

Supporting Thriving Families

David Jordan,
President and CEO



Background

Kansas Common Sense Fund, with support from the United Methodist Health Ministry Fund, sponsored this survey to understand Kansans' views on issues impacting families across the state, specifically:

- Affordable child care
- Medicaid expansion
- Food assistance

PerryUndem, a non-partisan research firm, led the research.

To develop this survey, we conducted 8 focus groups with diverse Kansan voters to hear about their lives and the challenges they face.

This report covers findings from a statewide survey of 1006 registered voters 18 and older in Kansas conducted February 13-18, 2024. Here are details:

- The survey was conducted by telephone and text-to-web interviews.
- Interviews lasted, on average, 15 minutes.
- The survey vendor was Braun Research.
- The margin of sampling error for total results is ± 4.0 percentage points.



The survey shows that voters believe Kansas families are struggling with high costs right now and that policymakers are not in touch with their challenges.

- 70% of voters feel the average Kansas family is struggling financially.
- Most believe essential costs are difficult to afford for the average Kansas family right now: housing (87% difficult to afford), health care (86% difficult to afford), child care (83% difficult to afford), and healthy food (81% difficult to afford).
- Nearly 8 in 10 (79%) believe that most Kansas policymakers are NOT in touch with the financial challenges facing the average family.

Child care issues break through with Kansas voters – most support the state doing more to help families afford child care.

- 87% agree “high quality, safe, affordable child care allows parents to continue working, which helps the state economy and encourages healthy development in young children.”
- 7 in 10 (70%) believe it is a good idea for the state to invest more in programs that help Kansas families pay for child care.
- 78% think it is a good idea for the state to expand a tax credit that is designed to help working parents pay for child care.
- 73% agree that “state legislators should not pass any policy that would loosen qualifications and standards for child care providers because it could put children at risk.”

Most support expanding Medicaid to make health care affordable for more Kansans.

- Most voters say they are concerned about the following:
 - Health care costs going up (95% concerned);
 - Rural hospitals closing (90% concerned);
 - A rise in the number of uninsured people in the state (87% concerned);
 - Health care providers leaving the state (81% concerned).
- Neary three-quarters (73%) support the state expanding Medicaid so that more low-wage Kansans can get affordable health coverage.
- There is bipartisan support for Medicaid expansion: majorities of Democrats (90%); Independents (74%), and Republicans (61%) support this policy.



Voters believe high food costs are a serious problem and want the state to do more to help families who are struggling to put food on the table.

- 76% of voters think rising food costs are a serious problem for most Kansas families.
- 79% support the state government doing more to help Kansas families afford healthy foods and groceries.
- 85% agree the state should “not put barriers in the way” of hungry Kansans who need help to put food on their table.
- 80% recognize that food banks can’t do it alone and that a strong SNAP program is needed to help Kansans who are struggling to afford food.
- 64% oppose a recent policy that added more paperwork requirements and red tape for low-income Kansans seeking help through SNAP.



Voters want their policymakers to support more policies that help Kansas families deal with these challenging times.

- 74% agree that any Kansas policymaker who stands in the way of policies intended to help Kansas families does not deserve their support.
- 72% agree we need to eliminate government red tape and paperwork requirements that make it harder for Kansans to get the support they need to take care of their families.
- 74% agree a policymaker that wants to expand Medicaid and increase funding for child care and food assistance is more likely to get their support.

Civic and Voter Engagement = Healthier Kansas

- The more civically engaged a community is, the healthier the community
- Kansans are not voting in local elections at healthy levels
 - Civic Health Index Ranked Kansas at 42nd in country
- To improve health, we must invest in civic and voter engagement and advocacy
- We need you to elevate voices of Kansans to policymakers at local and state levels as well as show up to vote

Today's Agenda – Friday, April 19th

10

- 8:30 a.m. – Registration
- 9:00 – Welcome and opening remarks
- 9:15 – Healthier Communities Through Voter and Civic Engagement
- Lindsay Ford, Anne Gahn, Rachael Pryor
- 10:45 – Break
- 11:00 - Hot Topics (Medicaid Expansion, Child Care, Maternal and Child Health)
- Brenda Bandy, April Holman, John Wilson
- 11:45 – Hot Topics Round Table Discussions
- 12:30 – Lunch
- 1:15 – Awards Presentation
- 1:45 – Break
- 2:00 - How Congregations and Communities can Improve Local Food Security
- Miranda Miller-Klugesherz, Haley Kottle, Sabrina Rosario
- 3:00 - Closing Remarks
- 3:45 – Conference concludes

Questions

