

PLATFORM OF THE KANSAS DEMOCRATIC PARTY

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**PLATFORM CHAIR: JEANNA REPASS
PLATFORM VICE CHAIR: MARK SCHAUKOWITCH
PLATFORM SECRETARY: NIK B. CABRINI**

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Preamble

THE KANSAS DEMOCRATIC PARTY affirms our state and national constitutions, recognizing that all power rests with the people. We pledge to protect rights, uphold dignity, defend against tyranny, and ensure government remains responsive, just, and true to Kansas's democratic heritage.

Statement of Principles

The KANSAS DEMOCRATIC PARTY believes in:

THE inherent dignity and equal worth of every person. Our differences are not weaknesses; they are strengths. No Kansan's rights should ever be impaired, or denied, on the basis of their sex, race, age, color, creed, national origin, immigration status, religion, economic status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, ethnic identity, or disability. A just society demands that all people be treated with fairness, respect, and opportunity.

WE believe in strong, thriving communities: rural, suburban, and urban alike. Each plays a vital role in Kansas's success. We are committed to investing in every part of our state because no community can thrive at the cost of another. Our future depends on building a Kansas where all regions have the tools to prosper.

WE believe in the power of local control. Government works best when decisions are made closest to the people they affect. We support policies that respect and strengthen local governance. We believe that the uprising of fascism, authoritarianism, the suppression of the free press, and discrimination against marginalized communities is anti-democratic.

WE believe public dollars belong in public schools. Public education is the foundation of opportunity and democracy, and it must be fully funded and equitably supported so that every child, no matter their zip code, receives a high-quality education.

WE believe in the dignity of work and the rights of working people. Labor unions play an essential role in protecting workers' rights, ensuring fair wages, and building a strong middle class. We stand with organized labor and all those who fight for safe, fair, and just workplaces.

These beliefs guide our work and reflect the best of Kansas values: fairness, freedom, community, and opportunity for all.

PLANKS/ISSUES PLATFORM:

1. SUPPORTING KANSAS WORKING FAMILIES

Kansas Democrats believe that strong families, of all forms, are the foundation of strong communities. We are committed to making sure every working family has the tools they need to build a good life here in our state, so they remain in our state.

We support fair wages, safe workplaces, and the right of workers to join or form a union.

We believe that affordable healthcare, childcare, and mental and behavioral health services are essential for families to thrive. We will fight for strong public schools, union-supported trade and technical education, and job training programs that create real pathways to better opportunities for the next generations.

Kansas families deserve economic policies that lift up working people instead of giving special treatment to the wealthy and big corporations. We believe housing is a basic necessity, and we support tenant protections that prevent out-of-state property managers and corporate landlords from driving up housing costs, property taxes and rent. We also

support investments in transportation, broadband, and other infrastructure that connect our communities and open the door to opportunity.

Kansas Democrats are committed to building a future where every family—no matter where they live or what they earn—can get ahead and not be left behind.

2. ECONOMIC FREEDOM

Kansas Democrats believe that the economy should be open and accessible to the people, including people inside and outside the workforce. The economy should be affordable, fair, and just. An affordable economy ensures that demand is driven by broad-based participation, not by the consumption habits of the wealthy. A fair economy provides access to essential goods and services for both working and non-working people. And a just economy includes the right to organize the workplace to fight for equitable compensation and safe workspaces. We believe that a just and fair economy allows rural communities to prosper regardless of the size of their population. We recognize that not all people have the ability to work and we support an economy and system that supports those individuals without harassment, otherization, or unnecessary requirements to obtain access to the system.

We recognize the government as having a critical role in regulating supply and demand through taxation, public services, and business development. We champion progressive taxation to drive private economic accessibility and demand for public services. We champion public services as a base platform from which the economy becomes accessible to all people and drives private supply and demand. And we champion business development that supports the public good by creating supply, especially in less than regularly accessible places, and satisfying private demands.

