Governor
Republican
Mike Parson
Democratic
Nicole Galloway
Libertarian
Rik Combs
Green
Jerome Howard Bauer

Lieutenant Governor
Republican
Mike Kehoe
Democratic
Alissia Canady
Libertarian
Bill Slantz
Green
Kelley Dragoo*

Secretary of State
Republican
John R. (Jay) Ashcraft
Democratic
Yinka Faleti*
Libertarian
Carl Herman Freese
Green
Paul Lehmann*
Constitution
Paul Venable

State Treasurer
Republican
Scott Fitzpatrick
Democratic
Vicki Lorenz Englund*
Libertarian

U.S. Representative - District 4
Republican
Nicholas (Nick) Kasoff Green
Joseph Civettini

Attorney General
Republican
Eric Schmitt
Democratic
Rich Finneran
Libertarian
Kevin C. Babcock

U.S. Representative - District 1
Republican
Anthony Rogers
Democratic
Cori Bush
Libertarian
Alex Furman

U.S. Representative - District 2
Republican
Ann Wagner
Democratic
Jill Schupp*
Libertarian
Martin Schulte

U.S. Representative - District 3
Republican
Blaine Luetkemeyer
Democratic
Megan Rezabek
Libertarian
Leonard J. Steinman II

U.S. Representative - District 5
Republican
Ryan Derks*
Democratic
Emanuel Cleaver II
Libertarian
Robin Dominick

U.S. Representative - District 6
Republican
Sam Graves
Democratic
Gena L. Ross*
Libertarian
Jim Higgins

U.S. Representative - District 7
Republican
Billy Long
Democratic
Teresa Montseny
Libertarian
Kevin Craig

U.S. Representative - District 8
Republican
Jason Smith
Democratic
Kathy Ellis*

Libertarian
Tom Schmitz

State Senator - District 1

Republican
David Lenihan

Democratic
Doug Beck*

State Senator - District 3

Republican
Elaine Freeman Gannon

State Senator - District 5

Republican
Michael Hebron

Democratic
Steve Roberts

State Senator - District 7

Democratic
Greg Razer*

Green
Nathan Kline

State Senator - District 9

Republican
David Martin

Democratic
Barbara Anne Washington

State Senator - District 11

Democratic
John Joseph Rizzo

State Senator - District 13

Democratic
Angela Walton Mosley

Libertarian
Jeff Coleman

State Senator - District 15

Republican
Andrew Koenig

Democratic
Deb Lavender*

State Senator - District 17

Republican
Mickey Younghanz

Democratic
Lauren Arthur*

State Senator - District 19

Republican
Caleb Rowden

Democratic
Judy Baker

State Senator - District 21

Republican
Denny Hoskins

Libertarian
Mark Bliss

State Senator - District 23

Republican
Bill Eigel

Democratic
Richard Orr

State Senator - District 25

Republican
Jason Bean

State Senator - District 27

Republican
Holly Rehder*

Democratic
Donnie Owens

State Senator - District 29

Republican
Mike Moon

State Senator - District 31

Republican
Rick Brattin

Democratic
Raymond Kinney

State Senator - District 33

Republican
Karla Eslinger

Democratic
Tammy Harty*

State Representative - District 1

Republican
Allen Andrews

State Representative - District 2
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<td><strong>Republican</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Republican</strong></td>
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<td>Terrence Fiala</td>
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<td>Rusty Black*</td>
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<td>James Shackelford*</td>
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<td><strong>Republican</strong></td>
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<td>Karen Planalp*</td>
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<td><strong>Republican</strong></td>
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<td>Bill Falkner</td>
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<td>Colby Murphy*</td>
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<td>Brenda Shields</td>
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<td>Josh Hurlbert</td>
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<td>Wade Hugh Kiefer*</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Republican</strong></td>
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<td>Vic Allred</td>
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<td>Vic Abundis</td>
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<tr>
<td>Eric Holmes</td>
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<td>Ashley Aune*</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Republican</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Steve West</td>
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<td><strong>Republican</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Republican</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Brandt Vircks*</td>
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<td>Mark Ellebracht</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wes Rogers*</td>
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<td>Ingrid Burnett*</td>
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<td><strong>Republican</strong></td>
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<td>Robert Sauls*</td>
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Last Updated: 9/11/2020
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<tr>
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<td>Yolanda Young*</td>
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<td>Art Schaaf*</td>
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<td>Megan E. Seacrest</td>
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<td>Chris Hager</td>
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<td>Sean Smith</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Keri Ingle*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Republican</td>
<td>Nola Wood*</td>
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<tr>
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<td>John D. Boyd Jr.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Democratic</td>
<td>Annette Turnbaugh</td>
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<td>Doug Richey</td>
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<tr>
<td>Republican Cheri Toalson Reisch</td>
<td>Republican Kurtis Gregory</td>
<td>Republican Rodger L. Reedy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Democratic Jacque Sample*</td>
<td>Libertarian William Truman (Bill) Wayne</td>
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<tr>
<td>Democratic Kip Kendrick</td>
<td>Republican Bradley Pollitt</td>
<td>Republican Willard Haley</td>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Democratic Martha Stevens</td>
<td>Republican Terry Thompson</td>
<td>Republican Rudy Veit</td>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Republican Charles (Chuck) Basye*</td>
<td>Democratic Connie Simmons</td>
<td>Republican Dave Griffith</td>
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<td>Democratic Adrian Plank*</td>
<td>Libertarian Cameron Pack</td>
<td>Democratic Joshua Dunne*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Republican Tim Taylor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Republican Travis Fitzwater</td>
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<td>Republican Bruce Sassmann</td>
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<tr>
<td>Republican Sara Walsh</td>
<td>Republican Michael Davis*</td>
<td>Republican Richard W. West</td>
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<td>Democratic Kari L. Chesney*</td>
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Republican
Tony Lovasco

Democratic
Aaliyah Bailey

State Representative - District 65
Republican
Tom Hannegan
Democratic
Bill Otto

State Representative - District 66
Democratic
Marlene Terry

State Representative - District 67
Democratic
Neil Smith

State Representative - District 68
Democratic
Jay Mosley

State Representative - District 69
Republican
Scott E. Cazadd
Democratic
Gretchen Bangert

State Representative - District 70
Republican
Jerry Adzima
Democratic
Paula Brown

State Representative - District 71
Democratic
LaDonna Appelbaum*

State Representative - District 72
Republican
Darren L. Grant
Democratic
Doug Clemens

State Representative - District 73
Democratic
Raychel C. Proudie

State Representative – District 74
Democratic
Mike Person

State Representative - District 75
Democratic
Alan Gray

State Representative - District 76
Democratic
Marlon Anderson

State Representative - District 77
Democratic
Kimberly-Ann Collins

State Representative - District 78
Republican
Timothy Gartin

Democratic
Rasheen Aldrige Jr.

