



JCRC Omaha 2026 Jewish Voter Guide on State and Local Races

Candidate Positions on Issues of Importance to Nebraska's Jewish Community and Our Neighbors

NEBRASKA STATE SENATOR

Antisemitism and leadership

1. Antisemitism can come from across the political and ideological spectrum. What responsibility do elected officials have to recognize and speak out against antisemitism, including when it comes from members of their own party, political allies, or supporters?

For 33 years, I took an oath, first as a cadet, then as an officer, and finally as a Colonel, to support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies foreign and domestic. That oath was never just words to me. I stood alert in a B-52 on September 11th, 2001 with live nuclear weapons onboard. I served in combat. I led thousands of Airmen, sailors and civilians over my career at home and abroad. Indeed, every single day of that career was grounded in the belief that our Constitution and the freedoms it protects are worth defending with your life if it comes to that.

Our Constitution is built on a foundation of Judeo Christian values, namely the belief that every person is made in the image of God and possesses inherent, God-given dignity that no government, no mob, and no political movement have the right to strip away. Antisemitism is a *direct* assault on that foundation. It always has been and always will, especially on my watch when elected to the Unicameral. When one targets the Jewish people, they are not merely attacking a religion or an ethnicity they are attacking the moral bedrock upon which this country was built.

To be sure, this is not a comfortable issue for many elected officials, because it sometimes requires confronting people within their own coalition. But that is precisely the point. I do not believe antisemitism is a partisan issue and I do not think elected officials get to treat it like one. If it shows up on the right, we must condemn it. If it shows up on the left, we must condemn it. Moreover, if it shows up from someone in our own party, our own coalition, or even someone who supported our campaign, we must still condemn it, clearly and without hesitation. After spending my career defending the Constitution, I am not about to go soft on the values it stands on the moment doing so becomes politically inconvenient. Nebraskans deserve leaders with the moral clarity to call this out no matter where it comes from—recall the portion of the oath “foreign and domestic”...make no mistake, there are domestic enemies posing a threat to our Republic espousing and advancing antisemitism.

2. How do you define antisemitism, and how would you distinguish it from legitimate political speech or criticism?

I define antisemitism as hostility toward, prejudice against, or discrimination targeting Jewish people because they are Jewish, whether that hatred is expressed through violence, harassment, conspiracy theories, or language and imagery that singles out Jews for blame, suspicion, or dehumanization. This includes classic tropes about Jewish power, loyalty, or control that have circulated for centuries, and it includes newer variations of those same tropes dressed up in modern political language.

To be sure, distinguishing antisemitism from legitimate political speech is not always simple, and I do not think elected officials should pretend otherwise. Criticizing the policies of the Israeli government is not, by itself, antisemitic. Nebraskans, like all Americans, have every right to debate foreign policy, including our nation's relationship with Israel. Indeed, robust debate over policy is a healthy feature of our constitutional system, not a threat to it.

The distinction, in my view, comes down to whether criticism is directed at specific policies or actions, or whether it slides into targeting Jewish people as a group, holding them collectively responsible, questioning their loyalty as citizens, invoking conspiratorial language about Jewish influence or control, or applying a standard to Israel that is not applied to any other nation on earth. When criticism crosses from policy into prejudice against a people, it has left the realm of legitimate political speech.

As a father, this is not just a policy question to me. I have a fifteen-year-old daughter, and I think often about the country and the culture she is inheriting. I want her to grow up in a Nebraska, and an America, where she can debate ideas passionately and disagree with people on hard issues, but where she also knows how to recognize hatred when it is dressed up as something else. That is a distinction I hope to model for her, not just legislate.

Having spent 31 years defending a Constitution built on the principle that every person possesses inherent dignity, I take seriously both sides of this responsibility. We must protect the right to vigorous political debate, and at the same time, we must have the clarity to recognize hatred when it appears, regardless of the political packaging it arrives in.

3. Community harmony in a polarized environment: Political rhetoric can contribute either to division or to mutual respect. What responsibility do elected officials have

to avoid language that stereotypes or scapegoats religious, racial, ethnic, immigrant, or other communities, particularly during campaigns?

