

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

**Name:** Mike Parson

**Position you're running for:** Governor

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

As I've traveled the state I have seen Missourians working hard every day to support their families. Missourians expect and deserve a state government that is rolling up its sleeves and doing the same hard work to ensure that opportunities to grow and thrive exist for future generations. I am running for Governor because I want every Missourian to have the same opportunities to pursue the American Dream as I did.

Leading our economic recovery while protecting the health and safety of Missourians is the single most important issue of this election. Missourians expect and deserve leaders who listen to the diverse needs of our communities throughout the state. We need a balanced approach that restarts our economy and protects jobs while implementing common sense measures to keep our most vulnerable citizens safe from the virus. Our initiatives have made Missouri a national leader in workforce development, and funded K-12 education at a record level - both are critical to strengthening our economy. As Governor I have been tested since Day 1 – leading Missouri through historic drought, floods, tornadoes, COVID-19, and civil unrest – and I am ready and hopeful for our state's future.

**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?**

My biggest priority as Governor has been workforce development and that will continue in my second term. Whether it is hands-on skills at State Tech or new economy jobs like programming, my workforce development programs will continue producing qualified workers

for Missouri's economy. I also reformed the operation of the Missouri Department of Economic Development to ensure more efficient delivery of Missouri's economic development programs and I look forward to continued success from our programs in 2021.

**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?**

Before COVID, I signed the largest education budget in state history and I have placed a premium on computer science and STEM education. I share education funding as a priority with the state legislature and I believe education funding will get back to levels we want after the economy stabilizes. That said, there are things the legislature can do to stabilize funding. Increased gaming revenues would go to education, for example.

**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 shortage of qualified workers is exactly why I made workforce development a top priority for my administration. Missouri One Start was designed to match employers with qualified workers and Missouri Fast Track opens up job training and education opportunities for alternative students in Missouri. These programs, together with our traditional education programs, are making Missouri a leader in workforce development.

**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. Education - Missouri's constitution mandates that education be our top funding priority for general revenue and I agree with this priority 100%
2. Economic Development - Economic Development is one of the few things the government can do that turns a profit in the long run. I have a long record championing reasonable economic development programs and that will continue in my second term.
3. Infrastructure - I will continue to champion infrastructure improvements because Missouri's economy depends on being the nation's crossroads. Roads, bridges, and other infrastructure need maintenance and investment for our state to grow.

**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 will continue to be an increasingly important part of Missouri's economy. The push for more work from home and remote work jobs can be a boon if Missouri fully exploits our geographic and cost of living advantages.

**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?**

Often federal money comes with federal strings but Missouri needs to look at ways to rebuild I-70 because our nation's oldest interstate is crumbling from beneath the pavement. We also need to look at smart infrastructure to make the next I-70 work better and more efficient. Technology like driverless freight or tandem trucking is coming and Missouri cannot afford to be left behind.

**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?**

N/A

**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?**

N/A

**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?**

I do support enhanced funding as part of my administration's emphasis on workforce development.