State Representative - District 79
Democratic
LaKeySha Bosley

State Representative - District 80
Democratic
Peter Merideth

State Representative - District 81
Democratic
Steve Butz*

State Representative - District 82
Republican
Robert J. Crump*
Democratic
Donna M.C. Baringer*

State Representative - District 83
Democratic
Jo Doll*
Libertarian
Andrew Bolin

State Representative - District 84
Democratic
Wiley (Chip) Price IV

State Representative - District 85
Democratic
Kevin Windham Jr.
State Representative - District 86
Democratic
Joe Adams

State Representative - District 87
Democratic
Ian Mackey

State Representative - District 88
Republican
Karen Pujji
Democratic
Tracy McCreery*
Libertarian
Stephen R. Johnson

State Representative - District 89
Republican
Dean Plocher
Democratic
Luke Barber*

State Representative - District 90
Republican
Rick Perry
Democratic
Barbara Phifer*

State Representative - District 91
Democratic
Sarah Unsicker*

State Representative - District 92

Republican
Bill Heisse
Democratic
Michael Burton

State Representative - District 93
Republican
Gabriel Jones*
Democratic
Bridget Walsh Moore*

State Representative - District 94
Republican
Jim Murphy
Democratic
Jean Pretto*

State Representative - District 95
Republican
Michael A. O'Donnell
Democratic
Ann L. Zimpfer*

State Representative - District 96
Republican
David J. Gregory
Democratic
Erica Hoffman*

State Representative - District 97
Republican
Mary Elizabeth Coleman

State Representative - District 98
Republican

State Representative - District 99
Republican
Lee Ann Pitman
Democratic
Trish Gunby*

State Representative - District 100
Republican
Derek Grier
Democratic
Helena Webb*

State Representative - District 101
Republican
Bruce DeGroot

State Representative - District 102
Republican
Ron Hicks
Democratic
Tracy Grundy*

State Representative - District 103
Republican
John D. Wiemann
Democratic
Lisa Rees

State Representative - District 104
Republican
Adam Schnelting
Democratic
Jessica DeVoto*

State Representative - District 105

Republican
Phil Christofanelli

Democratic
Christine Hyman*

State Representative - District 106

Republican
Adam Schwadron

Democratic
Cindy Berne

State Representative - District 107

Republican
Nick Schroer

Democratic
Victoria Witt Datt

Libertarian
Mike Copeland

State Representative - District 108

Republican
Justin S. Hill

Democratic
Susan Shumway*

State Representative - District 109

Republican
John Simmons

State Representative - District 110

Republican
Dottie Bailey

Democratic
John Kiehne*

State Representative - District 111

Republican
Shane Roden

Democratic
Daniel (Vern) Cherry*

State Representative - District 112

Republican
Rob Vescovo

Democratic
Chad Bicknell

State Representative - District 113

Republican
Dan Shaul*

Democratic
Terry Burgess

State Representative - District 114

Republican
Becky Ruth

State Representative - District 115

Republican
Cyndi Buchheit-Courtway

Democratic
Cynthia D. Nugent*

State Representative - District 116

Democratic
Victoria Witt Datt

Libertarian
Mike Copeland

State Representative - District 105

Republican
Phil Christofanelli

Democratic
Christine Hyman*

State Representative - District 106

Republican
Adam Schwadron

Democratic
Cindy Berne

State Representative - District 107

Republican
Nick Schroer

Democratic
Victoria Witt Datt

Libertarian
Mike Copeland

State Representative - District 108

Republican
Justin S. Hill

Democratic
Susan Shumway*

State Representative - District 109

Republican
John Simmons

State Representative - District 110

Republican
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State Representative - District 113

Republican
Dan Shaul*

Democratic
Terry Burgess

State Representative - District 114

Democratic
Chad Bicknell
Constitution
Pat Bellew

State Representative - District 124
Republican
Lisa Thomas

State Representative - District 125
Republican
Jim Kalberloh

State Representative - District 126
Republican
Patricia Pike

Democratic
Jim Hogan*

State Representative - District 127
Republican
Ann Kelley

State Representative - District 128
Republican
Mike Stephens

Democratic
Marvin Manring*

State Representative - District 129
Republican
Jeff Knight

Democratic
Dewanna (Dee) Marquez

State Representative - District 130
Republican

Bishop Davidson

Democratic
Dave Gragg*

State Representative - District 131
Republican
Bill Owen*

Democratic
Allison Schoolcraft

State Representative - District 132
Republican
Sarah Semple

Democratic
Crystal Quade

State Representative - District 133
Republican
Curtis D. Trent

Democratic
Cindy Slimp

State Representative - District 134
Republican
Alex Riley

Democratic
Derrick Nowlin

State Representative - District 135
Republican
Steve Helms

Democratic
Betsy Fogle

Green
Vicke Kepling*

State Representative - District 136
Republican
Craig Fishel

Democratic
Jeff Munzinger

State Representative - District 137
Republican
John F. Black

Democratic
Raymond Lampert

State Representative - District 138
Republican
Brad Hudson

State Representative - District 139
Republican
Jered Taylor

Democratic
Darlene Graham

State Representative - District 140
Republican
Tricia Derges

State Representative - District 141
Republican
Hannah S. Kelley

State Representative - District 142
Republican
Bennie Cook
State Representative - District 143
Republican
Ron Copeland

State Representative - District 144
Republican
Chris Dinkins

State Representative - District 145
Republican
Rick Francis
Democratic
Mike Lindley

State Representative - District 146
Republican
Barry D. Hovis

State Representative - District 147
Republican
Wayne Wallingford
Democratic
Andy Leighton

State Representative - District 148
Republican
Jamie Burger

State Representative - District 149
Republican
Don Rone

State Representative - District 150
Republican
Andrew McDaniel

State Representative - District 151
Republican
Herman Morse

State Representative - District 152
Republican
Hardy Billington

State Representative - District 153
Republican
Darrell Atchison

State Representative - District 154
Republican
David Paul Evans

State Representative - District 155
Republican
Travis Smith
Democratic
Mike Lind

State Representative - District 156
Republican
Brian H. Seitz
Democratic
Dale Speelman*

State Representative - District 157
Republican
Mitch Boggs

State Representative - District 158
Republican
Scott Cupps
Democratic
Brenda McKinney*

State Representative - District 159
Republican
Dirk Deaton

State Representative - District 160
Republican
Ben Baker
Democratic
Angela Thomas

State Representative - District 161
Republican
Lane Roberts
Democratic
Elizabeth Lundstrum

State Representative - District 162
Republican
Bob Bromley
State Representative - District 163

Republican
Cody Smith

Democratic
Aaron Hailey*

Responses have been printed exactly as candidates sent them. All candidates were instructed to keep their responses to 2 pages. Any responses that were longer than two pages have been cut to reflect the page limit.

* Indicates candidate has responded to the survey
Missouri Disability Voter Coalition 2020 State Candidate Survey Questions

Background
What training, experience, and characteristics qualify you for this position? Do you have any personal experience with a disability or an individual with a disability?

COVID-19 and Voting Access
Many people with disabilities are high risk for COVID-19 and are concerned about potential exposure to the disease when voting. What, if any, steps would you take to address this problem?

Medicaid Expansion
How do you see Medicaid Expansion affecting the state of Missouri?

Housing
According to HUD, less than 5% of homes are accessible to individuals with mobility impairments. Affordable accessible housing is a concern for many Missourians with disabilities. What, if any, steps would you take to address this problem?

Direct Support for Community Living
There is a shortage of direct support professionals (personal attendants and other caregivers), to help people with disabilities live independently in the community. What, if any, steps would you take to address this problem?

Transportation
In many areas across Missouri, there are a lack of public/para-transit transportation resources for seniors and individuals with disabilities. What, if any, steps would you take to address this problem?

Employment
The rate of unemployment or underemployment is much higher for individuals with disabilities than those without a disability. According to the American Community Survey, as of 2017, only 34% of all working-age people with disabilities in Missouri were employed, and 25% of people with a cognitive or intellectual disability were employed. What, if any, steps would you take to address this disparity?

Waiver Programs
There are 11 1915(c) waivers in Missouri. Recently, many individuals have experienced waitlists and the effects of limited funding for waiver supported programs. What, if any, steps would you take to address this problem?

Final Thoughts
Is there anything else you would like to say to voters with disabilities?
Missouri Disability Voter Coalition 2020 Federal Candidate Survey Questions

Background
What training, experience, and characteristics qualify you for this position? Do you have any personal experience with a disability or an individual with a disability?

COVID-19 and Voting Access
Many people with disabilities are high risk for COVID-19 and are concerned about potential exposure to the disease when voting. What, if any, steps would you take to address this problem?

