

## **Notes from the Campaign Trail July 2016**

It is hot, but you know that. I walk door to door almost every evening and both Saturday and Sunday afternoons reintroducing myself to voters and asking if there is a state issue they would like to discuss with me.

As you might expect, state support for education is the most prominent issue. I assure the voters that I have opposed the Governor's income tax reforms that have led to the increased state sales tax, and reductions in funding for higher education that result in rapidly increasing tuition rates. I agree with the Kansas Supreme Court rulings against the Legislature and Governor for inadequately funding K-12 education opportunities.

Often our conversations include my opposition to the underfunding of our two state mental health hospitals and community mental health services. I strongly oppose reducing funds that help seniors and those with disabilities to stay in their homes instead of going to more expensive group facilities, and oppose "stealing" money from the Dept. of Transportation and other state agencies in failed efforts to balance the budget.

I actively support state economic development programs, support helping university faculty commercialize their inventions and discoveries, support further development of our state's wind energy capacity, and support investments to protect our drinking water supplies.

I enjoy the door to door campaigning, like meeting and talking with the voters, enjoy the exercise, and do not mind the heat. Many people ask if I would like a drink of water and if they do not and I need one, I ask. No one has ever refused me.

I did have one door slammed in my face when the woman asked my political affiliation. I responded "traditional, moderate Republican". As she slammed the door, she said she would never vote for a Republican because of Trump and Brownback. My suggestions that she look at my record and decide whether my actions and votes warranted her consideration went unheeded.

The slamming of the door was discouraging. It will not be the last time this year and it has happened during previous campaigns, but it always bothers me. My mother taught me better manners. I ask only that voters evaluate my legislative work before deciding to vote for or against me. I am investing thousands of hours campaigning, time that could otherwise be spent with Gail, visiting our children and grandchildren, or travelling. I do not regret my decision to campaign and serve the people of Douglas County and Kansas, but would prefer civil discourse to uncivilized rejections.

On the other hand, last night a Democrat told me that she had changed her voter registration to be able to vote for me in the Republican primary. She also informed me that she would be changing the Registration back to Democrat after the primary.

I do not walk with a voter list telling me who is Republican, Democrat, or Independent. I talk with all voters, so when someone self-identifies as a Republican, Democrat or Independent and says she/he will vote for me I am pleased to have the vote, but more pleased that my non-partisan, common sense, pragmatic visionary work reflects the values of our community.

I will periodically update you on my campaign experiences. If you live within the 45<sup>th</sup> District and I have not yet been to your door (I leave a card if no one answers the doorbell), know that I am working my way towards you. If you find a card, you may be assured that it was me that stopped by your home. I do not hire people to drop my literature, believing that residents should meet the person seeking their vote and have the opportunity to talk with the candidate.