Elected officials, and those of us seeking to become elected officials, carry a real responsibility for the tone we set, because words have consequences that outlast any single election cycle. Understandably, campaigns are inherently adversarial. Candidates are supposed to draw contrasts and debate ideas vigorously. But there is a clear line between disagreeing with someone's policies and stereotyping or scapegoating an entire community, whether that community is defined by religion, race, ethnicity, immigration status, or anything else. Crossing that line is not tough campaigning rather it is a failure of *leadership*.

The Book of James puts this better than I can. James warns that the tongue, though small, has the power to set an entire forest ablaze, and he makes a striking point that ought to give every elected official pause: the same mouth that blesses God can be used to curse people who are made in His image, and James says that should not be so. That is precisely the danger in political rhetoric that scapegoats a community. It is not just bad politics. It is a betrayal of the basic dignity every person possesses.

Indeed, I believe this responsibility only grows heavier the more polarized our politics becomes. When people feel anxious or uncertain, it is tempting for candidates to reach for an easy villain, some group to blame for complex problems that actually have complex causes. That kind of rhetoric might win a headline or fire up a base in the short term, but it corrodes the trust and mutual respect a community needs to actually solve problems together. Moreover, it tends to outlive the campaign itself, leaving neighbors more suspicious of one another long after the yard signs come down.

This is personal to me as well. I spent 31 years in a military that draws its strength precisely from bringing together people of every background, every faith, every color, generational diversity and every region of this country while asking them to trust one another with their lives. I served alongside Nebraskans and Airmen, soldiers, sailors, Marines and Guardians from every walk of life, and I saw firsthand that our differences were never our weakness. Our shared commitment to something larger than ourselves was our strength. I do not intend to abandon that lesson the when elected in November.

Elected officials owe their constituents honesty and vigorous debate on the issues. What they do not get to do is trade the dignity of an entire community for short term political gain. I intend to hold myself to that standard, and I believe voters have every right to expect the same of anyone asking for their vote. This is a hallmark of my endorsement by the highly-esteemed national organization With Honor and I one of the few candidates in Nebraska with this distinction.

Hate and bias

4. Should Nebraska codify IHRA legislatively so its applicability extends beyond what a governor can accomplish through executive action. How would you respond to acts of hate or bias affecting any community in your district or across Nebraska, and what legislative action, if any, do you believe is appropriate?

One of the trademarks of my campaign is: Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness—drawing back to my enduring commitment and love for the Constitution.

Yes, I support codifying the IHRA definition of antisemitism into Nebraska statute, and I do not believe this is a close call. A governor's executive order can be rescinded by the next governor with the stroke of a pen. It applies only to the executive branch and it carries none of the permanence or democratic legitimacy that comes from being debated and passed by the elected representatives of the people. If Nebraska is serious about giving state agencies, universities, and law enforcement a clear, consistent standard for identifying antisemitism then that standard needs to live in statute, not merely in a document that expires the moment a new administration takes office.

Moreover, codifying IHRA legislatively sends an unambiguous signal that combating antisemitism is not a partisan preference of whoever happens to hold the governor's office, but a settled commitment of the state of Nebraska itself—after all, we live the Good Life so let's perpetuate that life. That kind of durability matters, particularly for institutions like our public universities, where incidents of antisemitism have become far too common in recent years and where administrators need a clear, defensible standard rather than a patchwork of shifting executive guidance.

As for how I would respond to acts of hate or bias affecting any community in my district or across Nebraska, my approach would be the same regardless of which community is targeted. I will speak out promptly and unambiguously, without waiting to see how the politics might shake out. Having spent 35 years in uniform (4 as a cadet and 31 as a commissioned officer) I do not believe silence is ever a neutral or acceptable option for someone in a position of public trust.

On the legislative side, beyond codifying IHRA, I believe the Unicameral should ensure Nebraska's hate crime statutes are being applied consistently and that law enforcement across the state has the training and resources to recognize and properly report bias motivated incidents. I would also support legislation ensuring our public universities have clear, enforceable policies addressing harassment and discrimination on campus, consistent with IHRA where antisemitism is concerned, so that students are not left to rely on the goodwill of whichever administration happens to be in office at the time. Ultimately, I believe the legislature's role is to make sure that protecting Nebraskans from hate is not contingent on which party controls the governor's mansion, but is instead a durable, shared commitment written into our laws.

