

1. Please provide some basic information about yourself.

Name: Beverly Gossage

Position you're running for: KS State Senator District 9

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

Sen Julia Lynn was forced to remove her name from the ballot to care for her ill sister. As per state law, the District 9 Republican precinct committeemen voted for the replacement candidate. I was elected to take her place on the ballot. Though I never needed a position to make a difference or have a voice, I accepted the challenge. I will not walk into Topeka with an agenda but will defend our constitution and work to find ways to balance our budget without raising taxes on hardworking Kansans.

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 would meet with those industry leaders to determine if there are any regulations that are barriers to growth.

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?

As a former classroom teacher, I know the struggles of teachers trying to have enough supplies for their students, but I also saw the waste and top heavy salaries in the administration and questioned how the funds were used and if the tax payer investment from the budget translated to improvements in student outcomes. Recently the Senate voted to end the

decades long litigation by passing \$1.5B in funding to our schools. I am hopeful that our School Boards will be held accountable for how those precious tax payer dollars are used, and this funding will be targeted to the classroom, teachers and actual education, including STEM programs and not used to build layers of administrative positions.

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?

The workforce starts with education and affordable and flexible pathways for student success with future career and job programs and mentorships. This includes partnerships with industry and business that start in Middle School/ High School to improve career awareness and ensure basic skills are solid. Career readiness begins in early childhood and culminates directly to seamless graduation from high school to college or career. I would rely on the technology companies to explain to me what barriers exist that inhibit hiring a talented workforce.

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.

I truly cannot answer that question until I see the budget and the deficit and begin to review the solutions. Budgets are often “balanced” by shifting dollars from agencies and programs and delaying payments to other programs such as KPERS, Borrowing from Peter to Pay Paul. We need to look at the budget line by line and assess if our dollars are spent wisely and where cuts could be made. A zero based budgeting approach would help prevent spending beyond our means. In zero based budgeting, all managers are required to justify all budgeted expenses, not just the changes in the budget of the previous year. The baseline in zero based budgeting is not last year’s budget but “zero.” This would protect taxpayers and local governments from runaway spending and take the politics out of the process.

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?

Of course are businesses are vital to economic recovery, including tech companies. I would rely on conversations with the technology business community to determine measures that can speed the positive impact of the tech industry on the economy.

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?

I believe it is too soon for me to make that determination without an overview of the current state of each of those infrastructure categories.

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?

I am primarily for local control of regulation balanced with consumer protection. I will need to have more information before I can make an informed decision.

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 have no opinion at this time. I would need to have more details and see how the program is funded.

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?

N/A