

1. Please provide some basic information about yourself.

Name: Cindy Neighbor

Position you're running for: KS House of Representatives, District 18

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

I have served in office for several years, but there has never been a more challenging time than now. With the pandemic upon us, the issues we face are much greater. The budget, getting back to business, and funding for agencies is at an all time high. I have the experience and desire to address these needs.

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?

Our countries and cities are always looking for opportunities to bring new business to our communities. One of the top priorities for me is the advancement of broadband. I currently sit on the Energy and Utilities Committee and have continued to work on this issue. If we want to grow our state, we must have broadband accessibility for schools, businesses and hospitals across this state. I also believe we can work on partnerships between the Department of Commerce and new technology companies that would like to locate in our area. This is already taking place in Kansas.

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?

STEM funding in Shawnee Mission has always been a top priority. Having served on our school board for over 20 years, I know the importance of this program and will continue to make sure we have the necessary funding to support this academic need. This is what many in business are asking for and we have to be able to provide a trained workforce for the future.

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?

We have to provide more opportunities for technology training in our trade schools. Community Colleges are one opportunity and they are currently providing this much needed curriculum. We can also do more in our high schools to encourage STEM programs to students. Many of our students take advanced placement courses to lessen their time in college and have some of the licenses they need to work in the field of technology.

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.

Continued funding for K-12 and higher education. This is our economic engine for the future economic growth. We must bring high quality jobs in all fields for our state to have a strong tax base. This needs to be done in cooperation with our Department of Commerce. Safety and infrastructure (including broadband). Without connectivity, businesses are not going to want to locate here.

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?

Technology is extremely important to getting us back to economic recovery. As an example, we are now using more telemedicine during this pandemic which has kept people safe. With the apps available on our phones and computers, we can place orders online and have them delivered. Also, the ability to work from home has provided safety and flexibility for employees.

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?

Smart infrastructure.

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 believe there should be federal guidelines. The FTC can set the rules so that everyone is on the same page and there should be funds made available to accomplish this requirement.

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 believe the program is of high importance. It brings the best and brightest to the table. I believe economic development programs work to bring people and businesses together for the benefit of all.

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