1. Please provide some basic information about yourself.

    Name: Ethan Corson

    Position you're running for: KS State Senate District 7

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

I am running for the Kansas Senate to make sure that our community remains a great place to live, work, and raise a family, and that children like my son have even more opportunities than I had growing up here.

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?

- Governor Kelly and Secretary of Commerce David Toland have revitalized our state's Department of Commerce, including fully staffing the business recruitment team for the first time in seven years. I plan to be on the Senate Commerce Committee, and I look forward to working with Secretary Toland and the business recruitment team to make sure that attracting technology companies to Kansas City remains a top priority.

- I want to work with experts in the field to understand how Kansas can harness areas in which it has natural advantages, like wind energy, into high-growth green technology companies.

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?

We need to increase education funding, including as it relates to computer science and STEM education. We also need to fully fund special education and create more robust early childhood education programs.

To fund these ideas, we need to look at loopholes in our tax code, and if they're not driving economic growth or creating jobs, we should remove them. Additionally, the Governor's Council on Tax Reform will submit its final report before the 2021 Legislative Session, and I'm looking forward to reviewing those recommendations.

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?

-- Fund and support rigorous STEM programs in our public schools to prepare students for careers in STEM-based fields.

-- Make higher education affordable to every qualified student.

-- Use our vibrant community college system to help experienced workers get a certificate or training that will enable them to take the next step in their career.

-- Enhance apprenticeship programs.

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) Fully funding K-12 education.

(2) Maintaining or increasing funding for higher education.

(3) Funding grant and other programs to support businesses impacted by COVID-19.

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?

The technology business community is critical to the economic recovery from COVID-19. I am very interested in meeting with and learning from leaders in the technology community what measures can speed the positive impact of this industry on the economy. One priority I have is helping companies get access to the capital they need in the form of low or no interest loans.

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 am supportive of the Eisenhower Legacy Transportation Program passed by the legislature and signed into law last session, and would prioritize making sure that program remains on track, as it includes repairing bridges, increasing freeway capacity, smart infrastructure, and public transportation.

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?

If elected, I would look forward to meeting with members of the KC Tech Council to better understand this issue. I am familiar with the GDPR from my work at the U.S. Department of Commerce, but would like to understand the KC tech community's views on this issue before forming a position.

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?

If elected, I would like to meet with members of the KC tech community to better understand how this program is utilized by the KC tech community.

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