Community security

5. Jewish institutions and other houses of worship have faced increased security concerns in recent years. What role do you believe elected officials should play in helping communities feel safe while preserving an open and welcoming civic environment?

Elected officials have a direct and practical role to play here, because security for houses of worship is not an abstract policy debate. It is a question of whether a grandmother can attend synagogue on a Saturday morning, or a family can bring their children to Sunday school, without wondering whether they are safe. That is not too much to ask in this country and it is certainly not too much to ask in Nebraska.

Practically speaking, I believe the state has a responsibility to ensure that funding streams like the federal Nonprofit Security Grant Program are accessible and well publicized to houses of worship, synagogues, mosques, churches, and other religious institutions across Nebraska in order for congregations of every faith to afford basic security upgrades such as cameras, lighting, and trained personnel without having to divert scarce resources away from ministry, education, or charitable work. I would also support the state working closely with local law enforcement to ensure officers receive training on recognizing and responding to hate motivated threats against religious institutions, and that there are clear, trusted channels for congregations to report concerns before they escalate into something worse.

Undoubtedly, there is a balance to strike here, and I take that seriously. We cannot allow legitimate security needs to turn our houses of worship into fortresses, or to make Nebraskans feel that an open, welcoming civic environment has been sacrificed in the name of safety. Indeed, part of what makes a community strong is that its doors remain open, that a stranger can walk into a house of worship and be welcomed rather than viewed with suspicion. Elected officials should be working to preserve that openness even as we address genuine security concerns, not treating the two goals as though they are in conflict.

Having spent 31 years in the Air Force, much of it centered on protecting this country and the freedoms for which it stands, I understand both sides of this equation better than most. Real security and genuine openness are not opposites. The best security measures are often the ones a visitor barely notices, because they allow a congregation to remain warm and welcoming while professionals work quietly in the background to keep everyone safe. My last four years of duty were in Special Operations at a Commander level—our mantra was Quiet Professionals. The model I would want Nebraska to pursue is one that protects our communities without asking them to trade away the openness that makes them communities in the first place.

Church and State

6. Religious liberty includes both the right to practice one's faith and protection against government establishment of religion. As a state senator, how would you balance these principles when considering legislation affecting public schools and other government institutions, particularly when the religious beliefs of the majority differ from those of religious minorities?

The First Amendment gives us both a Free Exercise Clause and an Establishment Clause, and I do not view those as being in tension with one another so much as working together toward the same end, which is protecting every Nebraskan's right to practice their faith, or no faith at all, without government putting its thumb on the scale. As a state senator, I will approach legislation affecting public schools and other government institutions with that dual obligation squarely in mind.

To be sure, this is not always simple in practice, particularly in a state like Nebraska where the religious beliefs of the majority may differ meaningfully from those of Jewish, Muslim, or other religious minority families. My approach would be to ask a consistent question of any legislation that touches religion in public institutions: does this protect an individual's right to practice and express their faith, or does it have the effect of government favoring one faith over another, or faith over non-faith. Protecting a student's right to pray privately, wear religious garb, or be excused for a religious holiday is fundamentally different from a government institution endorsing or promoting a particular religious viewpoint, and I think elected officials owe it to their constituents to keep that distinction clear rather than blurring it for political convenience.

Indeed, I would bring both my military and private sector background to bear on this question, because both trained me to make decisions with equal application across large, diverse populations rather than tailoring policy to whichever group is loudest in the moment. During my 31 years in the Air Force, I served alongside Airmen of every faith, color, and age, and I depended on every one of them regardless of what any of us believed on Sunday, Friday, or Saturday. While stationed in Turkey, I had Muslim Airmen and local nationals working directly for me, and that experience gave me a firsthand understanding of Islam and a genuine respect for the faith and the people who practice it, not an understanding gained from a book or a briefing, but one earned by leading and trusting those airmen every day. That experience continued in the private sector, where I spent 15 years in business development roles at publicly traded companies with well over 100,000 employees worldwide, managing pipelines exceeding a billion dollars. In organizations of that size and scale, you learn quickly that policies and standards have to be applied fairly and consistently across every employee, regardless of background, or the whole

organization loses trust in leadership. I intend to bring that same discipline to how Nebraska handles religious liberty questions in our public institutions.

