

Planned Parenthood Advocates of Kansas and Mid-Missouri

State Candidate Questionnaire 2014

Candidate Name: Dennis "Boog" Highberger

Candidate for: Senate _____ House 46 Other _____
District District

Party: Democratic

Name of Campaign Committee: Boog Highberger for State Rep

Address: 918 Massachusetts Street, Suite B

City/State/Zip: Lawrence, KS 66044

Would you welcome Planned Parenthood's public support? : **Yes**

Please note, PPAKM will not endorse a candidate unless they accept the endorsement. Returning a survey does not guarantee an endorsement nor does it require a candidate to accept an endorsement if one is offered.

Please return your completed candidate questionnaire to:

PPAKM
4401 W. 109th St., Suite 200
Overland Park, KS 66211
Email: Elise.Higgins@ppkm.org
Fax: 913-312-3170

Planned Parenthood believes in facilitating access to family planning and the continuum of reproductive health care services. Planned Parenthood fully supports legislation that seeks to expand access to preventive reproductive health care services and education programs that can reduce unintended pregnancies, prevent the spread of STIs, and reduce the need for abortion. Planned Parenthood believes it is the government's role to enable individuals to make personal childbearing decisions with medically accurate reproductive health information including sex education and providing access to contraceptives and safe, legal abortion.

1. **ACCESS TO ALL FDA-APPROVED CONTRACEPTIVES:**

Anti-women's health organizations characterize FDA-approved, hormonal contraceptive methods (including birth control pills, emergency contraception and IUDs) as abortion agents and have attempted to restrict access to them.

Do you support women's access to all FDA-approved birth control options?

Yes

No

2. **TEEN ACCESS TO BIRTH CONTROL:**

Planned Parenthood believes teens, as well as adults, should have confidential access to family planning and disease prevention services. Most teens have already been sexually active for about one year before seeking contraceptive services, and most teens involve their parents in their decision to seek birth control.

Would you oppose government-mandated parental consent or notification for a teen to obtain contraceptives?

Yes

No

3. **RESPONSIBLE SEX EDUCATION:**

Despite the fact that a vast majority of Americans support responsible, age-appropriate, medically accurate sex education in schools, Kansas receives significant funds from Congress for abstinence-only sex education, which excludes any mention of contraception, family planning or disease prevention except in terms of failure rates.

Do you support the teaching of responsible, age-appropriate, medically accurate sex education, including information about both abstinence and contraception, in public schools?

Yes

No

4. **RIGHT TO PRIVACY WHEN MAKING DECISIONS RELATED TO PREGNANCY**

Planned Parenthood believes women have the right to obtain a medically safe, legal abortion under the standards set forth by the U.S. Supreme Court in the *Roe v. Wade* decision.

Do you support this position?

Yes

No

5. GOVERNMENT INTRUSION IN PRIVATE DECISIONS:

Planned Parenthood believes decisions about whether to choose adoption, end a pregnancy, or raise a child must be left to a woman, her family, and her faith with the counsel of her doctor or health care provider without intrusion by government and politicians. Examples of government intrusion in these decisions include mandatory biased counseling, misinformation, gag rules, mandatory delays and excessive clinic regulations not reasonably related to protecting women's health.

Do you oppose further government intrusion in personal reproductive health and medical decisions? Yes No

6. DEFINITION OF CONSTITUTIONAL PERSONHOOD:

Anti-women's health groups have tried to advance their cause by assigning "personhood" rights to a woman's fertilized eggs. Recent attempts have been made in Kansas to pass a "Personhood" constitutional amendment onto the ballot, stating at the moment of fertilization, a zygote, embryo and fetus has constitutional rights and protections. Personhood laws will potentially outlaw fertility treatments, some forms of birth control, and a woman's right to choose a vaginal birth after cesarean (VBAC).