Housing
According to HUD, less than 5% of homes are accessible to individuals with mobility impairments. In many areas across the county, people with disabilities do not have access to affordable accessible housing. What, if any, steps would you take to address this problem?

Direct Support for Community Living
There is a shortage of direct support professionals (personal attendants and other caregivers), to help people with disabilities live independently in the community. What, if any, steps would you take to address this problem?

Transportation
In many areas across the country, there are a lack of public/para-transit transportation resources for seniors and individuals with disabilities. What, if any, steps would you take to address this problem?

Employment
The rate of unemployment or underemployment is much higher for individuals with disabilities than those without a disability. According to the American Community Survey, as of 2017, only 34% of all working-age people with disabilities in Missouri were employed, and 25% of people with a cognitive or intellectual disability were employed. What, if any, steps would you take to address this disparity?

Final Thoughts
Is there anything else you would like to say to voters with disabilities?
Position: Lieutenant Governor
Name: Kelly Dragoo
Party: Green

Background

Running for Lieutenant Governor is not something I imagined I would do. I have been an activist for over a decade and, while a stint in public service has always been something I've considered, I did not think it would come in this form. With that known, it was time that I chose to step up. I believe my strongest quality which prepares me for this position is my ability to compromise through effective communication. The Lieutenant Governor's job, as I see it - for they have very few defined duties - is to be the bridge between the executive and legislative branches of our government. I take this very seriously because if we are to move forward as a State, we need to more efficiently give the people what they need. I will do that. Speaking directly to my personal experience with disability: my background is in psychology and while mental disorder is very different from a physical disability there are some overlaps. I believe the most important component of this intersection is recognizing just how much I take for granted as a non-disabled person. On the bus, simply stepping up eight-inches from the curb can be very difficult! My party's Governor candidate, Jerome Bauer, is legally blind and uses text-to-speech online and it, again, showcases how necessary small considerations are to helping someone simply live their life.

CoVid-19/Voting Access

It is unacceptable that a person would not be accommodated for any reason. This CoVid situation highlights the voter suppression happening for decades. A person should be able to request a mail-in ballot FOR ANY REASON and without a notarized signature the Secretary of State is now requiring. We need a constitutional amendment protecting voting rights and I would push the SOS and the legislature for such, if elected.

Medicaid Expansion

I will be voting yes on Amendment 2 in August. We are leaving money on the table that Missourians need.

Housing

As I have stated, recognizing how much one takes for granted is the first step to creating change. The LG position is uniquely situated to help with this as they sit on the Missouri Housing Development Commission. Housing is a universal right which should be easily accessible and affordable. Perhaps legislation should be put forth which requires property owners of more than one or two units install accessibility ramps, elevators, accommodations, etc? Potentially, we could require any new home built, moving forward, to comply with ADA guidelines?

Direct Support for Community Living

I believe a huge part of why there is a shortage in direct care professionals is because of the low wages and nearly non-existent benefits. I've known many folks who have worked in such positions and know first-hand how undervalued these workers are compared to the intensity of the work itself. Higher wages, better benefits. This is one of my platforms.

Transportation

Public transportation is a marker of a healthy society. All citizens should have access to these resources. We need to construct a more comprehensive transit system as a State. This is one of my platforms.

Employment

The lack of employment opportunity for those with disability is a symptom of the bigger problem that society, at large, believes that if a person is unable to perform 'labor' that they are somehow less
valuable. This is where my psychology background comes heavily into play. Just because someone does not work one particular way does not mean they cannot work, it means they cannot work “that one specific way.” I believe humans have an innate need to feel useful and valued and I have known so many persons with disabilities who can do things I cannot, who have strengths that I do not. Our value is shown best when we are given opportunities to showcase our strengths. We need to rethink what it means ‘to work’ and those with differing abilities need to be integral in understanding that new concept.

Waiver Programs

The government is not effectively using Missourians tax dollars if those who are asking for help are not being given what they need. The LG sits as counsel on both the Office of Advocacy and Assistance for the Elderly and the Special Health, Psychological, and Social Needs of Minority Older Individuals Commission. We are not distributing enough of our State’s wealth to these programs, both in staffing and funding for waivers. If elected, I would push hard to get more money into these types of programs. Welfare programs help people to fare well. We must help each other.

Final Thoughts

As I am answering these questions I am realizing just how much I do not understand, and am not educated about, regarding disability rights. It is not the Missouri Disability Voter Coalition’s job to educate me on these things and I will be seeking much more information to better serve this portion of our State. I am grateful for this bit of eye-opening and for the chance to talk to your coalition about what I would bring to Jefferson City, if elected. Thank you!!!
Position: Secretary of State
Name: Yinka Faleti
Party: Democratic

Background

What training, experience, and characteristics qualify you for this position? Do you have any personal experience with a disability or an individual with a disability?

I have spent the greater part of my life working to better my community and our country. As a cadet at the United States Military Academy at West Point, I studied, practiced and honed leadership and came to understand what the word duty looks like in action. I carried those attributes with me during my over six years of active-duty service in the United States Army as a combat arms officer. After my military service, I moved to St. Louis to attend Washington University School of Law. After graduating, I worked in private practice at a global law firm and later as a state prosecutor, where I fought for justice for victims of abuse, assault and burglary. When I sensed there was more I could do for my community, I turned my efforts to the nonprofit sector as a senior vice president at United Way of Greater St. Louis, where I led the fundraising division to raise over $300 million in four years to help one of three people in the Greater St. Louis region. Most recently, I led as the executive director of Forward through Ferguson, the successor nonprofit to the Ferguson Commission. In that role, I worked to help inspire the St. Louis region to do the work to achieve racial equity in education, healthcare, economics, housing, transportation, criminal justice and more.

I have personally experienced temporary physical disability: for almost all of my first semester of law school, I lost use of a leg, as I had to undergo and rehabilitate from knee surgery. In what was already a stressful time in my life, needing to rely on others to drive me to school, take me grocery shopping, and much more was humbling and difficult. That experience helped me gain a months-long glimpse into what life is like for many Missourians with physical disabilities.

COVID-19 and Voting Access

Many people with disabilities are high risk for COVID-19 and are concerned about potential exposure to the disease when voting. What, if any, steps would you take to address this problem?

I was the first candidate running statewide in Missouri to call for universal mail-in voting at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in March. I am extremely concerned that many voters will not have access to the ballot and am appalled by our current Secretary of State Jay Ashcroft’s complete disregard for the many Missouri voters whom the law precludes from no-notary absentee voting. I recently held a press conference to demand that all ballots postmarked by, not just received by, election day be counted. As Secretary of State, I would fight to ensure accessibility to the ballot box for all voters, with a heavy emphasis on permanently expanding vote-by-mail options past the 2020 election.

Medicaid Expansion

How do you see Medicaid Expansion affecting the state of Missouri?

Medicaid expansion was a tremendous step forward in the fight for equitable access to healthcare. I advocated for Amendment Two throughout my entire campaign, as I know the impact the decision will have on the 230,000+ working Missourians who will soon be eligible for more accessible and affordable healthcare. I am proud that this decision will help aid our state’s rural hospitals, 10 of which have tragically shuttered just since 2014. It is beyond time Missouri joined the 38 other states who have expanded Medicaid, and I am proud of the vote’s outcome and am excited to work towards the changes taking effect as our next Secretary of State.

Housing

According to HUD, less than 5% of homes are accessible to individuals with mobility impairments. Affordable accessible housing is a concern for many Missourians with disabilities. What, if any, steps would you take to address this problem?

Direct Support for Community Living

There is a shortage of direct support professionals (personal attendants and other caregivers), to help people with disabilities live independently in the community. What, if any, steps would you take to address this problem?
Transportation
In many areas across Missouri, there are a lack of public/para-transit transportation resources for seniors and individuals with disabilities. What, if any, steps would you take to address this problem?

