

2010 Republican State Platform

Preamble

The Kansas Republican Party affirms the Kansas Constitution in stating that “We the people of Kansas [are] grateful to Almighty God for our civil and religious privileges.” Since man is created in God’s image, each person’s dignity, freedom, ability, and responsibility must be honored.

- We believe in equal rights, equal justice and equal opportunity for all, regardless of race, creed, sex, age, or disability.
- We believe in free enterprise and that individual initiative has brought this nation opportunity, economic growth, and prosperity.
- We believe government must practice fiscal responsibility and allow individuals to keep more of the money they earn.
- We believe the proper role of government is to provide for the people only those critical functions that cannot be performed by individuals or private organizations, and that the best government is that which governs least.
- We believe that government at every level has grown too large and is now a threat to the very rights it was designed to protect. We call on every elected official to eliminate government programs and reduce government spending at every opportunity.
- We believe that the most effective, responsible and responsive government is the one closest to the people.
- We believe that Americans must retain the principles that have made us strong while developing new and innovative ideas to meet the challenges of changing times.
- We believe that the entitlement mentality which permeates our state and our society must be reversed.
- We believe that Americans value and should preserve our national strength and pride while working to extend peace, freedom, and human rights around the world.
- We believe the Republican Party is the best vehicle for translating these ideals into positive and successful principles of government.

Understanding the rapid nature of changing needs, we recognize that specific legislative proposals will come and go. We believe the merit of future legislation and policy should be judged against the philosophy of the Republican Party as outlined above.

We acknowledge and support the Commitment to Kansas as the basis for the think-tank effort of the Kansas Republican Party.

Embracing our Heritage

The Kansas Republican Party believes that the fundamental principles of the Republican Party are rooted in the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution of the United States, and the Bill of Rights. The Party supports the preservation of our Republic, its ideals, and institutions for the good of all Americans. We adamantly oppose the erosion of these cherished freedoms.

Preserving these freedoms requires our best effort; our willingness to believe in ourselves and to believe in our capacity to accomplish great things; and our great faith that together, with God's guidance, we can and will resolve the problems that now confront us.

Respecting the Constitution

The judicial branch of our federal government, and that of our state, must recognize that it is a co-equal branch of government, not a "super-legislative body." The core mission of the judiciary is to protect the historically recognized constitutional rights of the people. We believe judges should be arbiters of conflict and not public policy makers. The judiciary should be held accountable for its mission by a thorough examination of its members by the people whose rights they are to protect. The most efficient mechanism of accountability, and one envisioned by both the state and federal constitutions, is a vigilant legislature. Kansas should change its judicial selection process to reflect the federal model of legislative confirmation or by adopting direct election of judges statewide.

Respecting Individual Freedoms

Respect for each person's dignity, freedom, ability, and responsibility is a bedrock strength of our nation. We affirm the Declaration of Independence, which states that we are endowed by our Creator with inalienable rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

We affirm the rights guaranteed by the Bill of Rights as originally intended by the founding fathers, including the rights to practice religion freely, to keep and bear arms, and to be protected from unreasonable search and seizure of property, including the seizure of property by government for the use of private enterprise.

We welcome Kansans of every ethnicity into our Party as we work together to preserve our heritage of equality, religious freedom, and strong moral values. We strive to eliminate racism and we condemn all racist acts and groups.

The Republican Party supports the right of all individuals and groups to express their political views freely and openly without government regulation or interference. We cherish the opportunity to engage with others and to advance our philosophy of freedom and responsibility in a free and vibrant political debate, secure in the knowledge that the logic of freedom and responsibility will always prevail in a free and thinking electorate.

Upholding the Constitutional Right to Keep and Bear Arms

We uphold the right of individual Americans to own firearms, a right which antedated the Constitution and was solemnly confirmed by the Second Amendment. We applaud the Supreme Court's decision in Heller affirming that right, and we assert the individual responsibility to safely use and store firearms. We call upon the President to appoint judges who will similarly respect the Constitution. Gun ownership is responsible citizenship, enabling Americans to defend themselves, their property, and communities.

