



2020 State Legislative Platform



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Action Agenda Priorities

Johnson County:

- A. Supports increased funding for mental health services and community mental health center (CMHC) grants.
- B. Supports Medicaid expansion in Kansas.
- C. Supports legislation facilitating the collection of compensating use tax from purchases made from sellers with no physical presence in Kansas based on the U.S. Supreme Court decision in South Dakota v. Wayfair.
- D. Supports expanding the eligibility of the Homestead Act and SAFESR – Kansas Property Tax Relief for Low Income Seniors. Additionally, supports tying current program income limits to federal poverty guidelines.
- E. Supports funding of a comprehensive transportation plan including highways, airports, trails and transit.

The federal, state, and local governments have a partnership through which numerous governmental services are funded and made available to citizens. This partnership is dependent upon stable funding, decision-making at the appropriate level, and removing barriers to efficient and effective access to services. Johnson County strongly supports the following core principles as the means to an effective and improved partnership among each level of government and underlying issues.

1. RETAIN AND ENHANCE COUNTY HOME RULE AUTHORITY, MAINTAIN LOCAL DECISION MAKING AND OPPOSE UNFUNDED MANDATES.

Johnson County supports the retention and strengthening of local home rule authority to allow locally elected officials to conduct the business of their jurisdiction in a manner that best reflects the desires of their constituents and results in maximum benefit to that community. The County opposes mandated responsibilities from the state without being fully funded.

The county further:

- A. Supports local elected officials having the ability to make taxing and spending decisions and urge the repeal of the property tax lid legislation.
- B. Supports adoption of such as, employee benefit costs, Kansas Public Employees Retirement System (KPERs) costs, Public Building Commission debt, infrastructure, and costs for intellectual and developmental disabilities and mental health services, if the property tax lid is not repealed.

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- C. Supports a constitutional amendment granting counties the constitutional home rule authority currently granted to cities.
 - D. Supports local control for decisions to Kansas Open Records Act requests.
 - E. Supports local officials and their representatives' ability to freely participate in the legislative process through advocacy and education on issues affecting local governments without cumbersome reporting requirements.
 - F. Supports continuing the ability for citizens and elected officials of each jurisdiction to determine if county elections are held on a nonpartisan or partisan basis and retain the ability of vacancies in nonpartisan elected positions being filled through nonpartisan means.
 - G. Supports current law regarding the use of eminent domain by local units of government for utilities and public infrastructure improvements.
 - H. Supports the repeal of 2016 Legislation granting the automatic placement of cell towers in city and county owned right of way to allow regulation of the placement of cell towers by reasonable local zoning processes which review important community values such as safety and neighborhood concerns.
 - I. Supports the repeal of 2016 Legislation curtailing local control over inclusionary zoning policies and rental property licensing programs regulating interior inspections. Local officials, who are tasked with the responsibility to develop and maintain safe, sustainable cities and counties, should have the flexibility to address the need for affordable, varied types of housing as integral components of both their economic development and public safety duties.

2. MAINTAIN FINANCIAL STABILITY AND ENHANCE PROCESSES FOR COUNTY GOVERNMENT SERVICES

Many critical county government services provided are financed by federal and state governments. As a key provider, Johnson County seeks federal and state appropriations at levels adequate to meet the needs of the recipients. Furthermore, Johnson County opposes reductions in funding for services that result from actual reductions, as well as cuts in “real dollars” which result from a lack of inflationary adjustments. Johnson County does not support reductions in state funding, nor changes in state taxation that would reduce resources available for the State to carry out these functions. Moreover, the State should explore the possibility of providing greater flexibility to local units of government, allowing local control as opposed to implementing any additional reductions in programs or services due to State funding cuts.



The county further:

Healthcare

- A. Supports Medicaid expansion in Kansas.

Infrastructure

- B. Supports funding of a comprehensive transportation plan including highways, airports, trails and transit.
- C. Supports policies enabling broadband development and access to improve economic development, telemedicine care and government efficiency.

Appraisals

- D. Opposes legislation based on hypothetical lease valuations or the dark store theory, which suggests that commercial properties should be valued as-if-vacant and available for sale or rent to a future hypothetical user rather than in the current use, which is often a functioning, occupied store.
- E. Supports allowing the County Appraiser, rather than the State of Kansas, the ability to grant property tax exemptions on property owned by governmental entities and used for an exempt purpose for efficiency.
- F. Supports maintaining the current system of non-centralized county appraisers to meet the needs of each county.
- G. Supports the valuation process remain constitutional and remove the 5% mandate; remove summary of reasons for determining value; amend the agricultural lease provision; remove independent appraisal after appeal; and allow the county appraiser to request recent fee appraisals and detailed income expense data during appeals process.

State Services Provided by the County

- H. Supports the State fully funding its portion of the employer contributions at the Actuarial Required Contribution (ARC) levels and at the required times to the Kansas Public Employees Retirement System (KPERs).
- I. Supports greater flexibility in the use of technology for motor vehicle services, new approaches to service delivery and appropriate funding at the local level.
- J. Supports legislation to establish predictable fees for the recording of documents in the office of the Register of Deeds that is revenue neutral and streamline the recording process for both the submitter and recorder.