Moreover, this is personal to me as a father. I have a 15-year-old daughter and a 20-year-old son, and I want them, and every Nebraska family, whether Christian, Jewish, Muslim, or of any other faith or no faith, to know that their government treats their beliefs with equal respect. Protecting that principle is not about diminishing anyone's faith. It is about ensuring that government never puts itself in the business of deciding whose faith matters most.

Education

7. What role should the Legislature play in addressing antisemitism and other forms of religious discrimination in Nebraska's K-12 schools and public colleges and universities?

The Legislature has a direct and appropriate role to play here, because Nebraska's public schools and public universities are creatures of state law, funded by state taxpayers, and accountable to the elected representatives of the people. Local school boards and university administrators certainly have day to day responsibility for their institutions, but the Legislature sets the framework within which they operate, and I believe that framework should make unmistakably clear that antisemitism and other forms of religious discrimination have no place in Nebraska's classrooms, from kindergarten through graduate school.

Practically speaking, I believe the Legislature should ensure that Nebraska's public colleges and universities have clear, codified anti-discrimination policies, consistent with the IHRA definition of antisemitism where that specific issue is concerned, so that administrators are not left to invent standards case by case or to bend under whichever political pressure happens to be loudest that week. I would also support the Legislature requiring meaningful reporting mechanisms and training for K through 12 educators and university staff, so that incidents are identified and addressed early, rather than allowed to fester into something larger. Moreover, I believe legislative oversight matters here. The Unicameral should not simply pass a policy and walk away. We should be asking our public institutions hard questions about how these policies are actually being enforced.

Indeed, I would bring both my military and private sector experience to bear on this question. During my 31 years in the Air Force, much of it spent leading large, diverse teams, including Muslim airmen who worked directly for me while I was stationed in Turkey, I saw firsthand how quickly a unit unravels when leadership tolerates even small acts of bias, and how quickly trust rebuilds when leadership holds a clear, consistently enforced standard instead. That lesson

followed me into the private sector, where I have spent 15 years in business development roles at publicly traded companies with well over 100,000 employees worldwide, managing pipelines exceeding a billion dollars. Organizations of that scale simply cannot function, and cannot retain talent, if discrimination against any group is allowed to go unaddressed. I intend to bring that same standard of accountability to how Nebraska's Legislature approaches our schools and universities.

This is personal to me as well. I have a 15-year-old daughter and a 20-year-old son, and I attended public schools all of K-12 unlike my opponent. I want every Nebraska child, Jewish, Christian, Muslim, or otherwise, to be able to walk into a Nebraska classroom and know that their state government has their back. The Legislature's role is not to micromanage every classroom in Nebraska, but it absolutely is to set a floor below which no student in this state should ever have to fall.

Budget

8. Nebraska faces a significant projected budget shortfall. What two specific actions would you support to restore structural balance, and what area of the state budget would you prioritize for protection?

Our deficit is not a revenue problem. It is a discipline problem. We promised Nebraskans income tax relief and property tax relief at the same time, without a plan to sustain both, and now Lincoln is patching gaps instead of fixing the root cause. That is not how a household budgets, and it is not how I ran a \$1B (that's a B!) pipeline for a multinational corporation with over 100,000 employees. We budgeted daily, with transparency, accountability, and diversity of thought, and Nebraska's budget deserves that same discipline.

The first specific action I would support is fixing the property tax relief funding mechanism itself. Fiscal analysts have flagged it as a bucket with a hole in it, a cash transfer system that was never structurally sound to begin with. You cannot stabilize a budget on a mechanism that leaks by design. That has to be repaired before we can honestly say we have restored structural balance.

The second specific action is going agency by agency to find real efficiencies before we ever touch direct services for seniors, veterans, or the disabled. I would support empowering the State Auditor with a special commission made up of small, mid, and large business owners, trusted and respected government leaders, and farmers and ranchers from across Nebraska, to identify savings and efficiencies across the whole of state government. As Reagan put it, "the nine most feared words in the English language are, 'I'm from the government and I'm here to help'". This is about shrinking government to its core job, funded honestly, with a clear plan, measurable

goals, and real accountability, not about cutting the services our most vulnerable neighbors depend on.

