's role regarding immigration and do you support employment-based immigration reforms to assist with workforce shortages in specified industries?** (50 words or less)

Our state's economy is dependent on a migrant work force. This should be respected and understood. Employment-based immigration reforms should be supported and approached on a business to business/region to region basis to meet our needs for economic growth. Of course, we want all workers to be present legally.

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

We are at a pivotal time regarding this issue and need to decide if we want to be a state supported system or user pay. I want Kansas to be a state supported system with increased funding to public higher education, including research and development.

**What are your views on healthcare policy and Medicaid expansion?** (50 words or less)

I support Medicaid expansion for humanitarian reasons and economic reasons. If you do not have coverage, you may lose a limb or life. Losing your hospital is like losing your school. Hospitals have become the bank for the uninsured. Like a bank, they cannot remain open without solvency.

**What do you believe is the most pressing issue or challenge facing Kansas today and how would you address it?** (50 words or less)

Economic growth is the number one challenge for the next governor. That is why we have focused so intensely on developing a plan that can work. We need a full-time Governor/Lt. Governor to work on this issue and bring focus on international trade and markets, while rebuilding basics in Kansas.

**What project have you been most proud to work on?** (50 words or less)

Expanding access to healthcare through federally qualified health clinics, along with expanding 340B plans for affordable prescription drugs has helped many Kansas communities and hospitals.

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

We are the only Republican alternative to the failed Brownback/Colyer type administration that is still embodied in all current adult Republican candidates.