We recognize the concentration of corporate power artificially restricts supply and prices the people out of the economy. We oppose corporate consolidation and monopolization and propose enforcing anti-trust laws to break up large corporate monopolies and building critical redundancies into the supply chain.

We stand in solidarity with labor unions fighting for fair wages, safe workplaces, and the right to organize.

We work to build a fair economy respectful of workers' rights, to invest in a shared community, and to support the success of current and future generations.

3. EDUCATION

Kansas Democrats believe that education is, fundamentally, a public service. As a public service, education – at all levels – should be fully funded by the people. Kansas

Democrats believe that education is a public service. As a public service, education at all levels including special education should be fully funded. We stand against the use of public dollars to fund private education. We believe local public education should be governed by local school boards, regulated by the Kansas Board of Education.

We believe that all students learn best when their basic nutritional needs are met, and that all schools should provide free meals to all students.

We believe that all schools should provide a variety of programming, not limited to “job skills” and including before and after school programming, to foster well-disciplined students in both academic excellence and care of their self.

We believe that financial status should not be a barrier to entry or completion of higher education, community colleges, trade schooling, or technical schooling.

We believe that knowledge, and its creation, is an inherently valuable public good that should be accessible to all.

4. HEALTHCARE

Kansas Democrats believe that healthcare is a fundamental human right. Therefore, all people should have access to healthcare, in a timely manner, in person or via telehealth.

Access to all healthcare should never be obstructed or denied. Everyone has agency over their own body and has the freedom to make decisions about the health and well-being of their body without interference from the government.

We champion the right to bodily integrity and personal autonomy, as defined by Constitution of the State of Kansas. Everyone proudly owns their own body and has the freedom to make decisions about the health and well-being of their body without interference from the government.

Patients have the right to be fully informed about their treatment options by medical professionals, and to choose a treatment, based on scientifically accurate information.

The financial status of a patient should not limit their access to treatment. Nor should a patient's treatment be limited on the basis of their employer's, healthcare providers, or insurance providers' values or religious beliefs.

5. AGRICULTURE

Kansas Democrats are proud of our state's agricultural excellence. We support fair returns and wages for farmers and farm workers, expanded crop insurance, and conservation incentives. Monopolies must be blocked from interfering with honest profit. We support equal access to loans and streamlined approvals for all – including new farmers, small

operations, and minority and women producers. The people who work the land have the right to purchase, maintain, and repair their equipment as they see fit.

We want better trade deals – and an immediate end to the destruction of our international markets and partnerships.

We support local food, food hubs, farmers markets, and the shrinking of food deserts. We support nutrition programs, WIC, free school meals, SNAP, and senior meals.

6. STEWARDSHIP OF LAND AND NATURE

We fundamentally believe that the people are the stewards of their private land, and that the people entrust the government with stewardship of public lands. We advocate for policies that support the efforts of the people to conserve, cultivate, and sustain the land – whether rural, urban or suburban.

We advocate for land and water conservation and sustainable development. We advocate for the stewardship of our public lands, including our prairies, forests, green spaces, and parks. Abundant and clean water is essential to our future – we must protect our reservoirs, rivers, wetlands and aquifers. We affirm Climate change is real and is a threat. We support the use of our capacity for the technology and ingenuity to take action.

7. ENERGY

The Kansas Democratic Party believes the people have a right to clean, affordable, safe, and environmentally friendly energy production. We believe that renewable energy should be expanded and readily available to all Kansans alongside traditional energy sources, and that energy production should have a neutral environmental impact. We champion modern, sustainable energy infrastructure, including a modernized power grid that can provide clean energy in a rapidly changing climate. We believe in a just

transition in Kansas's energy production, creating jobs including high quality union jobs, and opportunities for all communities and ensuring no one is left behind.

8. HOUSING

The Kansas Democratic Party believes that shelter is a fundamental human right and absolutely essential to the survival of all communities across the state. We deplore the conditions that lead to homelessness, and oppose the criminalization or involuntary institutionalization of the unhoused. We champion land banking, investments in housing renovation, and the construction of affordable housing for all.

