

Johnson County Public Policy Council  
2018 Kansas State Representative Candidate Questionnaire

**Name:** Karen Snyder

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**Political Affiliation:** Republican

**Email:** ksnyder@snyderlawfirmllc.com

**District:** 27

**Campaign Website:** www.karensnyder.org

**Address/City/State/Zip:**

15455 Iron Horse Circle  
Leawood, KS 66224

**Campaign Video Link:** N/A

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

Practice law at my law firm in Leawood, representing children and parents in abuse, neglect and custody cases. Also commercial litigation cases.

**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:**

Leawood Chamber of Commerce--our law firm (Snyder Law Firm) is a member.

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

President of homeowners association, PTO and classroom volunteer at Blue Valley schools, volunteer at church (Church of the Resurrection).

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

1. Adequate funding for public schools, including responsible budgeting and balanced tax structure.
2. Improving transportation/infrastructure.
3. Fostering favorable climate for new and existing businesses in Kansas and Johnson County.

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

After nearly a decade of constant tax upheaval, Kansas needs to return to a balance of sales, property, and income taxes, which will restore stability and allow businesses to grow and hire more Kansans. I will work to reduce the food sales tax and acquire dedicated funds for transportation. Property and sales taxes should be left to localities to the fullest extent possible. With consideration of any tax change, we must take into account a full year's impact of recent tax changes to ensure we are not acting prematurely and end up in another cycle of instability.

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

Growing and developing the state's workforce is an important and immediate challenge and opportunity, though low rates are somewhat misleading because thousands have left the job market altogether. We must incentivize innovation and encourage job growth in the trade sectors. Kansas has made great strides in recent years to support Career & Technical Education, so we must now work closely with the business community to ensure those programs are meeting the needs of job creators.

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

I support fully funding our public schools. As an attorney, I am reviewing the Supreme Court ruling in the school finance litigation. I am pleased the Court found equity was achieved by the Legislature's 5-year, \$525 million increase. We will need to work during the 2019 session to address adequacy, which I believe can be done within existing state resources. Restoring school funding to constitutional levels is critical to our future success.

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

We should first shore up a reliable, dedicated fund to ensure priorities turn into projects. Completing work delayed from the current plan, and reviewing task force recommendations for future projects would be next. Expansion of Highway 69 south through OP should be a safety and commerce priority for the state.

**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 the sales tax transfer with legislative input on final plans. With too many cooks in the kitchen and competing regional and local priorities, the highway fund should not be caught in between legislative battles every session.

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

I support HPIP and PEAK employment incentives, as well as development incentives like STAR bonds. The best economic development tool we have is our quality of life – high quality schools, good roads, and safe communities. Combine that with a stable tax code and businesses will grow and hire Kansans.

**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)

Most immigration-related issues are not for the states to decide and are set and enforced at the federal level. I do support the concept of employment-based immigration reforms to assist with workforce shortages in specific industries, but oppose unfunded mandates like E-Verify.

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

The state has an important role in ensuring affordable public higher education and helping keep tuition affordable. One concrete action would be to restore higher education funding to levels that they were prior to the failed Brownback experiment.

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

Kansans are already paying the taxes for expansion, but other states are reaping those benefits. My opponent voted against Medicaid expansion, even though all Johnson County hospitals are in strong

support, representing thousands of health care workers. I support Medicaid Expansion as a moral obligation and smart business decision.

**What role should state government have in determining workplace employment practices and benefits offered to employees?** (50 words or less)

Much of how businesses interact with employees is governed by federal law, but to the extent possible, workplace practices and benefits should be left to the marketplace, for the individual business to determine the best fit for their and their employees' needs.

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

Adequate funding for public education is the most pressing issue, and I look forward to being part of the solution that resolves this long-standing court case. Our crumbling roads are a close second as transportation funding has been decimated to cover the costs of the last decade of economic irresponsibility.

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

My legal representation of children over the years who have been abused or neglected and have found themselves in the state foster care system in need of social, medical and educational supports and services has been the most rewarding work I have done, and of which I am very proud.

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

Of the three Republicans in this race, I am the only candidate who: 1. Is moderate, 2. Sent all of my children through public schools with many ties to my community through volunteering and the practice of law, 3. Will vote against arming teachers, and 4. Will vote to expand Medicaid. Both of my opponents will return us to the disastrous Brownback tax experiment, from which the state is still struggling to recover.