



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

Mark Schoenrock – Candidate for LD 32

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? As an elected official, I will always stand strong against all forms of antisemitism.
2. How do you define antisemitism, and how would you distinguish it from legitimate political speech or criticism? Antisemitism is defined as hostility, prejudice or discrimination against Jews. It is not free speech, and I will stand strong against it.
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? As an elected official, I will stand strong for open dialogue, free speech and mutual respect and avoid division. We must always work hard to see and understand the other person's point of view and work together for the common good of all of our citizens. We will not always agree, but we must never forget that what unites us is far greater than that which could divide us.

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? I will stand strong against all forms of antisemitism and acts of hate, bias and violence.

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? I will stand strong for public safety and preserving an open and welcoming environment for all of our citizens. I have a long track record as a county commissioner of supporting law enforcement and have been endorsed by the Nebraska Fraternal Order of Police and Lincoln Police Union, leaders representing our public law enforcement members in Nebraska.

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? I will stand strong for religious liberty to practice one's faith and protection against government establishment of religion. This is one of the founding core principles of our republic.

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 must play a key role, in conjunction with the other applicable entities, in addressing antisemitism and other forms of religious discrimination in our schools.

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? I am spending considerable effort with many key people and entities to understand the Nebraska budget. First, to have a clear understanding of the revenue sources, and second to have a clear understanding of where the revenue is spent. This process must be transparent to our citizens and reflect their priorities. As elected officials, it is our duty to understand and to implement the will of our citizens that we represent, as the revenue is their tax money being paid to provide these services.

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? We must achieve a balanced budget with sufficient cash reserve that reflects the will of our citizens, where the revenue comes from, and where it is expended for the services to serve our citizens.

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? I believe that we should prioritize the cooperation of the private and public sectors to maximize the efforts to reduce and eliminate food insecurity. I have served in a leadership capacity of three regional organizations (Blue Valley Community Action, Public Health Solutions, and Blue Rivers Area Agency on Aging) to help achieve that objective for the citizens of southeast Nebraska.

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? Local boards (city councils, school boards, and county boards) make these decisions based on the will of their citizens. These boards are accountable to the citizens they serve. If the citizens do not like the decisions being made, they can vote changes to the boards. We must explore all sources of revenue to provide these essential local services. The objective must always be to provide the highest level of essential services to our citizens in the most cost efficient manner possible.

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? I will always work hard to recruit and retain a quality work force. I have a long track record as an officer of the United States Army and County

Commissioner of successfully accomplishing those objectives. There are many tools in the toolkit to accomplish this and I will use my years of experience to best support and improve upon Nebraska workforce shortages.

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 have a long track record of reaching out to all of our citizens, developing solid relationships, and working together for Nebraska. We are not always going to agree on everything, but we will have solid relationships and best work together for our fellow citizens. At the end of the day, we are all in this together to make our state and nation the best that it can be.

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 always be reaching out to all of our citizens, be transparent and accessible. It is the duty of an elected official to understand and best represent all of those who he or she represents in an elected body.

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? Israel is the closest ally of the United States and I will always stand strong for that relationship. I will work hard to understand all of the political, cultural and religious views on this subject and stand strong for free speech and political dialogue.