

**1. Please provide some basic information about yourself.**

**Name:** Art Schaaf

**Position you're running for:** Missouri State Representative, District #30

**2. Please briefly tell us why you are running for public office.**

Our government is out of balance with super majorities in the Missouri House, senate and the governor's office. Super majorities limit the input from the voters. I want to be a part of restoring balance and creating the need to include a variety of opinions by carrying District 30 needs and opinions to Jefferson City.

**3. (State & Federal) Over the past decade, Kansas City has started to become recognized as a midwestern technology hub. There are multiple programs in place to allow this to happen, which should lead to high quality, high paying jobs. If elected, what types of policies would you support or advocate to continue the creation of startups, growth of the industry, and/or attraction of technology companies looking to relocate or expand to the Kansas City area?**

I strongly support:

1. Funding and support for Business incubators, especially in light of the decimation of startups caused by Covid 19.
2. Education funding of our population whether traditional systems or as a function of lifelong learning for non-traditional students.
3. Ensure our efforts are in line with the established businesses, startups and Businesses new to our area by coordinating these efforts with local, city, county, regional and state groups by seeking grants, and funding from all sources. Utilizing existing facilities first.

**4. (State Only) During the past few legislative sessions, education funding has been prioritized through new reforms to computer science and STEM education, allowing qualified courses to count as a high-school graduation credit. Due to COVID-19, funding proposals for computer science and STEM initiatives are in jeopardy. What, if anything, do you think needs to be done regarding education funding? How would you fund your ideas?**

Now is precisely the time for us to heavily invest in computer science and STEM. If we retreat from continuing this commitment we will make the future much more difficult and expensive. Funding by increasing gas taxes and fencing the funds for these efforts.

**5. (State & Federal) Finding talent is one of the most critical challenges that Kansas City technology companies face. Workforce development programs and STEM education are two ways in which the state can help address this concern. What do you believe can be done to fill the void to ensure companies can find the qualified workers they need?**

By enacting and supporting the ideas discussed previously to create the employee base and supportive environment needed to attract talent. Prioritizing local talent acquisition first and providing the specific training supports that employers and employees require.

**6. (State Only) COVID-19 significantly changed the budgetary landscape we faced at the beginning of 2020. Though we are all hopeful for a speedy economic recovery, funding will have to be prioritized in the meantime. What are your top three budget priorities, in order of importance to you? Please include a brief description of each priority.**

1. Gas tax increase, our rates are among the lowest in the nation. Our two largest population centers border other states with higher gas taxes. This creates an opportunity for people from other states to use our roads while contributing less to our state for gas taxes than they pay in their home state.
2. Making fully public the budget decision making process, to include all committee hearings and meetings.
3. Education fully funded, especially Tech and STEM. This commitment will spur lasting economic recovery.

**7. (State & Federal) Regarding the economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, how important is the technology business community to economic recovery, and which measures can speed the positive impact of this industry on the economy?**

It is readily apparent that the Tech sector holds huge potential for direct employment as well as frequently triggering spin off startups.

Cooperation and communication with employees and employers must be a foundation for our efforts to match their needs with our resources.

**8. (State & Federal) If the federal government makes additional funds available for infrastructure, where would you prioritize that spending? Alternative energy, repair bridges, increase freeway capacity, increase airport person and freight capacity, smart infrastructure, public transportation, or other?**

1. Repair, maintain and repurpose as needed the assets we already have. All the suggestions listed above have merit but because of our natural advantages we should focus on:

a. Alternative energy. Our prevalent, consistent winds can provide immense energy production. The huge windmills can be more economically produced and delivered here, assuming we have the workforce needed.

b. Infrastructure and upgrading smart systems in our transportation system. As a natural crossroads this is imperative.

c. Smart Public transportation as a step towards controlling traffic congestion and more widely available.

**9. (State Only) In 2019, the California general assembly successfully passed the California Consumer Protection Act. This legislation regulates how companies can collect, store, and sell consumer data. Federal pre-emption is looming and will likely mirror similar legislation to the General Data Privacy Rights passed by the European Union in 2017. If more states continue to pass similar legislation, compliance could become a difficult and expensive task for any online business. Do you support state legislation on this issue or would you prefer a Federal privacy law to preempt states' laws and to cohesively protect American consumers and businesses? If you prefer a Federal law, do you support giving the FTC the resources and authority it needs**

**to be the enforcer of the federal law, or do you believe plaintiffs' attorneys should be empowered to bring class-action lawsuits against companies?**

Generally in this circumstance, I prefer federal regulation. In my experience states regulation leads to innumerable lawsuits/countersuits in order to arrive at a roughly equitable system for interstate business. FTC should be given the authority and resources needed to provide consistent guidance. Lawsuits must be allowed at the federal level to challenge narrowly focused partisan efforts.

**10. (Kansas Only) The Kansas Angel Investor Tax Credit program was not renewed in the 2020 legislative session and must be renewed in the 2021 session to continue. The return on this investment has been exceptional and provides the necessary capital to grow new companies and attract outside investors to Kansas companies. What is your view on the Kansas Angel Tax Investor Credit and other economic development incentive programs?**

I live in Missouri but have long admired the Angel Investor Tax Credit program. It has more than proved its value in my opinion.

**11. (Missouri Only) In the last legislative session, funding for the Missouri Technology Corporation (MTC) was significantly decreased - allocating just \$1 million in this fiscal year. In 2016, MTC funding totaled \$17 million. MTC programs include MissouriTechLaunch (co-investment program), Seed Capital Co-Investment, and the Missouri Building Entrepreneurial Capacity program (MOBEC Grants). These programs will struggle to remain, if at all, with the cuts in necessary funding. Would you support future funding increases for MTC, or do you have recommendations for policies the state of Missouri can adopt to support the future of new tech businesses and startup support organizations?**

Support. This is a foundational effort to build our state and local economies, I would like the state to provide increased funding and language ensuring the inclusion of MTC efforts with local organizations.