



Kansas Statewide
Homeless Coalition

2024 Survey for Kansas Public Leaders and Candidates

Name

Alexis Simmons

Office:

Kansas House of Representatives

Party

Democrat

District

58

Home City

Topeka

Ballot City

Topeka

Policy and Strategy:

Kansas Housing Resource Corporation's 2021 Housing Needs Assessment found that "A shortage of quality, affordable housing is an undeniable barrier to economic growth and development in any community, and particularly in rural communities in Kansas." How likely are you to support increasing funding for affordable housing development?

Very Likely

Inadequate access to mental health and substance use treatment programs contributes to homelessness in Kansas. How likely are you to vote to expand mental health and substance abuse treatment programs?

Very Likely

How likely are you to be in favor of limiting annual rental increases?

Likely

Comments:

I think limiting annual rental increases would be most valuable when coupled with a broader package to prevent unintended consequences. For example, ensuring a property tax reduction plan is in place would be critical.

Kansas has no statewide plan that comprehensively addresses homelessness. How likely are you to support the implementation of a statewide affordable housing plan to address homelessness?

Very Likely

Comments:

I support this, with the understanding that each community has unique housing needs and there is no one-size-fits-all solution to homelessness. Homelessness in Topeka looks very different from homelessness in rural Kansas, for example. The particulars of any plan should be decided with significant input from locals and municipalities.

How likely are you to advocate to allow for more affordable housing developments in urban and suburban areas?

Very Likely

How likely are you to be in favor of establishing a state-funded rental assistance program to stabilize low-income renters and support property owners?

Likely

Comments:

My first inclination is to support a version of this. However, I would need more information about funding sources, requirements, and the program's sustainability to take a firm stance.

How likely are you to support legislation or programs to provide legal assistance to tenants facing eviction?

Very Likely

How likely are you to support increasing funding for domestic violence shelters and services to prevent homelessness?

Very Likely

What funding sources will you prioritize or advocate for to support homelessness programs and services? (Check all that apply)

Federal grants and programs (e.g., HUD Continuum of Care, Emergency Solutions Grants)

State Government funding initiatives

Local government budgets and funding allocations

Private donations and philanthropic foundations

Corporate partnerships and sponsorships

Community fundraising events and campaigns

Social impact bonds and other innovative financing mechanisms

Public-private partnerships

Tax revenue initiatives (e.g., bonds, levies specifically for housing and homeless services)

Comments:

I have an open mind about funding sources and wouldn't rule anything out, at this time.

Housing Solutions

Kansas does not have enough shelter space; nearly two thousand Kansans sleep outside or in their cars in dangerous weather conditions. How important is it to increase funding and capacity for emergency shelters to meet immediate needs?

Very Important

How important is it to develop more transitional housing programs to bridge the gap between homelessness and permanent housing?

Very Important

How important is it to expand permanent supportive housing options with integrated services for long-term stability?

Very Important

Comments:

I support this and would be interested in learning more specifics of the integrated services in question.

How important is it to implement a low barrier approach that prioritizes permanent housing with support services?

Very Important

Comments:

A low-barrier approach to housing support is absolutely critical to reach the homeless population and make real changes.

How important is it to collaborate on the local level to ensure a coordinated response that addresses homelessness?

Very Important

How important is it to use data-driven strategies to allocate resources based on current demand and long-term outcomes?

Very Important

How important is it to create a flexible funding source that allows communities to address local needs?

Very Important

Collaboration and Partnerships:

Will you establish regular communication channels with local nonprofits to address homelessness?

Yes

Do you plan to participate in a workgroup or advisory council that addresses homelessness that includes representatives from key stakeholders throughout Kansas?

Yes

How important is it for state entities to collaborate on homelessness initiatives?

Very Important

Employment and Education:

How likely are you to be in favor of creating state incentives for businesses that hire individuals experiencing homelessness?

Likely

Comments:

I support this, but would want to know the particulars of any such plan before taking a firm stance.

Will you support job training and vocational programs tailored to the needs of homeless individuals?

Yes

Do you support the creation of a statewide initiative to simplify the process of obtaining a state ID for homeless and low-income individuals?

Yes

Health and Well-being:

Do you advocate for Medicaid expansion to increase healthcare coverage for low-income individuals?

Yes

How critical is Medicaid expansion for increasing healthcare coverage for low-income individuals in your view?

Very Critical

Will you support the integration of healthcare services within shelters and housing programs?

Yes