



2016 Legislative Candidate Questionnaire
PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN BY 9/27/16

NAME: Kate Bolz
Campaign Website:
Legislative District: #29
Occupation:

Please provide additional pertinent biographical information:

1. Please list the top 5 issues you believe the Legislature needs to address in 2017.

Top Five Issues (not necessarily in order of importance)

I) Developing a fair and balanced budget that protects our long term fiscal stability and the priorities of Nebraskans.

II) Corrections reform that prioritizes employee and public safety and efficient use of resources.

III) Protecting and promoting a high quality public education system, including access to higher education.

IV) Economic development strategies that promote high quality, well-paying jobs that also stress workforce development initiatives.

V) Health and human services that ensure quality and stability in meeting the needs of vulnerable populations.

2. Do you support protecting the Build Nebraska Act (enacted in 2011), which will direct a small portion of state sales tax revenues to road needs through July 1, 2033?

YES **NO**

Additional Comments:

3. If elected, what is the #1 priority you would try to accomplish in 2017?

As a member of the Appropriations Committee, my number one priority in 2017 is developing a fair and balanced budget that protects our long term fiscal stability and the priorities of Nebraskans.

4. **Several state senators have worked closely in a bi-partisan effort with Governor Ricketts to keep state spending in check and reduce taxes. Their efforts have strengthened our economy, improved our national tax rankings, and set a more disciplined course for prioritized state spending. In the 2016 Session lawmakers focused efforts on property tax relief via shifting significant state revenues to the state's property tax relief fund that gets distributed back property owners residing inside and outside of the state. If elected, would state tax (income tax/and or sales tax) relief be a priority issue for you in 2017?**

YES NO

Additional Comments:

In a year where we are facing a budget deficit and revenue shortfalls, it is important to balance the budget in a sustainable manner first and foremost.

5. **Please check ONE characterization under each of the following categories of key issues that best represents your general view. We also encourage you to provide additional comments that clarify and define your views.**

5a. Taxes

I believe our state and local tax burden is too high and I favor thoughtfully holding in check state and local government spending as the means of lowering the burden of taxes on our citizens.

I believe our state tax burden may be slightly excessive but generally it is about where it should be in order to maintain needed and desired programs. I would be cautious about impacting government programs and agencies when dealing with tax cut proposals.

I believe our tax burden is about what it should be in order to maintain the state and local government programs and services desired by citizens. Therefore, I do not consider broad tax relief a central theme of my campaign.

Additional Comments:

5b. State Spending

I don't believe we need to reduce the rate of growth of state spending. Program spending in areas such as state equalization aid to K-12 schools, funding for health and human services, and other government services need to be increased and our current projected trends are reasonable. It seems as though reduced state spending often just pushes the burden to local property taxes.

I believe we need moderate reductions in the growth of state spending. Program spending in all areas can be reduced and through such shared efforts we must continue to reduce our state tax burden. Concerns over property taxes primarily should be addressed by local elected officials and government officials who make the decisions on the levels of local property tax spending.

I believe we need fairly significant reductions in the growth of state spending. Program spending in many areas can be reduced and we must make government programs more accountable for their spending. This will require tough decisions about the size and scope of state government, but I believe we must address these issues if we want significant tax relief.

Additional Comments:

There are aspects of all of these statements with which I agree. As a member of the Appropriations Committee, I have pushed for performance and evidence based budgeting to ensure that we are spending our dollars wisely. We have and continue to identify areas in which to create efficiencies and to say no to unnecessary funding requests. We must also protect investments in education and health care to develop a strong economy.

5c. Government Mergers/Consolidation

I support our current state and local government structure as the proper balance of state and local authority. Our current structure reflects efficiently organized and modern state and local government.

___ I believe our current state and local government structure is outdated and inefficient in many areas. I would support incentives for mergers and consolidations. Our current structure for delivering many of our government services at the state and local level too often reflects entrenched, inefficient, duplicative and ultimately unaccountable bureaucracies.

Additional Comments:

Generally speaking, I believe that local control in the form of school boards, natural resource districts, and behavioral health regions reflects a good balance of state and local control. However, systems may always be improved and efficiencies developed as technology, best practices, and research inform our public policy strategies and goals.

5d. Build Nebraska Act - Road Funding

I support the Build NE Act and would actively oppose efforts to repeal it.

___ I do not support the Build NE Act and believe we can't afford to direct sales tax funds to provide additional road funding. I can't say that I would actively oppose efforts to repeal it.

Additional Comments:

6. What are your ideas for encouraging strong job and investment growth?

I believe that protecting our quality of life, promoting a strong educational system, investing in workforce development initiatives, and incentivizing high paying jobs are the best policy principles for a strong economy. Specifically, I am working on proposals including skills training efforts tied to specific industry demands and long-term planning efforts to focus our state resources on an education and workforce development strategy focused on competition in a global economy.

7. If elected, do you have a preference as to which legislative committees you would want to serve on?

I prefer to remain on the Appropriations Committee.

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Lincoln Chamber of Commerce

Attn: Bruce Bohrer

1128 Lincoln Mall, Suite 100

Lincoln, NE 68508

or email to: bbohrer@lcc.com