Employment
The rate of unemployment or underemployment is much higher for individuals with disabilities than those without a disability. According to the American Community Survey, as of 2017, only 34% of all working-age people with disabilities in Missouri were employed, and 25% of people with a cognitive or intellectual disability were employed. What, if any, steps would you take to address this disparity?

Waiver Programs
There are 11 1915(c) waivers in Missouri. Recently, many individuals have experienced waitlists and the effects of limited funding for waiver supported programs. What, if any, steps would you take to address this problem?

Final Thoughts
Is there anything else you would like to say to voters with disabilities?

Although housing, direct support for community living, transportation, employment, and the above mentioned waiver program do not fall under the purview of the Secretary of State's office, I believe it is incumbent upon all of our statewide leaders to use their platform to advocate for positive change that the disabled community is demanding. I would love to discuss further with your organization how I can use the Secretary of State's office and my platform to address these issues.

In addition to the areas discussed above, there are many other aspects of the Secretary of State’s office that can positively impact the disabled community. For example, the Secretary of State's office oversees the Wolfner Library, a free library service for Missourians unable to use standard print materials due to a visual or physical disability. Through its Securities Division, the Secretary of State's office is responsible for protecting all Missourians, including members of the disabled community, from financial fraud. I will be a fierce advocate for the disabled community as our next Secretary of State.
I, Paul Lehmann, have advocated for persons with disability challenges all of my life, especially as an ordained minister in a liberal church for 34+ years. I was often met with resistance by people who lack understanding of and/or experience with a disability.

In the voting arena the entire country has had ridiculous barriers placed upon voters to suppress a fundamental right to vote in a democratic society. The emergency legislation for the 2020 elections in Missouri only adds another layer of restrictions and requirements to insult the integrity of the voting public and provide more paper shuffling work for the Secretary of State’s office.

In addition to what is said in the video, I want to assure citizens with disabilities, who would have difficulties with filling out a paper ballot, that special electronic voting would be available. Also, not detailed, is my belief that incarcerated citizens are included in the right to vote for all citizens.

I, Paul Lehmann, am a candidate for the Secretary of State of Missouri on the Green Party ticket in the year, 2020. I live on a small organic farm south of Fayette, Mo. in Howard County in central Missouri. I have two adult children, a son and daughter, who live in Chicago. My daughter and her husband have two young sons.

In my career as a pastor for 34+ years, I sought justice for the disadvantaged everywhere I served. I pushed for inclusiveness and handicap accessibility and fairness in all areas of life, be it in housing, in community living, in transportation, in employment, in health care, in the environment, and, now, in voter access.

Medicaid Expansion, on the August 4th primary ballot, is a justice issue, to force Missouri government leaders to accept what they irresponsibly have rejected for years. Several rural hospitals have closed because they cannot get paid for services provided to the rural poor and disadvantaged. Clearly thousands of Missourians have suffered and died because they could not afford preventative and acute health care, because of the callous indifference to the poor and disadvantaged by the controlling leaders of government. This is frankly criminal.

The Secretary of State is charged with elections and voting and political campaigns and ethical standards associated with the electoral system. I can and will focus on the disparities of voting and elections to make suffrage truly democratic and accessible to all by the removal of all barriers in the electoral process.

Historically, I learned that the United States has never had universal suffrage for its citizens even though billed as the greatest democracy on earth. The 1789 Constitution assigned control over elections to the states, which set the rules for voting. At first, only 6% of the population was allowed to vote. They were the white male land owning citizens. In 230 years the right to vote was slowly expanded, through decades of trauma and struggle, to erode entrenched disenfranchisement policies and practices against this fundamental right for all citizens.
Missouri Disability Voter Coalition

But there are still barriers to the exercise of the right to vote. The latest barrier is the requirement that mail in ballots have to have a notarized signature! This comes out of the paranoid mindset, of the people in power, that citizens cannot be trusted to sign their own assigned ballot as their signature, but must leave their home into a coronavirus environment to find a notary to confirm their signature. This vote suppression totally and intentionally defeats the purpose of the mail in ballot—to provide safety and accessibility to voting from the security of one's home.

As Secretary of State, I will push for a true politics free democratic universal suffrage right inclusive of ALL citizens, including the incarcerated and those with disabilities and the homeless.

What this means is that registration to vote would be a one time act for all citizens upon their 18th birthday, or day of naturalization, in the same manner as is done in being assigned a social security number at birth. Each county clerk would maintain the addresses in their county, and at each election, mail out a coded paper ballot to every citizen to be returned or postmarked by election day.

--No more restrictive registration requirements or deadlines (except when to mail out the ballots, and when to be returned, on election day).

--No more absentee ballot excuses or notarize signatures.

--No more expenses for polling places and ballot machines and poll workers.

--No more pitched political battles in the legislature over who can or cannot vote.

The mail in ballot system is proven to be safe and secure and disability accessible, as demonstrated in Utah, Colorado, Oregon, Washington and Hawaii. And no fraud! It is truly democratic and inclusive of all citizens.

A vote for me is a vote for true democracy and an advocate for justice.

Sincerely, Paul Lehmann
Position: State Treasurer
Name: Vicki Lorenz Englund
Party: Democratic

Background - What training, experience and characteristics qualify you for this position? Do you have any personal experience with a disability or an individual with a disability?

Born and raised in South St. Louis County, I am the first in my family to go to college and attended The American University in Washington, DC. After earning a BA and MA in Political Science, I worked for the Clinton Administration at the Small Business Administration’s Office of Women’s Business Ownership before returning to St. Louis in 2001 to start a family and a small, online retail business I have run for over 20 years. I focused on my community by working as the South County Sector Specialist for the St. Louis County Economic Council and for Edward Jones as a Leasing Coordinator. I served in the Missouri House for four years and on the Lindbergh School Board for six years. I currently consult in the clean energy industry and promote legislation to provide financing for energy improvements to residential and commercial property owners. One of my children, who is now 17, has had an IEP for the past 4 years. Having first-hand experience with this process has given me insight into how kids with disabilities are handled in the public school setting. Early in my campaign, I hired Teona McGhaw-Boure, an above-the-knee amputee to be my Minority Outreach Coordinator. She is currently taking a leave of absence from the campaign as she runs in a primary to be State Representative for the 71st District. Teona and I are committed to finding ways that persons with disabilities can get involved in the campaign and will be focused on that endeavor after her election in August 2020.

COVID-19 and Voting Access - Many people with disabilities are high risk for COVID-19 and are concerned about potential exposure to the disease when voting. What, if any, steps would you take to address this problem?

We need to do what we can to ensure as many registrations for absentee ballots are completed as possible. My campaign will be working to have mobile notaries to help make this possible.

Medicaid Expansion - How do you see Medicaid Expansion affecting the State of Missouri?

Not only would Medicaid Expansion positively affect Missourians by getting health care to those who need it the most, but it would also create an estimated 16,000 jobs in the health care industry. As State Treasurer, I commit to looking for ways to create as many jobs as we can to get our economy back on track. My opponent, the current appointed Treasurer, is firmly against Medicaid Expansion.

Housing - According to HUD, less than 5% of homes are accessible to individuals with mobility impairments. Affordable accessible housing is a concern for many Missourians with disabilities. What, if any, steps would you take to address this problem?

The State Treasurer has a seat on the Missouri Housing Development Commission. I would work to reinstate the Low Income House Tax Credit Program that the current appointed Treasurer ended. I would insist that these tax credits be used for accessible housing units.

Direct Support for Community Living - There is a shortage of direct support professionals (personal attendants and other caregivers) to help people with disabilities live independently in the community. What, if any, steps would you take to address this problem?