Would you oppose future "personhood" efforts to redefine the legal status of a fetus? Yes No

7. EMERGENCY CONTRACEPTION:

Emergency contraception (EC), sometimes known as the "morning-after pill" or emergency birth control, is a safe and effective means of preventing pregnancy. Available for more than 30 years, it contains hormones found in birth control pills and, to be effective, must be taken within 120 hours after intercourse. If the pregnancy is already established, EC does not work and will not harm the pregnancy. EC is critical in situations such as rape, or when contraceptive methods have failed. In 2013, Plan B One-Step was FDA-approved for sale with no age restrictions. Most other brands of EC require a prescription for those 16 and younger, and are available to those 17 and older over-the-counter. However, some doctors are not informing patients about the availability of EC, and some pharmacies are refusing to stock or dispense it.

Do you:

Understand that EC is a contraceptive and does not terminate a pregnancy? Yes No

Support legislation to increase education about and full access to emergency contraception? Yes No

8. REFUSAL CLAUSES:

Refusal clauses (sometimes called "conscience" clauses) permit a broad range of individuals and institutions — including hospitals, hospital employees, health care providers, employers, and insurers — to refuse to provide, pay, counsel or even refer for medical treatment based on their moral or religious views. Planned Parenthood agrees with the American Public Health Association that refusal clauses are appropriate only if they provide an adequate plan for referral and do not disrupt or obstruct a patient's access to care.

Do you support legislation that would make referral plans mandatory for any provider who intends to refuse reproductive health care services? Yes No

9. **STATE MANDATED MISINFORMATION:**

In 2013, the Kansas Legislature passed a bill mandating that physicians give women seeking abortion medically inaccurate information about unsubstantiated links between abortion and health issues such as breast cancer, depression, and future premature births.

Do you oppose state-mandated medical misinformation? Yes x No

10. **BANS ON ABORTION:**

Anti-abortion organizations have seriously eroded the Supreme Court's *Roe v. Wade* decision (which ensures a woman's constitutionally-protected right to choose) by advancing vaguely-worded and deceptive bans on abortion procedures, without exceptions for the woman's health. In 2011, the Kansas Legislature banned abortions after the 22nd week of pregnancy. Less than 1% of abortions occur at this period or later in pregnancy, and usually only by women facing wanted pregnancies that have gone tragically wrong. In 2013, the Kansas Legislature considered a bill intended to challenge *Roe v. Wade* that would have banned abortions after approximately the 6th week of pregnancy. **Would you :**

Oppose a ban on abortion procedures that does not include an exception for the woman's life and health or instances of rape or incest? Yes x No

Oppose any unconstitutional early abortion ban, including non surgical abortion? Yes x No

11. **NON-SURGICAL ABORTION**

Non-surgical abortion (medication abortion) is a safe and effective method for ending an early pregnancy. The Kansas Legislature has attempted to limit access to this safe abortion method in recent years, including an attempt to force physicians in Kansas to follow the outdated Food and Drug Administration (FDA) protocols instead of the safer evidence-based protocols that have been used for over a decade for millions of women world-wide for administration of non-surgical abortion. Doctors should be able to practice medicine in the safest way possible for their patients—not be forced to follow outdated protocols in an attempt by politicians to make abortion inaccessible.

Do you oppose politically-motivated regulation of non-surgical abortion? Yes x No

12. **FAMILY PLANNING FUNDING**

Title X Funds are federal dollars released to individual states to distribute among community health clinics and federally qualified health centers to be used only for family planning services for low-income individuals. Family Planning services include well-woman gynecological exams, contraceptive supplies, cancer screenings, STD testing and treatment, and education presentations. Family planning services do not include abortion. The Kansas legislature recently stripped Planned Parenthood in Kansas of Title X funds, depriving thousands of Kansas women and families the ability to choose their preferred family planning health care provider. **Do you:**

Understand that Title X Funds cannot and are not used to fund abortion? Yes x No

Oppose Title X priority funding legislation that removes all Title X dollars from Planned Parenthood and prevents thousands of Kansans from receiving health care services at Planned Parenthood? Yes x No

Comments/Questions: Thank you for all your efforts to provide family planning and reproductive health services to women in Kansas.

Candidate Signature

Date