We believe financial status should not prevent people from being housed. We believe local government should be empowered to create incentives for home maintenance, renovation, and construction across the state to provide adequate supply at affordable pricing.

We champion construction and care models of housing that preserve the dignity of all communities in our state.

9. THRIVING COMMUNITIES

Kansans find home in many settings -urban, suburban, and rural. We value neighbors, connections, prosperity, and mutual concerns. Public schools, childcare, eldercare, medicine, and affordable utilities impact Kansans in every county. Broadband access brings learning and jobs to every town. Our roads and bridges connect people, markets, and emergency services. None of these essential services should be unavailable or withheld based on a zip code. Investments in local services and economic development must be robust, stable, and sustainable.

10. PRESERVING HISTORY AND THE ARTS

The Kansas Democratic Party recognizes the essential need to preserve and produce the art that affirms and advances Kansas cultures. The literature, music, painting, poetry, theater, and sculpture captures the beauty of Kansas, and challenges perceptions of the historical narratives of our state's legacy. We champion creativity and curiosity, believing these artistic expressions are vital to maintaining a healthy, civil society.

11. ELECTIONS

The Kansas Democratic Party believes that voting is the fundamental method through which the people exercise their will. Therefore, elections must be free and fair. Every registered voter has the right and civic duty to participate in electing their representatives. No Kansan who is eligible to vote should be denied the opportunity to cast their ballot, and every ballot should be counted. Ballots and polling places should be accessible to all. The voting process should be free from obstruction, ensuring that the people can properly express their will. All Kansans living and working overseas have the right to vote in Kansas elections.

People who are American citizens should automatically be registered to vote. Voting rolls should not be purged of registered eligible voters, nor should registered voters be denied the ballot through poll tests or proof of identification. Mail in ballots must be available and must be counted if postmarked by election day. Election Day should be a federal holiday, and even the most essential workers must be allowed time to vote on the designated day.

We recognize partisan gerrymandering threatens the free expression of the people's will.

We advocate for nonpartisan, independent redistricting commissions that are mandated to make fair, competitive districts for all political parties.

We also recognize the corrupt influence of private money interfering with elections. We do not recognize corporations as "people," nor their campaign contributions as "speech."

We advocate for a ban on corporate PACs and seek to replace the current system of unlimited corporate spending with a publicly financed campaign system. Until that time, we champion lowering the financial barriers to run for public office and banning foreign non-citizen entities and corporations from interfering in our elections.

We support these reforms and our current, safe, secure, and effective voting process in Kansas.

12. CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORM

The Kansas Democratic Party recognizes the public duty of government to enforce criminal laws. We champion bond reform to create a more equitable system, based on flight risk and danger to the community, not the financial ability of those accused of a crime. We believe every person accused of a crime has a right to a trial by a jury of their peers.

We oppose the privatization of our prison system. Punishment should never be outsourced to a private corporation. We recognize the public duty of the prison system as being the rehabilitation and reintegration of criminal offenders. Therefore, we champion prison reform that includes behavioral and mental healthcare and reeducation programs that enable criminal offenders to stop repeating past behaviors.

We recognize the history of Jim Crow, as rigging the economic and judicial system against people of color. Jim Crow echoes through our communities and economies leading to the criminal profiling of people of color. We seek to end racial profiling as a mechanism blocking people of color from participating in our democracy and exercising their right to participate in self-government. We also seek to end the death penalty, which is disproportionately and unfairly used against people of color.

13. IMMIGRATION

The Kansas Democratic Party answers the need for safe haven from those who seek to immigrate to the United States and settle in Kansas. We champion our state as a place of refuge for those fleeing from all forms of oppression in the country of their birth. We support an immigration policy that addresses the labor force needs and challenges of agriculture and food processing as well as construction, health care, hospitality and small businesses.

We oppose the federal overreach and denial of temporary protected status to immigrants and visitors of this country who have complied with the law.