As State Treasurer, I will want to work closely with the caregiver community to figure out a solution to this problem. Getting our economy back on track means finding jobs for people who have permanently lost their jobs during COVID-19 and re-training them into other positions.
Transportation - In many areas across Missouri, there are a lack of public/para-transit transportation resources for seniors and individuals with disabilities. What, if any, steps would you take to address this disparity?

The State Treasurer does not have authority over transportation in Missouri, but I would encourage transportation resources so all Missourians, regardless of ability, can get where they need to go.

Employment - The rate of unemployment or underemployment is much higher for individuals with disabilities than those without a disability. According to the American Community Survey, as of 2017, only 34% of all working-age people with disabilities in Missouri were employed, and 25% of people with a cognitive or intellectual disability were employed. What, if any, steps would you take to address this disparity?

I believe that workplaces are becoming more work-from-home friendly during the current COVID-19 crisis. I am hearing from a lot of companies that many of their office duties may stay home-based even after the crisis subsides. This is a great opportunity for persons with disabilities to have more opportunities for jobs that may have previously been difficult to travel to in person. It also opens up employment all over the country and the world. It would be great to look into this option to really explore the contours of the new workplace.

Waiver Programs - There are 11 1915(c) waivers in Missouri. Recently, many individuals have experienced waitlists and the effects of limited funding for waiver supported programs. What, if any, steps would you take to address this problem?

While I am not an expert on this issue, I am hopeful that Medicaid Expansion in Missouri would help with this situation. If more specific steps need to be taken to ensure 1915(c) waivers are better-funded, I am very interested in looking at that as well.

Final Thoughts Is there anything else you would like to say to voters with disabilities?

The Missouri Treasurer’s Office has an amazing program called MO ABLE. ABLE Accounts give people with special needs more independence and financial security by providing a place for tax-deferred and tax-free earnings when used to pay for qualified expenses, the balances and distributions do not affect federal needs-based financial aid such as Medicaid or SSI and account holders can request a STABLE Visa Prepaid Card that can be used to spend money on qualified expenses. I would like to know if this program fills the needs of your community members, if there are changes that need to be made, and if enough people know about MO ABLE.
Missouri Disability Voter Coalition

Position: U.S. Representative – District 2  
Name: Jill Schupp  
Party: Democratic

**Background**

What training, experience, and characteristics qualify you for this position? Do you have any personal experience with a disability or an individual with a disability?

I have been a public servant for 20 years, starting with my role on the Ladue School Board and then the Creve Coeur City Council. I have spent the last 12 years in our state government and have been a Missouri state senator since 2014. While I do not have personal experience with a disability, I have spent the better part of my career working to ensure rights for all of our Missouri residents, including those living with a disability. I have visited people with disabilities in their homes, where they work, and where they receive special services and education. I have stood up for in-home care services for people with disabilities during our budget process every single year. I have served on the Seniors, Families and Children Committee as well as the Healthcare Committees during my tenure in Missouri’s House and Senate. Many of the issues that impact people with disabilities come through these committees, and I have always worked to make access to services for people with disabilities a priority so that we support full and meaningful lives.

**COVID-19 and Voting Access**

Many people with disabilities are high risk for COVID-19 and are concerned about potential exposure to the disease when voting. What, if any, steps would you take to address this problem?

I have been working closely with the Missouri Voter Protection Coalition to ensure that all Missourians, particularly our most vulnerable citizens, have access to voting in a safe, secure manner. I am pleased that Missouri has recently passed legislation that will allow those at high risk for COVID-19 to vote through an absentee ballot without a notary, but we must continue to work on improving access to voting for vulnerable populations.

**Housing**

According to HUD, less than 5% of homes are accessible to individuals with mobility impairments. In many areas across the country, people with disabilities do not have access to affordable accessible housing. What, if any, steps would you take to address this problem?

The Americans With Disability Act and the Fair Housing Act have helped make significant progress on this issue but there is so much more to be done. People living with disabilities have the right to live in accessible AND affordable housing. We can start by ensuring meaningful compliance and enforcement of these laws and ensure adequate funding for the federal housing programs that we have in place. My community is home to several group homes for people with disabilities, which is a positive for the people in the homes as well as neighbors in the community.

**Direct Support for Community Living**

There is a shortage of direct support professionals (personal attendants and other caregivers), to help people with disabilities live independently in the community. What, if any, steps would you take to address this problem?

We need to learn from those serving in this area how to create a system that encourages professionals to work in this industry, either through benefit programs or partnerships with community agencies. For example, high school and college internship programs could encourage more people to work in this area. This is a particularly sensitive and difficult time with COVID-19 potentially impacting so many vulnerable
people. We should consider additional measures to protect workers and caregivers, while also keeping people safe and allowing individuals to continue to live independently in their community.

**Transportation**

In many areas across the country, there are a lack of public/para-transit transportation resources for seniors and individuals with disabilities. What, if any, steps would you take to address this problem?

As always, it is a question of priorities. We have underfunded our investment in transportation and infrastructure for decades and the result is a system that simply doesn’t work for millions of Americans. Too often the first area cut in a transportation budget are services for the most vulnerable. I have heard countless reports of issues with the reliability of our transportation systems for our citizens with disabilities. Responding to a constituent request, I rode with him as he was transported home after work. Needing to be strapped uncomfortably into the chair in special buses that often take so long to get home makes a full day of work even harder for someone with a disability. Modern, comfortable transportation systems with shorter routes could significantly impact quality of life for many people.

The rate of unemployment or underemployment is much higher for individuals with disabilities than those without a disability. According to the American Community Survey, as of 2017, only 34% of all working-aged people with disabilities in Missouri were employed, and 25% of people with a cognitive or intellectual disability were employed. What, if any, steps would you take to address this disparity?

I imagine these statistics have also taken a turn during the COVID-19 pandemic. We must address all the disparities facing our citizens with disabilities, especially unemployment. We must invest further in programs that lower barriers for people with disabilities and help pair them with potential employers. We also ensure compliance the ADA so that employers are not illegally discriminating against those with disabilities in the workplace.

**Final Thoughts**

Is there anything else you would like to say to voters with disabilities?

As a member of Congress in Missouri’s second congressional district, I can assure you that I will always keep our citizens with disabilities in my heart and mind. There is much room for improvement, and it is important to work directly with people with disabilities and their families to learn what we can about how to find better ways to help improve access to services that will help support people leading full and meaningful lives.
Position: U.S. Representative – District 4  
Name: Steven K. Koonse  
Party: Libertarian

Background

I am a retired financial analyst previously employed by the Missouri Department of Insurance. I would be able to understand the State and Federal regulations addressing issues concerning the disabled.

My uncle, no deceased, had mental issues which required institutional care by the State of Missouri.

COVID-19 and Voting Access

I advocate for registration and voting by mail.

Housing

I would be receptive to suggestions proffered by the Missouri Protection and Advocacy Services (MPAS).

Direct Support for Community Living

I see a lot of ads for CNAs by the Nursing homes, assisted living, and Home health Services. I would suggest MPAS canvas these caregivers to see if they would contribute to a fund that would train CNAs to meet their tuition needs.

Transportation

When I was growing up, there were two ladies that had no transportation. Our church provided transportation for shopping and Church. MPAS could serve to identify needs and contact the nearest church to ask for assistance.

Employment

MPAS could research Companies and the type of businesses that have occupations suitable for each diverse disability. I would publish the results in my constituent letters and advocate for their employment.

Final Thoughts

If elected I will be striving to downsize the government, balance the budget, holding the Executive Branch accountable to the Legislative Branch as to War. My responses avoided promises of new legislation. I will serve to be a catalyst in support of private initiatives addressing the needs of the disabled.
Missouri Disability Voter Coalition

Position: U.S. Representative – District 5
Name: Ryan Derks
Party: Republican

Background
What training, experience, and characteristics qualify you for this position? Do you have any personal experience with a disability or an individual with a disability?