As for what I would prioritize protecting, it is direct services for seniors, veterans, and the disabled. Government should live within its means, the same discipline every family in LD20 practices every month, but that discipline should be applied to bureaucratic inefficiency first, not to the people who have the least room to absorb a cut.

I would bring the same mindset to this that I brought to 33 years in uniform and 15 years managing \$1B-plus processes at large publicly traded defense companies. In both worlds, you do not get to promise two things you cannot afford at the same time and call it a plan. You identify the problem, build a real plan, execute it with accountability, and deliver outcomes rather than talking points. As a father of two, I also think about what kind of fiscal foundation we are leaving behind, and I do not want my children, or any Nebraska family, inheriting a budget built on gimmicks instead of discipline.

Reserves

9. Nebraska entered 2023 with historically strong General Fund balances and nearly \$1 billion in its Cash Reserve Fund. What lessons should the Legislature draw from the fiscal decisions of recent years, and what spending, revenue, or tax-policy changes would you support to restore long-term fiscal stability?

The lesson here is not complicated, even if the politics around it have been. Nebraska entered 2023 with historically strong General Fund balances and nearly a billion dollars in its Cash Reserve Fund, and instead of treating that surplus as a rare opportunity to build long-term structural stability, Lincoln treated it like a green light to promise everything to everyone at once. We promised income tax relief and property tax relief simultaneously, without a sustainable plan to fund both once that surplus inevitably normalized. That is not fiscal discipline. That is spending a windfall as though it were a permanent baseline, and now we are patching the gap that decision created.

I oversaw a billion dollar pipeline for a multinational corporation with over 100,000 employees and global annual revenue of over \$37B, and the first lesson you learn managing a sales pipeline at that scale is that a strong balance sheet in one year is not a mandate to make permanent

commitments you have not stress tested for the years after. You budget with transparency, accountability, and diversity of thought precisely so a good year does not talk you into a bad decade.

So the changes I would support start with protecting the 2023 income tax cuts. Nebraskans and job creators earned that competitive edge, and clawing it back to cover Lincoln's spending habits would be punishing the wrong people for the Legislature's own lack of planning. Second, I would fix the property tax relief funding mechanism itself, the cash transfer system fiscal analysts have described as a bucket with a hole in it. You cannot restore long-term stability on a mechanism that was structurally leaking from the start. Third, I would go agency by agency to find real efficiencies before ever touching direct services for seniors, veterans, or the disabled, and I would support empowering the State Auditor with a special commission of small, mid, and large business owners, trusted government leaders, and farmers and ranchers from across Nebraska to identify those savings across the whole of state government.

Ultimately, the lesson of the last few years is that a strong Cash Reserve Fund is not the same thing as a sustainable budget, and Nebraska cannot keep treating surplus years as permission to defer hard structural decisions. Government should live within its means, the same discipline every family in LD20 practices every month, and I intend to bring the same standard of accountability I applied managing \$1B processes in the private sector, and the same discipline I learned across 31 years in uniform, to how Nebraska budgets going forward. As a father of two, I also think about the fiscal foundation we are leaving behind, and I want my children, and every Nebraska family, inheriting a budget built on discipline and a clear plan, not one built on the assumption that the next surplus will bail out the last decade's promises.

Food insecurity & Affordability

10. Food insecurity is growing and profoundly impacting families across Nebraska.

What role should state government play in addressing hunger, and how would your administration approach Nebraska's participation in and administration of federal nutrition programs?

Food insecurity is not an abstract statistic to me. It is a family in LD20 deciding between groceries and a property tax bill, or a senior on a fixed income stretching a budget further than it was ever designed to go. State government has a real and appropriate role to play here, and I have already said that direct services for seniors, veterans, and the disabled are the last place I would look for savings when balancing Nebraska's budget (interestingly, I just had my panel interview with AARP of Nebraska where we discussed this exact topic—and it's noteworthy to cite that 29.7% of LD20 registered voters are 65 and over). Nutrition assistance for vulnerable families and seniors falls squarely in that same category. That is not where government should be