We call for education in constitutional rights in schools, and we support the option of firearms training in federal programs serving senior citizens and women. We urge immediate action to review the automatic denial of gun ownership to returning members of the Armed Forces who have suffered trauma during service to their country. We condemn frivolous lawsuits against firearms manufacturers, which are transparent attempts to deprive citizens of their rights. We oppose federal licensing of law-abiding gun owners and national gun registration as violations of the Second Amendment. We recognize that gun control only affects and penalizes law-abiding citizens, and that such proposals are ineffective at reducing violent crime.

We urge passage of the Kansas State Constitutional amendment that explicitly states that the right to bear arms is an individual, not a collective, right.

Promoting a Culture of Life

Every innocent human life is sacred. Every human being, born or unborn, has an inalienable right to life which cannot be infringed. We believe life begins at conception. The Kansas Republican Party will lead our nation toward a culture that values life—the life of the elderly and sick, the life of the young, and the life of the unborn.

All unborn children, regardless of ability, have a fundamental right to life which cannot be infringed. Kansas Republicans, therefore, affirm our support for a Human Life Amendment to the U. S. Constitution (as stated in the Republican National Platform), and we endorse legislation to make clear the Fourteenth Amendment's protection applies to unborn children. We oppose using public revenues for abortion and funding organizations which advocate it.

In the interest of guarding the inalienable right to life of all Americans, we support the overturning of Roe v. Wade and the prohibition of euthanasia. We encourage providing positive alternatives to abortion by meeting the physical, emotional, and financial needs of pregnant women and offering adoption services where needed and promoting abstinence-only educational programs in our schools. To protect women considering abortion, we support full disclosure of possible short- and long-term effects of abortion, and licensure and regulation of abortion clinics by the State. The State of Kansas needs to enforce its extensive laws regarding abortion, especially the strict prohibition against late-term abortions, and to ensure the right to civil and criminal redress for matters involving malpractice, malfeasance, or ethical violations. We support the prohibition of all human cloning, whether therapeutic or reproductive. We support the use of scientifically proven and successful adult stem cell and umbilical cord blood cell research and other innovations that do not involve destroying human life.

Supporting our Military

A strong national defense requires a modernized, fully equipped, and trained armed force. Their noble mission and the sacrifices they have made mandate that the men and women of these all-volunteer forces be given the greatest honor and respect.

The Veterans Administration needs to provide adequate and timely support for our veterans. Kansas should support veterans' service organizations.

We encourage actions and policies that will help employers and communities to support National Guard members and their families as they serve our state and nation. We encourage Kansas employers to hire veterans.

Immigration

Legal immigration is a blessing to this country, and with the promises of America, a blessing to all. Preserving that promise for future generations requires that we protect the sovereignty of our country and secure our borders. Illegal immigration is not compatible with this goal. Immigration and citizenship with all of its privileges, executed pursuant to the law, are an essential component of that promise. It is, therefore, the duty of all who seek the promise of America to respect the laws of our land. We oppose amnesty.

English is the official language of the state of Kansas, and unless contrary to federal law, all published state documents, resources, advertisements, media and online material should be made available only in our official language. Employers should have the right to hire or terminate employees based on their competency of the state's official language.

Unchecked illegal immigration is unacceptable within the State of Kansas. Employers hoping to take advantage of cheap labor resources using illegal aliens in their work force will not be tolerated. Every effort must be used to ensure that all employees working within the state of Kansas are legal. E-Verify, an internet –based system that verifies the employment authorization and identity of employees must be used throughout the state for all employees when hired to work within Kansas.

Law enforcement agencies must use all available resources to deport from the state all illegal aliens involved in crimes in the most expeditious manner. Maximum cooperation should be the norm between all law enforcement agencies within the state when dealing with enforcement of laws affecting illegal immigrants.

Incentive programs to entice illegal immigrants to Kansas must be terminated. These programs include issuing of Driver's Licenses to illegal aliens and the granting of in-state tuition to colleges and universities to illegal immigrants.