I am not a politician, an actual outsider. Never held political position but worked on a few campaigns. I believe the founding fathers wanted individual Americans to represent the communities and then return home.

I agree. I do have a lot of experience in my career and volunteer work in my past with individuals with a disability, including a volunteer on the campaign with severe autism.

COVID-19 and Voting Access
Many people with disabilities are high risk for COVID-19 and are concerned about potential exposure to the disease when voting. What, if any, steps would you take to address this problem?

Absentee voting is a true and tested method. Many cities have made the absentee window larger this year.

HOUSING
According to HUD, less than 5% of homes are accessible to individuals with mobility impairments. In many areas across the county, people with disabilities do not have access to affordable accessible housing. What, if any, steps would you take to address this problem?

Rather than pass more laws to force private citizens, I would find public/private partnerships through philanthropy to help disabled individuals modify their home to be accessible.

Direct Support for Community Living
There is a shortage of direct support professionals (personal attendants and other caregivers), to help people with disabilities live independently in the community. What, if any, steps would you take to address this problem?

Public awareness may be the only sound solution on my part. The federal government forcing or incentives for private citizens into a career would be unconstitutional. However, many cities and states have wonderful programs to put incentives for individuals to take up these careers. I would gladly make phone calls to local representatives about this issue.

Transportation
In many areas across the country, there are a lack of public/para-transit transportation resources for seniors and individuals with disabilities. What, if any, steps would you take to address this problem?

If there are problems caused by the ADA type laws then we should work to fix those laws so these issues can be resolved faster. Perhaps at the state level.

EMPLOYMENT
The rate of unemployment or underemployment is much higher for individuals with disabilities than those without a disability. According to the American Community Survey, as of 2017, only 34% of all working-age people with disabilities in Missouri were employed, and 25% of people with a cognitive or intellectual disability were employed. What, if any, steps would you take to address this disparity?

This is a difficult question because many jobs require individuals to work directly in conflict with the disabilities. However, in our current time, there are many jobs that pay nicely that can accommodate people with disabilities. Many of these are online or technology jobs.

Promoting awareness and training for these types of jobs could absolutely have a positive impact on the disabled communities. A public/private jobs training would make a huge impact.

Final Thoughts

Is there anything else you would like to say to voters with disabilities?

No matter the disability you are valuable to our communities. You do have the ability to make an unimaginable positive impact on your world.

There are dozens of examples of individuals who have had a major disability and have overcome it to live a life worthy of being put in history books. Keep up the good work.
Position: U.S. Representative – District 6
Name: Gena L. Ross
Party: Democratic

Background

My training consists of having a PhD in Public Policy and Administration. I have a Master’s in Public Administration, a Bachelor’s in Business Administration and an Associate’s in Urban Ministries. In 2015, I worked on a contract with the United States Senator, former Senator Claire McCaskill as a Constituent Services Representative. I was a School Board Candidate in 2019 for the Platte County RIII School District. I am very comfortable with public speaking. I have customer service skills, communication skills, listening skills and organizational skills. I am a transformational and servant leader. I am a college professor and I have all types of students in my class. Some have had disabilities and I made accommodations for them as needed for their learning success and college experience. I had a younger brother with special needs and disabled. God made us all and I don’t have respect of person.

COVID-19 and Voting Access

I am a COVID-19 survivor. I was hospitalized a total of 9 days so I know first hand the seriousness of COVID 19. The steps and safety precautions I would take would be to allow voters to mail in their ballot and if that was not feasible follow the guidelines of the CDC and also allow them to cast a private independent vote in person. Even allow early voting and follow the ADA checklist.

Housing

I would advocate for individuals to live in accessible, affordable housing in a safe community. I would look for and contact resources such as the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the CCD Housing Task Force and request an increase in access of housing for all of those with disabilities and to protect their rights under the Fair Housing ACT.

Direct Support for Community Living

Partner with a college or Technical School and build partnership to recruit students that are qualified and in the field to be employed and receive continuing learning credits or training and receive certificates. In addition, a Nursing Staffing Agency could be called to find immediate help of their clients to assist. Partner with people in organizations for someone to bring food and other necessities to the individual.

Transportation

Have someone contact the individual’s social worker or case worker if they have one to learn of transportation resources for the individuals. If none are available eek out other community stakeholders to see if they have connections or resources. It’s all about networking and communicating.

Employment

I would find out why those individuals were not employed. Was it due to a lack or training? If so then recommend some programming to teach new skillsets. Create jobs that the individual can do with accommodations.

Final Thoughts

I would love to have the opportunity to represent you and serve you in District 6. We are better together and together we can build a better tomorrow beginning today. I am a mother of 3 young adult children, I am bold, and courageous. The only way I fail at anything is by not trying. I Know My Power. I want to empower you to not be silent if you want to see change.
Position: U.S. Representative – District 8  
Name: Kathy Ellis  
Party: Democratic

**Background**  
For the past 40 years, I have worked as a Licensed Clinical Social Worker and Addictions Counselor in the St. Louis region. In this field, I have served in a variety of roles, including a professional facilitator in the areas of domestic violence, addictions and recovery, experiential therapy, trauma, and other mental health issues; the Director of Youth Programs in a federally-sponsored program for youth at risk; the Director of the Child Welfare Specialization Grant at Washington University; the Director of a Women’s halfway home; and currently, the owner of a private practice. In each of these roles, I have had the distinct privilege of working with individuals with disabilities to overcome trauma and empowering them to take action in their communities.

Since launching my campaign in June 2019, my team and I have made a point of including individuals with disabilities in the conversations about policy platforms, as well as working with those in the 8th District to raise awareness of disability rights. For example, late last year, our team worked with the Easterseals Midwest and a local parent of a child with autism to host an Autism Care Forum in Benton, Missouri. At this forum, we talked at length about policies that I could implement upon election in November. These policies include things like allowing insurance coverage of music therapy, requiring better services in school systems for children with disabilities, and providing a permanent, federal funding stream for organizations like Easterseals.

I am proud to be running for Congress in Missouri’s 8th District, and I view this role as an extension of my work as a Social Worker. I am focused on meeting the needs of individuals in the 8th District, being available and accessible to constituents at all times, and always voting in the best interest of my future constituents.

**COVID-19 and Voting Access**  
Let me state clearly: We need no-excuse absentee voting in Missouri. Full stop. It is inexcusable that individuals would be forced to choose between their right to live and their right to vote. We must do everything in our power to implement this, and this starts by electing new leaders to our state and federal seats.

Know that this is an issue that concerns me deeply, and while I was pleased with some of the new measures implemented by the state legislature this last session, the new absentee law does not go far enough. We need no-excuse absentee voting without any requirements of notarization (a financial and physical barrier for many people), or any complicated requirements or categories of eligibility.

**Housing**  
The housing crisis across this country is shameful, and we must implement policies that increase affordable, accessing housing to those with disabilities. Specifically, I support: 1) Rigorous oversight to ensure compliance with existing ADA laws; 2) expansion of the Housing Voucher Program, which would allow low-income individuals with disabilities to access affordable housing; 3) expansion of discrimination protections for those individuals who have a disability; 4) strengthening tenant’s rights nationwide to ensure more protections for renters; 5) strengthening the Fair Housing Law and enforcement of this legislation.

**Direct Support for Community Living**  
There are several reasons for the shortage of direct support professionals, but the overwhelming contributing factors are the inadequate benefits, poor wages, and lack of career advancement opportunities for these professionals.
Let me state first and foremost, I support raising the federal minimum wage to at least $15/hour. I also support the right of all workers across the country to fight for higher wages and better workplace protections through a union. The right to unionize is a central component of our democracy, and it is something I will always fight to protect.