tightening its belt. At the same time, I believe the state's job is to administer these federal nutrition programs efficiently and with integrity, so that every dollar intended for a hungry family actually reaches that family rather than being lost to bureaucratic inefficiency, duplication, or fraud. I would apply the same discipline I have called for across state government, empowering the Auditor and a special commission of business owners, trusted leaders, and farmers and ranchers to identify efficiencies, to how Nebraska administers programs like SNAP and WIC, not to shrink the benefit going to families who need it, but to make sure DHHS is running these programs competently, without the kind of accountability issues constituents have already raised with me at their doors, of which I have knocked over 10,000. I would also bring Nebraska's agricultural strength directly into this conversation. We are a state that produces food for the world, and I believe we should be doing more to connect that abundance to Nebraska families who are food insecure, whether through support for food banks, farm to family programs, or partnerships that get Nebraska grown food to Nebraska kitchens more efficiently. Having spent 31 years in the military, including leading over 2,000 personnel across locations in Turkey, Nebraska, Texas, Louisiana, and Florida, I know what it means to make sure people under your responsibility are taken care of, full stop. That same sense of responsibility carried into my 15 years managing billion dollar pipelines in the private sector, and it is the standard I would bring to Lincoln. As a father of two, I also think about what it means for a Nebraska child to go to school hungry, and I do not believe that is a problem this state can afford to treat as someone else's job.

11. With rising home prices and property taxes, homeownership is becoming increasingly difficult for many families. What would you do to make homeownership more affordable while ensuring local governments have the resources they need?

Homeownership is slipping out of reach for too many LD20 families, and I hear it at the door constantly, from young couples priced out of the homes they grew up in to seniors on fixed incomes afraid of losing the home they raised their family in. This is fundamentally a property tax problem, and I have laid out a specific plan to address it. I support a hard cap on annual levy growth, building on LB1219 already before the Legislature, paired with CPI indexed valuation caps so increases stay predictable rather than unpredictable spikes pricing families out year over year. I would also raise the homestead exemption income threshold for seniors 65 and older, indexing it to inflation so relief does not erode every year against the rising cost of living. And I support a credit for homeowners who have lived in their home 20 years or more, whose children benefited from the education their property taxes funded but who have since moved on, rewarding families who choose to stay rooted in their neighborhoods rather than pricing them out once their kids are grown. On the resource side for local governments, the answer is not simply asking Nebraskans to pay more. It is fixing the leaking property tax relief funding mechanism itself and finding real efficiencies in state spending first, so relief for homeowners does not come at the expense of the police, fire, and school funding local governments depend on. I managed

billion dollar budgets for a multinational corporation with over 100,000 employees, and the lesson is always the same: you fix the structural leak before you ask anyone for more money. As a father of two, I want LD20 to be a place young families can actually afford to put down roots, not a place they have to leave to find one or one to which they cannot return (the Brain Drain is real) due to unaffordability.

Workforce

12. What policies would you support to address Nebraska's workforce shortages, including attracting and retaining legal immigrants and refugees who can contribute to Nebraska's economy?

Nebraska's workforce shortage is one of the clearest threats to our long-term economic strength, and I believe the state has to attack it from multiple directions at once. I support continuing to strengthen programs like the Grow the Good Life Act and our ImagiNE Nebraska incentives, which have already driven billions in private capital and tens of thousands of jobs statewide, because a growing economy is what gives young Nebraskans a reason to stay and build a career here rather than leaving for opportunity elsewhere. I also support the Child Care Tax Credit Act, because workforce participation and affordable, accessible child care are directly connected, particularly for working parents trying to stay in the workforce. On legal immigration and refugees specifically, Nebraska's economy, particularly in agriculture, meatpacking, healthcare, and manufacturing, has long depended on legal immigrants and refugees who come here to work hard and build a life, and I support policies that make it easier for those who are here legally to have their credentials recognized, to access workforce training, and to fully participate in Nebraska's economy. I do not believe supporting legal pathways and welcoming those who follow them is in any tension with also supporting secure, lawful immigration processes. In my private sector career managing billion dollar pipelines for companies with over 100,000 employees worldwide, I worked alongside people of every background and nationality, and I saw directly how much stronger an organization becomes when it can draw on a genuinely diverse, skilled workforce. Nebraska's workforce challenge will not be solved by any single policy. It requires growing our economy, supporting families so they can work, and making sure everyone who is here to legally contribute has a real path to do so.