Fiscal Impact

- K. Supports legislation facilitating the collection of compensating use tax from purchases made from sellers with no physical presence in Kansas based on the U.S. Supreme Court decision in South Dakota v. Wayfair.
- L. Supports stable revenue sources and urges the Kansas Legislature to avoid applying any further exemptions to the ad valorem property tax base, including exceptions for specific business entities or the state/local sales tax base, as well as industry-specific special tax treatment through exemptions or property classification.
- M. Supports the preservation and funding of local government revenues which pass through the State's treasury, including Local Ad Valorem Property Tax Reduction (LAVTRF), County City Revenue Sharing (CCRS), alcoholic liquor tax funds and the local portion of motor fuel tax to local governments.
- N. Supports the current law that exempts local government and public construction projects from sales tax.
- O. Supports the state's thoughtful consideration of reductions in sales tax on food and pharmaceuticals, while balancing the impact on, and obligations of, counties and local units of government across the state.
- P. Supports amending current statutes to allow counties the option of publishing required notices on the official County website in lieu of publication in a newspaper.
- Q. Supports statewide economic development.
- R. Supports legislation to ensure that 911 services across the state of Kansas remain high quality, appropriately funded and all counties are operating in the most efficient manner possible that may include consolidation or co-location opportunities.
- S. Supports the State investing in their information technology systems to enable effective data sharing between departments and with their community partners, the ability to extract data for decision making and the effective and efficient service to those receiving services.

Environment

- T. Supports the state's efforts to develop and implement cost-effective, scientifically-based environmental plans and provide local governments flexibility and resources to meet their environmental goals.
- U. Supports fully funding the State Water Plan (SWPF).

Elections

- V. Supports the legislature or Secretary of State establishing consistent election rules and regulations for counting votes in all 105 counties to provide confidence in the election process.
- W. Supports extending the 3-day postmark grace period to include mail ballot elections.
- X. Supports clean-up on election issues relating from move from spring to fall, regarding how and where to file for city positions elected by district.
- Y. Supports current statutes for advance voting.
- Z. Requests clarification on ballot rotation in contests where there are more candidates than precincts.
- AA. Support changing the deadline for calling a recount from the second Friday after the election at 5:00 p.m. to the 14th day after the election at 5:00 p.m. to allow for consistency because some counties hold their canvass on 14th day after the election.
- AB. Supports verifying the impact of voter system security across the state when making changes to statutes impacting elections.
- AC. Supports decision to be made by each county if same day registration on election day is approved to allow focus on county's voter system security.

Enhance Processes

- AD. Supports statutory amendments requiring the tracking of all land record mortgage instruments through proper public notification of assignments and releases, which includes an accurate paper trail to ensure a complete chain of title to protect the interests of the property owner and lending institution.
- AE. Supports exempting surveys that do not collect personally identifiable information from the Student Data Privacy Act.
- AF. Supports the Legislature clarifying that any structure used for events or activities related to Agritourism will meet local jurisdiction public safety codes.

3. PRESERVE AND ENHANCE HEALTH, HUMAN SERVICES AND PUBLIC SAFETY:

Many critical county government services provided are financed by federal and state governments for health, human services and public safety. As a key provider, Johnson County seeks federal and state appropriations at levels adequate to meet the needs of the recipients.



The county further:

Healthcare

- A. Supports Medicaid expansion in Kansas.
- B. Supports the re-evaluation and increase in Medicaid rates within the Serious Emotional Disturbance (SED) waiver and the Medicaid Mental Health Rehabilitation Codes to reflect the actual costs.

Senior Tax Relief

- C. Supports expanding the eligibility of the current programs Homestead Act and SAFESR – Kansas Property Tax Relief for Low Income Seniors to provide property tax relief for those on fixed incomes.

Human Services

- D. Supports increased funding for mental health services and community mental health centers (CMHC) grants.
- E. Supports fully funding the statewide Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) waiver program and its waiting list and evaluate and determine ways to improve the program for citizens with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD).
- F. Supports developing an approach to establish ongoing IDD provider rate increase as well as restoring cuts in state general funds to the IDD system.
- G. Supports the State fully funding all state-mandated human service programs at levels that reflect the actual cost of services, expanded funding for further establishments of public/private partnerships for psychiatric inpatient hospital beds, and the creation of regional Crisis Stabilization Units.
- H. Supports full funding of the Senior Care Act to meet the needs of the community.
- I. Supports the expansion of behavioral health programs for adult and juvenile community corrections populations.

Judicial

- J. Supports amending the Juvenile Justice System to allow local discretion when dealing with Child in Need of Care (CINC) and juvenile offenders, and implementation of the Crossover Youth Practice Model (CYPM).
- K. Supports an adequate budget for the Office of Judicial Administration to fully execute the duties of the judiciary.



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