Specifically, regarding the shortage of direct support professionals, I support the following measures: 1) grants from the federal government to states to provide for training and technical assistance for Direct Support Professionals; 2) a requirement that Medicaid include coverage for individuals to hire Direct Support Professionals; 3) a movement towards Universal Healthcare in this country so that all workers can have adequate health care coverage; 4) Federal regulation that requires that Direct Support Professionals be compensated adequately based on the local, livable wage calculation.

Transportation
While the ADA was an important piece of legislation, it has not been fully enforced in the way it should be. This perpetuates many of the issues surrounding public and para transportation access for seniors and individuals for disabilities: despite a law requiring public transportation to be accessible, many of the systems are not. So, first and foremost, we need to fully enforce the ADA, and I support increased oversight on this topic.

In the rural area of Missouri’s 8th District, the lack of transit resources can be extreme. To combat this, I support: 1) Increased and dedicated federal funding to expand public transportation into our rural areas, 2) Expansion of existing programs to support increased access to public transportation; 3) Vigorous oversight of existing transportation options to ensure ADA compliance; and finally 4) free public transit, or at least a significant reduction in cost of public transit, so that all individuals, regardless of income status can utilize it within their communities.

Employment
We must end the shameful sub-minimum wage for individuals with disabilities. I will fight for raising the federal minimum wage to $15/hour for all employees, regardless of whether they’re full-time or part-time or whether they have a disability or not. We must treat all workers equally and equally value the work that individuals do.

I’ll also fight to fully-fund and expand the Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP) to increase support for individuals working across the country.

Finally, I support federal grant money to support organizations like Paraquad and others that assist individuals with disabilities on expanding job skills and finding employment in their areas. We must create a society in which all people are equally valued for their labor, and I’ll fight to create that system.

Final Thoughts
For too long, individuals with disabilities have been denied a seat at the table. As a Social Worker for the past 40 years, and as a Candidate for Congress, I am committed to changing that. I pride myself on being accessible and available to people at all times. If you have questions or comments, please feel free to reach out to me at team@ellisforcongress.com. I’d be happy to talk more with you.

I am so grateful for the opportunity to share my perspective on these important issues at-hand. Thank you all for the work you do, and for allowing me the opportunity.
Position: State Senator – District 1
Name: Doug Beck
Party: Democratic

1. I’ve served in the Missouri House of Representatives for four years and I am seeking my first term in the Missouri State Senate. While I have no personal experience with a disability, I have worked over the years with many folks who faced both physical and mental disabilities. In addition to my public service, I am a trained union pipefitter. Throughout my time as a pipefitter I’ve worked with several individuals who have had disabilities. The one thing I noticed was all of them did their jobs well and never brought up their disability and wanted to be treated like everyone else. We need more elected officials in our state who know what it’s like to live with a disability and work on behalf of Missourians with disabilities.

2. I supported and voted for wide-sweeping changes to our absentee voting process. I support mail in voting for every Missourian – including those with disabilities. Unfortunately, what passed the legislature this session, while a small step toward expanding voting access, was not nearly sufficient in my opinion. While Missourians who are permanently incapacitated, and those who care for them, can request an absentee ballot with no notary requirement – too many other Missourians who don’t meet that criteria, but who still live with disabilities are left to either risk their health and safety to vote in person, or find a notary (which is also a risk) to complete their absentee ballot. That is a shame, and I will continue to fight for greater voting access.

3. Medicaid expansion must, and in my opinion, will become the law in Missouri after this November’s election. I intend to support this ballot measure, and encourage all Missourians to vote for it. Missouri is one of only 14 states left that has not expanded Medicaid. States red, blue, and in between have seen cost-savings and healthier citizens as a result of accepting the 90% federal match that pays to insure Missouri’s most at-need, at-risk citizens. I hope that changes on November 3rd.

4. The statistic that only 5% of homes are mobility accessible informs us that there are mobility-impaired Missourians unable to access adequate housing right now. We should be ashamed of this statistic. The Fair Housing Act prohibits discrimination based on disability, but clearly all to often the law is not followed. Folks should know their rights and have the support required to demand the housing they deserve. Those who violate the law must be held accountable. I promise that if I ever learn of an instance of housing discrimination in my district, I will investigate and I will advocate and I will do all I can to help end it.

5. One of the biggest embarrassments of my time in the House was HCB3 – in 2017 – a bill that drastically limited state assistance for in-home care and community support. I voted against this horrific bill and spoke out strongly against it. All of these cuts should be restored immediately – and more resources must be made available to keep people in their homes and communities. It is cheaper for the state in the long run anyway!

6. I have heard from folks that I know in the community that transportation has become increasingly difficult as private transportation companies continue to refuse to contract with DMH due to low pay. The state must step in. If private transportation companies cannot stay in business contracting with the state, the state must provide the services directly. As much as I have the right to get in my car and drive where I want, so too should any person have access to the transportation they need.

7. Unfortunately, for too long now leaders in our state have taken an extreme “pro-business” view to public policy to detriment of many folks who face discrimination in the hiring process and in the workplace. I think our state can still be “pro-business” and also guarantee that the rights of those who face discrimination are protected. When an applicant or employee faces discrimination, they deserve legal recourse.

8. It should go without saying that we get what we pay for in life – including as a state when it comes to our economy. We have not increased revenue in this state in decades. Because of that, we continue to cater corporate interest at the expense of cutting services to those who need them most. We have a poorly paid skeleton crew when it comes to our state employees who assist Missourians trying access their government, and we operate a software system that was created before many of my colleagues were born. We must increase revenue in our state, and in so doing we must
reprioritize our focus less on large corporations and more on working Missourians and those whose disabilities prevent them from seeking full employment.

9. One final thought I would like to add would be the issue of education. Too many of our students with disabilities in our K-12 education system do not receive the support they need to succeed academically, and all too often their disabilities are labeled as "problems" as "bad behavior" or some other thing that needs to be "fixed." One piece of legislation that I voted for and am eager to support next session is Rep. Ian Mackey’s bill (D-Richmond Heights) to limit the use of seclusion and restraint of students in our K-12 schools. This legislation drew my attention to the unfortunately widespread issue of children being restrained, or isolated/secluded against their will for extended periods of time, and without their parents even being notified. It’s a practice that must stop. I also look forward to continuing to learn more about other issues facing the disability rights community, and how I can be a better ally.
Position: State Senator – District 7  
Name: Greg Razer  
Party: Democratic

**Background**

I have served for four years in the Missouri House of Representatives and have always voted and been an advocate for people with disabilities. I appreciate my close working relationship with The Whole Person and groups around the state.

**COVID-19 and Voting Access**

For the past two years I have introduced no-excuse absentee balloting in the Missouri House. Voting should be as easy as possible, especially for those with disabilities.

**Medicaid Expansion**

I am a strong supporter of Medicaid expansion. It will 1) provide better health outcomes for Missourians; 2) Improve our economy since more people with access to healthcare means more people working in the healthcare field – as well as healthier people means less time taken off from work due to illness; 3) It will put out hospitals on more solid financial footing – this is especially true for our rural hospitals which we see closing around the state.

**Housing**

Any housing development that receives public aid (ie, tax abatements, etc) should be required to have a certain percentage of units that are accessible for those with disabilities. I look forward to working with the disability community to learn about further ideas and how we might be able to implement those through legislation in the state Capitol.

**Direct Support for Community Living**

We need to develop incentives for individuals to enter into this field. Overall, as a state, we have to better fund and support all levels of post-secondary education – making it affordable for Missourians in order to fill job shortages in many fields.