Kansas should join with the 25 other states that have passed legislation to refuse implementation of the Real ID Act of 2005. This act requires all states to issue a federal standardized driver's license or personal identification card. Only legal Kansas residents should be permitted to receive state issued driver's licenses or other identification cards which could be used to misrepresent citizenship status to other government entities or prospective employers.

Healthcare

True health care reform requires a systematic approach to gaining efficiency by focusing on the patient. Transparency of cost creates a consumer-based environment of health care, thus promoting the use of Health Savings Accounts and other similar choices that empower the individual in making health care choices for themselves and their families. In addition, Kansans should have the opportunity to shop for insurance policies across state lines, making the price of these policies competitive. Imperative to lowering the cost of health care is the implementation of meaningful tort reform for medical malpractice.

Under the tenth amendment, Kansas has the constitutional right to govern the state and the policies affecting its citizens. We must reestablish our right to determine federal health care mandates unconstitutional by adopting the Health Care Freedom Act. We encourage the Kansas Legislature to join in the lawsuit against the Federal Government's authority on individual liberty and state's rights regarding health care.

Growing the Economy

The keys to economic success and personal financial security are opportunity and entrepreneurship. Federal, state, and local governments must recognize that prosperity can only be achieved when economic resources remain in the hands of the people. Tax policy at all governmental levels should foster economic growth as this is the path to job creation and technological growth. We support implementation of the Fair Tax which would eliminate all individual and corporate income tax in Kansas.

Government should always seek first to constrain its expenditures to the least possible. Increasing the tax burden on its citizens should be a last resort, and any effort to do so beyond the rate of economic growth should be submitted to a vote of the citizenry. To promote economic growth, state tax policy must be simple and fair to Kansas businesses. Tax mechanisms such as the destination sales tax are unfair to small business and should be repealed. Further, there must be a new property tax system that is fair and accountable to the people.

Governments should not compete with private enterprise through ventures such as hotel resorts and gambling. Any law or constitutional provisions allowing Kansas to own and operate gambling facilities must be repealed. Government oversight of gambling enterprises is compromised when government itself is in the gambling business.

To ensure the efficacy of government, we must first evaluate each government program through zero-based budgeting. This process would involve auditing each program individually first to determine the necessity of the program, and then the approximate funding level required to run each program effectively instead of the current

process of basing the budget off of previous years. This process will enable us to recognize and eliminate the duplication of inspections and services while realizing cost savings.

Understanding that business, and not government, drives job creation, growth, and innovation, we must work toward a consistent regulation system where such regulations are clear, expected and user-friendly. This reform will encourage businesses to settle in Kansas.

Equally important, we must create a tax foundation to encourage businesses and industries already here to stay. This tax base must be competitive with neighboring states and should include a level of consistency, allowing industries to plan on staying in our state long term.

We expect our government to create a budget much like Kansas families go about creating their own budgets, by spending within its means. The Kansas budget increase should not exceed inflation or population growth.

Building the Knowledge of Students

The Republican Party believes that the primary focus of education should be on expanding academic knowledge from a core education. Students must first learn core curriculum and cannot be passed along without proving proficiency in these areas. Our students must have a thorough understanding of history, civics and the philosophical concepts upon which our society is based. Kansas students should be allowed and encouraged to fully discuss and critique all science-based theories for the origin of life in science curricula.

Public education is an essential service provided by local government and is key to our children's success. We support the Kansas legislature's continued commitment to fund Kansas public schools. We encourage the continuing auditing of school districts to find more efficiencies. Kansas schools must address efficiency in funding by adopting uniform accounting practices.

We encourage innovation and competition in education. Toward that end, we should encourage independent charter schools. We also would like to see the exploration of the idea of rewarding early graduation with state aid toward post-secondary education.

Public schools, while serving the diverse communities of our state, must recognize and be responsive to the input of school children's parents, and to the standards of character and values prevalent in the communities they serve. The role of parents as the primary decision makers in the lives of their children should be embraced. Parents

should have academic choices through options such as public schools, charter schools, and private schools, both accredited and non-accredited, including home schools. Public policy should support parental choice. The base state aid for each pupil should follow the child, regardless of the school the child ultimately attends.

