

## 2016 Legislative Candidate Questionnaire

**NAME:** Anna Wishart

**Campaign Website:** [annawishart.com](http://annawishart.com)

**Legislative District:** #27

**Occupation:** Consultant, Beyond School Bells (Nebraska's Afterschool Network)  
**Elected Board Member,** Lincoln Airport Authority.

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

### ***Top Five Issues (not necessarily in order of importance)***

1. *Addressing serious issues with the Department of Correctional Services to reduce overcrowding, staff shortages and excessive overtime, increase mental and behavioral health services, improve rehabilitation programming, and ensure the most dangerous offenders remain incarcerated.*
2. *Modernizing the Nebraska Advantage Act and supporting a business climate that promotes economic development and broadens our revenue base.*
3. *Reducing taxes by better managing all levels of taxing authority and implementing performance metrics in our budgeting process to ensure better returns on our investments.*
4. *Championing workforce development initiatives in K-12 and postsecondary education to address workforce shortages in our state.*
5. *Improving public health through access to affordable healthcare and housing.*

**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?**

**x YES \_\_\_ NO**

### ***Additional Comments:***

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

*Championing workforce development initiatives in K-12 and postsecondary education to address workforce shortages in our state.*

**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:**

*Property tax relief is still the main tax issue I hear about in District 27.*

**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:**

*I believe we can achieve significant reductions in the growth of state spending and significant tax relief in the long term through holding the line on state spending, implementing performance metrics to our budgeting process to ensure better returns on our investments, and working to prevent massive state spending errors that have wasted millions of public dollars.*

### **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:**

*I believe our current state and local government structure is outdated and inefficient in many areas. I would support incentives for better collaboration and accountability procedures to reduce inefficiencies, duplications and mismanagement.*

### **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:**

#### **What are your ideas for encouraging strong job and investment growth?**

*1. We need to support workforce development initiatives in K-12 and postsecondary education to address workforce shortages in our state. 2. We need to modernize the Nebraska Advantage Act and create an attractive business climate in Nebraska to encourage homegrown business development and attract out-of-state businesses to Nebraska. 3. We need to continue to invest in transportation and telecommunications infrastructure. 4. We need solutions to the affordable housing crisis in our state. 5. We need to continue to support quality education (we have the highest graduation rate in the country), public health, and public safety. 6. We need to eliminate overburdensome regulations that stifle innovation and business growth.*

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

*Health and Human Services, Transportation and Telecommunications, Urban Affairs.*