

1. Candidate Information

Name: - Cheryl Reynolds

House District: - 57

2. The Economy: What are the biggest financial challenges facing Kansans today?

The price of energy and food.

3. Health Care Costs: Please describe policies that might slow the growth of health care costs.

We need to make sure doctors can practice good medicine, but are not forced to order tests that may not be necessary or helpful merely as a defense to feared lawsuits. Defensive medicine drives up costs and likely drives down the overall quality of medical care received by patients.

4. Health Care Costs: Please describe policies that might help families pay their medical debts.

I would like to explore these options further before coming up with a plan to address this problem, but I can say that I understand this need. I am the parent of child with an "orphan disease" so I am personally aware of the stresses medical costs can place on a family.

5. Economic Development: What are some actions that you think would make it easier for businesses to provide health insurance for their employees and families?

We should look for incentives that both benefit the business and the employee. Incentives would be a win-win as the Kansas taxpayers benefit when more Kansans are insured.

6. Insurance: According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the number of Kansans without health insurance has increased to 340,000. Please describe policies that might help to reduce this number.

Again, I would like to see incentives for business and also incentives for insurers to develop options to reach out to those who are currently uninsured.

7. Children: What role do you believe the Kansas government can play in increasing the fitness of our children?

I think the key is to work through our education system to provide physical education that benefits all children. Sports programs are terrific, but they sometimes don't meet the needs of kids who might not consider themselves as competitive athletes. We need to make sure we have a focus on activities that the average person would enjoy doing for a lifetime.

8. Children: The Kansas Legislature increased the number of pregnant women who are eligible for Medicaid coverage. Are there other policies that you suggest to keep our children healthy?

We need to make sure we are doing everything we can to protect our children from child predators and to make sure we keep neighborhoods safe from all types of crime. If parents are worried about their children's safety, they won't be encouraging them to play outside and to engage in physical activity that comes from being outside with their friends. Beyond physical fitness, we need to continue to look at nutrition and basic medical and physical care and look for opportunities in those areas.

9. Employment: Please describe policies that might help in getting more health care workers to the rural and urban areas of Kansas.

I would be in favor of looking at incentives like tuition waivers at Regents Universities for health care workers who agree to work in underserved areas for a given period of time. We also need to work with the community leaders and organizations to make sure they will do their part to welcome, encourage, and support these workers who come to their communities.

10. Rural Health: What do you propose doing to increase rural Kansans' access to health services?

We should look for ways to train current residents who might be willing to work in health care if they could be trained in their communities. We should also look at ways to use the Internet and other technology to provide some specialized health care from afar. Another option may be to explore more portable options such as high-tech health vans who can visit rural areas on a rotating schedule to bring more specialized care to rural Kansans.

11. Technology: Electronic health records are used in Kansas and other states as a way to streamline care and lower costs. What types of policies could be used to encourage greater use of electronic health records by health providers in Kansas?

I think the biggest concern is that we have to make sure these records are secure. We all hear of accidental releases of Social Security numbers or credit information being released on the Internet. Health information is among our most personal and private of information and many Kansans are not going to support electronic health records without ironclad assurances as to their security and a clear understanding of who may access them and when. And, in the cases of some smaller practices, the increase in cost to move from paper to electronic records may further discourage rural practitioners.