We support the current system of an elected State Board of Education that is accountable to the people.

Taxpayer funding of lobbyists and lawsuits against Kansas for additional state funds should be prohibited.

Building Safer Communities

We believe the rights of society and the rights of the individual must be protected. We support the work of law enforcement across the state to create safe neighborhoods, to protect us from sex offenders, and to provide freedom from abuse. The judicial system must impose swift and fair punishment for all crimes, violent and non-violent.

We support a law requiring Kansans to show a government-issued photo ID to vote in any election in our state. We encourage the purging of the Kansas voter rolls of ineligible voters to ensure the integrity of our elections.

We oppose pornography in all forms as an indignity to the human person. Because of the increasing prevalence of pornography in our society from modern technologies, we urge our elected officials to routinely examine the laws of our state to ensure the protection of our citizens, especially our children.

We support the retention of capital punishment as a necessary and appropriate power of the state to be used most judiciously, and we urge the passage of laws that will limit endless appeals in capital cases.

Parents bear the final responsibility before God in rearing of their children and have the right to raise their children consistent with their religious and moral values. Parents must be free to train and discipline their children in love and direct their education and health care without government intrusion.

Preserving Traditional Marriage

As Republicans, we believe that strong societies rest on strong, stable families. Families provide important value in attainment of leadership skills, moral fiber, work ethic and other traits necessary to be successful in society. As defined by the Kansas Constitution, the benefits and privileges of marriage exist only between one man and one woman. Happy and healthy marriages are the foundation of our society, and we must support the institution of marriage if our society is to survive.

Because our children's future is best preserved within the traditional understanding of marriage, we call for a federal constitutional amendment that fully protects marriage as a union of a man and a woman, so that judges and legislatures cannot make other arrangements equivalent to it.

We support the courageous efforts of single-parent families to provide a stable home for their children. We also salute and support the efforts of foster and adoptive families.

As the family is our basic unit of society, we oppose initiatives that erode parental rights, such as the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Preserving the Heartland

As Kansas Republicans, we gratefully acknowledge the gift of abundant natural resources in our state and especially recognize the importance of these resources in the agricultural economy of our state. Agriculture is the single biggest economic driver in Kansas. Maintaining the rich heritage of our state in the future depends on the protection and wise use of all natural resources.

We recognize that stewardship requires the wise conservation of our God-given natural resources. The balance between the conservation of natural resources and private enterprise can be accomplished.

Private property rights are essential to individual liberty. Government should be prohibited from seizing private property for economic development. Eminent domain is intended for essential public purposes only.

We support the protection of water rights and natural mineral resources of private landowners, and we encourage the conservation of all natural resources through economic and tax incentives rather than government regulations.

Strong energy policy allows for a strong state through an increase in jobs. Innovations allow Kansas to be a national leader on energy policy. A strong energy policy is built through the development of energy resources. Kansas government should encourage development of new energy-producing business.

Kansas leaders should not be allowed to arbitrarily deny permits to build new power and energy-producing plants. Carbon dioxide, one of the most common gases on earth, should not be declared a pollutant nor used as an excuse to deny the construction of new power plants in Kansas. We oppose any so-called Cap and Trade legislation.

Ever increasing energy prices are creating new avenues for entrepreneurs and existing companies to develop new sources of energy. Every day brings new developments in wind, solar, nuclear, or geothermal energy. All of these energy sources show real promise for clean, inexpensive, renewable energy for future generations.

Kansas residents, the consumers of energy production, must be the ones considered first when mandating new and potentially expensive technology and energy policies and their impact on the economy.

Kansas must establish its role as an energy producer and exporter. We must encourage the development of alternative energy supplies, while continuing to support the oil and gas industry within the state. Increasing energy sources will inevitably create a more market-based system which ultimately lowers utility prices for consumers.

This Platform is Recommended for Passage