

Johnson County Public Policy Council  
2018 Kansas Governor Candidate Questionnaire

**Name:** Joshua Svaty

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**Political Party Affiliation:** Democratic

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2348 SW Topeka

**Campaign Video Link:** N/A

Topeka, Ks 66604

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

Owner/Operator, Free State Farm's Vice President, The Land Institute Senior Adviser,  
Environmental Protection Agency

**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:**

Former member, Salina Chamber of Commerce

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

Former State Representative, former Secretary of Agriculture of Kansas

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

Stabilizing the state budget Growing the Kansas economy Improving the image of Kansas so that we can change the perception of the state, both inside and outside of Kansas.

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

Kansas is best served when we have balance and stability in our tax system. We push the burden to local property taxes when we do not sustain a balanced system at the state level. The tax policy of 2012 upset that balance - our task now is to live within the policy passed last legislative session so that the state can grow but we can rebuild our broken state agencies.

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

We must remain open with immigration - both in our policies and how we speak about our vibrant immigrant communities. We also need to invest in our career and tech education systems, and design our high school system to make sure kids can track that direction if they choose.

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

I believe what the legislature passed last session was probably as good as the state can do right now. We have clearly underfunded K-12 education, but we have also underfunded every state agency and must balance incoming revenue to stabilize all of state government.

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

Public Safety and economic development are the central focus in a statewide transportation plan. Investments in infrastructure improve how we move commodities out of our state and make us more competitive. I am particularly a fan of large projects like the intermodal.

**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 am a fan of a dedicated sales tax transfer, and believe the governor and legislature should keep their commitment to transportation.

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

I see investments in higher education as strongly entrepreneurial. Many of our home grown Kansas businesses have spun out of our institutions and those same institutions also attract research dollars. Finally, all the tax policy in the world cannot attract businesses when they perceive the state as going downhill.

**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)**

I see some of Kansas' most vibrant, healthy communities as those that have strong immigrant populations. I do support reforms to help with workforce shortages.

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

Young graduates saddled with crippling debt cannot be the economic participants in the local economy to their full extent. We must create a system open and affordable to students - that means no mid-year allotments to schools.

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

We should expand Medicaid and rebuild KanCare. KanCare was promised as a more efficient, better-outcome system but has been a system where millions of Kansas dollars have ended up out of state, when they could have been put to work here in the state.

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

The perception of the state. We know young people are relocating based not on jobs, but on the communities in which they want to live - then they find a job. If our state is not attractive to young people, we will continue to struggle to attract businesses.

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

My wife and I have built our own farm over the last 8 years, during a crippling drought and the worst farm crisis in a generation. It has taken hard work, optimism, and more than our share of luck. But I love our farm.

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

I can win by attracting voters statewide in a way no Democrat has done since the Finney administration. My running mate Katrina Lewison and I represent the future of Kansas, and that bright vision is attractive in a way other tickets are not.