



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?

All Americans, whether they be elected officials or not, should speak out about antisemitism when they see it. There is no space for hate in politics, or frankly, anywhere else in society.

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

Antisemitism is the discrimination against Jewish people, which sometimes escalates to the level of open hostility and blame. Legitimate political speech should never blame or criticize an entire group of individuals, just like political strategy cannot treat groups of individuals as monolithic.

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 should be role models for the community, both in ideals and in practice. No group of people should ever be stereotyped or made into scapegoats, regardless of perceived reason. We need to speak with reason, moderation, and with calm while sticking to the facts and not getting caught up in the mood of the day.

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?

The IHRA definition of antisemitism states: "Antisemitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities."

This definition was adopted by the U.S. State Department in 2010, and I see no reason why the State of Nebraska should not codify the same. When acts of hate or bias impacting any group of individuals take place, elected officials must speak out.

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?

Communications from elected officials should include a welcoming attitude toward all constituents, regardless of religion, background, or any other demographic factors. Further, there is no place for violence in any house of worship, and that point must be made clear by anyone elected to serve Nebraskans. My own place of worship has ramped up security dramatically in recent years in response to threats of violence so it is not an issue I am unfamiliar with.

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?

Liberty is liberty, plain and simple. Individuals must have the freedom to practice their religion, but they must also understand that this freedom applies to other individuals as

well. If everyone makes the effort to allow others to practice their religion without being offended, society will operate much more smoothly and safely.

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?

Hate speech is already a crime, but we can take this further into antisemitism. Public dollars should not flow to any organization – whether educational in nature or not – that allows antisemitic speech or actions, or discriminatory speech or actions toward any other religion.

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?

A review of sales tax exemptions is at the top of the list. Specifically, exemptions around luxury services like charter flight fees and pool maintenance fees; and exemptions on so-called “food” items that are absolutely not food, like pop and candy. Economic growth is the long term solution, and I’ve taken action in that regard to grow our economy, add new jobs, and make Nebraska a more attractive place to place a business. For protection, I would prioritize recent legislative changes like the massive increase in public school funding and the income tax cuts that have benefited nearly every Nebraska family.

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?

Those funds belonged to the people of Nebraska, and we gave it back through tax cuts, public school funding, and property tax relief. Government should not exist simply to tax citizens and then figure out what to do with the money. Taxes should be as low as possible to maintain quality services and programs for the state. Meaningful property tax reform, growing our economy, and a deep look into the school funding formula are important next steps for long term fiscal stability.

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?

First, we must make sure nobody loses nutrition assistance due to administrative error. That should never happen. State government has an important role in providing grants and assistance to food banks and other non-profit entities that assist with food insecurity. Children should not be negatively impacted due to bad decisions made by their parents and should receive special consideration.

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?

I mentioned earlier the needs for a deep look into school funding and real property tax reform. As a state legislator, I don't have control over the cost of lumber or the housing market, but I can certainly continue taking steps to reduce the tax burden, cut costly and needless regulations, to put more money back in the pockets of Nebraskans. Already we have cut income taxes in half and provided an additional 20% more property tax relief. I also have a bill to cap spending at the level of the taxing authorities to prevent higher valuations from becoming "free spending" accounts for municipalities, counties, and school districts.

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?

Again, as a state legislator, I don't have control on immigration policy. However, I have already taken steps to grow our economy and bring in more well-paying jobs. Jobs need people to fill them. If we can continue to grow our economy and make the state a more attractive place for businesses to operate and thrive, not only will Nebraska's tax base expand, but the amount of jobs will grow exponentially. I am working with the Aksarben Foundation to determine the best ways to address this critically important issue for our state.

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?

I spend a great deal of time having conversations with individuals and groups who reach out to me or to my office. I am proud to have an open-door policy with anyone in Nebraska. I also understand that good people can disagree, and that has not stopped me from engaging with individuals who I know sit on the opposite side of the aisle. Nebraska may be a red state, but our population is made up of people from all walks of life. My job is to represent my district to the best of my ability and make our state a better place for everyone to live, work, and raise a family. I have traveled the world, including Israel and other parts of the Middle East and East Asia and have personally encountered conflicts of faith and culture. This is not new territory for me.

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?

I will continue to engage all people and communities the same way I have for the past four years. I'll be the first to admit that I don't have all the answers, and the only way to

learn is to put myself in a position to do so. With that in mind, I have made every effort to be available and transparent in all that I do as a state legislator and your organization can attest to that. I have learned a great deal in these past four years, and my next term will be another learning opportunity.

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?

To be fully transparent, the Israel-Palestinian conflict has not come up in conversation with voters in my district, despite personally knocking many thousands of doors. I am not an expert in geopolitics, and the Nebraska state legislature has no influence on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. However, if it were brought up, my answer would be relatively simple: Israel is a strong ally of the United States, the Israeli people deserve protection from unjust persecution in any shape or form, and I proudly stand with Israel and the Jewish people around the world against antisemitism.