We oppose the inhumane and cruel use of public and private detention camps, which violate basic human rights of the people detained in those facilities.

We oppose the trafficking and deportation of people to other countries, for reasons unstated, to be abused and tortured without limit.

We assert that both the Constitution of the State of Kansas and the Constitution of the United States of America guarantee due process to all people, regardless of legal status.

We champion immigration reform, including but not limited to the hiring of more immigration judges and attorneys, to speed the backlog and provide justice to those

seeking refuge in our state. We further strongly support a “work permit” system which works for employers and immigrants as well as improved and quicker pathways to citizenship.

14. EQUAL PROTECTION UNDER THE LAW

The Kansas Democratic Party ensures the people’s right to equal protection under the law. All people are entitled to due process, to be heard by a court, to be represented by a licensed attorney with proper notice and opportunity to be heard.

Each individual has the right to their own identity and is entitled to respect for their self-determination. It is an inherent right to be safeguarded from illegal governmental actions. This principle must be applied fairly and consistently to everyone. This right provides a fundamental balance to our society and must be safeguarded at all costs.

15. PUBLIC PURPOSE OF GOVERNMENT

Kansas Democrats believe that government exists to serve all the people. Therefore, government must provide a basic platform of resources, services, and utilities necessary for the people to utilize public and private opportunities to maximize their potential, regardless of the circumstances of their birth or their zip code. Such a basic platform must ensure the people are protected from environmental harm, that the people are not defrauded, the people can receive healthcare, and the people can be provided with basic utilities.

The financing for such a platform must be deliberated, in the open. Decisions that affect the budgets of public services must be debated, transparently, in public, with a public record made accessible to the people. A key role of government is to collect tax dollars and allocate those dollars back to the benefit of the community for services that keep us

safe; infrastructure that keeps us connected; and quality public schools that educate our children.

We recognize the press has a right to public records and a right to distribute and comment on these records for the purpose of informing the people. The press should be entitled to protect their sources under a legal shield, unless defamation can be proven in a court of law.

Governmental powers flow from the people and must answer to the people. Decisions should be made by those they affect, with transparency and accountability at every level. Everyone should have a role in their state's future, through civic engagement, elected positions, and fair representation.

16. DISABILITY

The Kansas Democratic party recognizes the unique needs of Kansans with disabilities as well as the value they bring to our Kansas communities.

We recognize that Kansans with disabilities deserve to earn the same wages as their able-bodied counterparts. The elimination of the practice of disabled workers being paid a subminimum wage would work towards that end.

We recognize that workplaces must be accessible to those who need accommodations. Workplaces should honor the workplace protections enshrined in the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

We recognize that disabled students in primary, secondary and post-secondary education settings should receive the same fully funded education as their able-bodied counterparts. We also recognize that the same institutions also adhere to the protections enshrined in the ADA ensuring that all primary and post-secondary campuses are structurally

accessible and that protections put in place via Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act remain in force. We also recognize that vocational rehab services should be made available to help disabled Kansans receive integrated employment.

We recognize that disabled Kansans have more complex medical needs which require more financial, emotional and institutional support. It is imperative that the resources they rely on continue to be supported. Waiver services must be fully funded ensuring that Kansans with disabilities and those that care for them do not have to wait on services. Waiver services should also allow for those who care for them to be able to lead equally fully supported lives financially, emotionally and institutionally. Privatization of the waiver services should also be eliminated.

We recognize that Kansans with disabilities should have access to safe and accessible housing. Housing should comply with all municipal, state and federal ADA regulations. We recognize that disabled Kansans should have the same accessibility to the ballot box as able-bodied Kansans and should be able to cast their ballot in whatever manner that is appropriate for their disability.

17. ANTI-CORRUPTION

The Kansas Democratic Party believes that government officials should not be allowed to use their public offices for their own personal gain nor the personal gain of their family members. Anti-corruption is the hallmark of a free people, and the Kansas Democratic Party champions transparency, honesty, integrity, and decency to every person in our state and nation.