Diverse representation

13. Relationships across differences: How would you build relationships with Jewish and other faith and minority communities—including communities whose members

may disagree with you politically—and ensure they have meaningful access to you if you are elected?

Building real relationships means showing up before you need something from someone, not just during an election. I have knocked on over 10,000 doors in LD20 myself, and that same principle, showing up in person and listening first, is how I intend to build relationships with Jewish and other faith and minority communities, including those whose members may disagree with me politically. Across 31 years in the military, I led people of every faith, background, and political persuasion, and I learned that trust is built by showing up consistently, listening honestly, and being willing to sit with disagreement rather than avoiding it. I do not believe meaningful access to an elected official should depend on whether someone voted for you. If elected, I intend to hold regular, in person office hours and community listening sessions across LD20, and I will make a specific effort to build ongoing relationships with synagogues, mosques, churches, and community organizations, not just reach out around election season or in response to a crisis. Having Muslim Airmen and local nationals working directly for me while stationed in Turkey, and having led thousands of Airmen, sailors, and civilians of every background over my career, taught me that genuine relationships across religious and cultural lines are built through consistent presence and mutual respect, not through a single meeting or a campaign mailer. That is the standard I intend to hold myself to in Lincoln.

14. How do you approach policymaking in a culturally and religiously diverse legislative district, and how will you engage with faith-based and minority communities if elected?

My approach to policymaking in a culturally and religiously diverse district starts with the same discipline I applied leading diverse teams for 31 years in the Air Force and 15 years in the private sector, apply standards consistently and listen before you legislate. LD20 is home to families of many different faiths and backgrounds, and I do not believe good policy comes from assuming any single community's perspective represents everyone. It comes from actively seeking out those perspectives before a bill is drafted, not after it has already been introduced. Practically, that means continuing to knock on doors and hold in person conversations after the election just as I have during the campaign, and it means building direct, ongoing relationships with faith based and minority community leaders across LD20 so that when an issue affecting their community comes before the Legislature, I am hearing from them directly rather than relying on assumptions. I also believe engagement has to be genuine rather than transactional. Communities can tell the difference between an elected official who shows up because they want something and one who shows up because they actually care what a community is experiencing. Having served alongside people of every faith and background throughout my military and private sector career, including Muslim Airmen

who worked directly for me while I was stationed in Turkey, I bring a habit of building trust across difference that I intend to carry directly into how I legislate.

Israel and the Jewish community

15. Israel is an important part of the organized religious, cultural, and communal identity of most Jewish Nebraskans even while holding a wide range of views about Israeli government policies. How do you approach conversations about Israel and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in a way that respects both legitimate political disagreement and the concerns of Jewish constituents about antisemitism?

I approach conversations about Israel the way I approach any serious foreign policy question, with respect for the fact that reasonable people, including within the Jewish community itself, hold a range of views on specific Israeli government policies. That kind of disagreement is healthy and legitimate, and I do not believe every criticism of an Israeli policy decision is antisemitic. At the same time, I believe elected officials have a responsibility to recognize when criticism of Israel crosses into antisemitism, whether that is questioning Israel's fundamental right to exist as a Jewish state, applying a standard to Israel that is applied to no other nation on earth, or invoking classic antisemitic tropes under the cover of political commentary. I support codifying the IHRA definition of antisemitism, which specifically helps draw that distinction rather than leaving it to guesswork. Israel is America's most important democratic ally in a volatile region, and I support that relationship clearly and without apology, while also respecting that Jewish Nebraskans are not a monolith on every policy question related to Israeli government decisions. Having spent 31 years defending this country, including time focused on threats across the Middle East, I understand both the strategic importance of Israel to American security and the complexity of the region firsthand, not from a headline. What I will not do is treat Israel as a political football or allow conversations about the Israeli Palestinian conflict to become a vehicle for antisemitism directed at Jewish Nebraskans who had no role in shaping Israeli government policy. Respecting legitimate political disagreement and standing firmly against antisemitism are not in conflict. They are both part of the same commitment to treating people, and nations, with honesty and fairness.