**Transportation**

Missouri is woefully behind in funding for our transportation system. We are embarrassingly behind in our support of public transportation. We must invest in all forms of public transit – from roads, buses and light rail in our urban cores, to support for programs like Oats in rural areas of our state. We must also keep in mind the changing nature of public transportation with apps such as Uber and Lyft becoming more popular. These companies must serve all citizens.

**Employment**

We should incentivize employers to hire people with disabilities. I would be interested in looking at programs we have for employers who hire veterans and create similar programs here. We also need to educate employers on the workforce they are missing out on, and how to integrate various types of disabilities into their workplace.

**Waiver Programs**

This issue is one of so many that have been impacted by poor budgeting principles of the majority party in Jefferson City for the past two decades. Due to the massive corporate tax cuts we have seen in the past
years we have a budget that is barely balanced in the best of times, and is decimated in times like these. Programs that could go to help Missourians are underfunded or cut all together in favor of low taxes for the wealthiest among us. Until that overall problem is reversed we will see issues with 1915(c) waivers and other programs like it.

Final Thoughts

I am a son of Missouri. Raised in the Bootheel on a cotton farm. Educated at the University of Missouri in Columbia. I have made my home in Kansas City for nearly 20 years. If elected I am likely to be the only openly LGBTQ member of our Senate. I will be a strong voice for my district and my community. However, as Senator I will work to represent all Missourians regardless of disability and where in the state they happen to live.

Greg Razer
Razer for Missouri
Senate District 7
www.GregRazer.com
Position: State Senator – District 15  
Name: Deb Lavender  
Party: Democratic

**Background**  
What training, experience, and characteristics qualify you for this position? Do you have any personal experience with a disability or an individual with a disability?

I have served in the House of Representatives for three terms. As a physical therapist I have a lot of experience in the healthcare industry serving people living with disabilities.

**COVID-19 and Voting Access**  
Many people with disabilities are high risk for COVID-19 and are concerned about potential exposure to the disease when voting. What, if any, steps would you take to address this problem?

Removing the notary requirement from absentee voting for this year’s election cycle would allow more Missourians to be safe and vote in this important election. This would be a good first step towards moving our state toward no excuse absentee voting for all our elections.

**Medicaid Expansion**  
How do you see Medicaid Expansion affecting the state of Missouri?

Medicaid Expansion will allow us to provide healthcare to an additional 200-250 thousand individuals. This is vital in making sure all Missourians have accessible and affordable healthcare. I will work continue my work in the budget to assure MO will implement Medicaid expansion after our citizens vote to expand in August.

**Housing**  
According to HUD, less than 5% of homes are accessible to individuals with mobility impairments. Affordable accessible housing is a concern for many Missourians with disabilities. What, if any, steps would you take to address this problem?

Ensuring that Missourians with disabilities have affordable and accessible housing is an important issue. We need to work with builders to make sure that floor plans are accessible to everyone. Through the legislative process we may be able to require low income housing contracts, utilizing tax credits, to build accessible housing.

**Direct Support for Community Living**  
There is a shortage of direct support professionals (personal attendants and other caregivers), to help people with disabilities live independently in the community. What, if any, steps would you take to address this problem?

We need to increase wages for direct support professionals in order to support those already in those positions as well as draw in more interest from others wanting to work in the care industry. I have worked on the House budget committee to increase these wages for the past four years.

**Transportation**  
In many areas across Missouri, there are a lack of public/para-transit transportation resources for seniors and individuals with disabilities. What, if any, steps would you take to address this problem?

We need to work for additional public transportation that is accessible to any individual in both expanding transportation into areas that are lacking and updating current public transit to be more accessible. I had
an amendment earlier this year that would have taken CARES Act money and applied it to public transportation in urban areas.

**Employment**
The rate of unemployment or underemployment is much higher for individuals with disabilities than those without a disability. According to the American Community Survey, as of 2017, only 34% of all working-age people with disabilities in Missouri were employed, and 25% of people with a cognitive or intellectual disability were employed. What, if any, steps would you take to address this disparity?

Job fairs held by Paraquad, as well as other organizations in the community, have been successful in getting more people with disabilities employed. The COVID-19 pandemic has shown us that more jobs can be done at home, which may favor people living with disabilities. We need to continue to advocate for the employment of Missourians with disabilities so that employers don’t conflate accessibility needs to job qualifications.

**Waiver Programs**
There are 11 1915(c) waivers in Missouri. Recently, many individuals have experienced waitlists and the effects of limited funding for waiver supported programs. What, if any, steps would you take to address this problem?

I worked to add waivers during the budget process in FY19 and will continue my support for needed waivers. I will also work to ensure waivers are fully funded.

I worked to continue the NME program for the people affected by cuts made through the budget program, gaining the support of liaisons in the DHSS to assure coverage for the people who have been covered in this program for the last many years.

**Final Thoughts**
Is there anything else you would like to say to voters with disabilities?

I have your back. For the past six years, I have supported the Missouri Disability Voter Coalition as a State Representative in district 90. I will continue that support as a State Senator.
Position: State Senator – District 17  
Name: Lauren Arthur  
Party: Democratic

Background:  
After attending Smith College, I returned to Kansas City to work as a middle school teacher at Urban Community Leadership Academy. During that time, I earned a Masters in Education from the University of Missouri — St. Louis. I was elected first to the Missouri House of Representatives in 2015, and then to the Missouri State Senate by a special election in 2018. Most recently in the legislature, I have passed legislation to expand access to healthcare, to support quality public education, and to help small businesses. Throughout my time in public service, I have worked to be an advocate for those who need it the most. I am running for reelection in the 17th Senate District so that I can continue to fight for the issues that matter most to Missouri families.

COVID-19 and Voting Access:  
Unimpeded access to voting is crucial for our democracy. With the additional risk of COVID-19 threatening our state this year, I support measures to increase access to mail-in and absentee voting.

Medicaid Expansion:  
Medicaid expansion would help over 300,000 low-income, working Missourians who are without health insurance while also bolstering our state’s economy. In August, Missouri voters will get the chance to support the expansion of Medicaid. I trust that they will support the proposal. And, when they do, I will fight to ensure that the legislature upholds the will of the people.

Housing:  
If re-elected, I will continue to be an advocate for people with disabilities to fight for increased access to affordable accessible housing.

Direct Support for Community Living:  
If re-elected I will support efforts to increase the number of direct support professionals in the state of Missouri, and increase the accessibility of those professionals to individuals in need.

Transportation:  
I will continue to support measures that invest in accessible transit throughout the state. Additionally, I support measures to update the existing transportation infrastructure to be more equally accessible.

Employment:  
I believe that it is important to ensure equal employment opportunities for people. Currently, the additional pressures that have been placed upon Missourians by COVID-19 make it more critical than ever that we increase the opportunities for employment. If re-elected I will continue to support measures that increase equitable employment opportunities.

Waiver Program:  
In my time as a public servant, I have worked diligently to be responsive to constituents whose needs are not being met. If re-elected I would work with those individuals who are facing long waitlists, as well as investigating and supporting measures to increase the requisite funding to these programs.
Position: State Senate – District 21
Name: Mark Bliss
Party: Libertarian

Individuals with disabilities are first and foremost individuals, and my primary concern as your representative is respecting and defending the rights of every individual. Those with disabilities, whether physical, mental, emotional, learning, or other, will be able to enjoy the freedoms and liberties granted by the Constitution under my watch, and I support accommodations that will guarantee those rights.

I praise and admire my wife for choosing to make a career helping children with disabilities in our local school, and though I do not personally work with individuals with disabilities, her passion to love and support her students is where I get my drive to make sure the State also defends them when many times the State is to blame for constraints.

As your senator, I would support access to voting by every Missourian, and provide accommodations to make sure every voice is heard and counted, by mail or by other innovative ways.

Now that Medicaid Expansion has been passed by Missouri voters, I would make sure to regularly audit the program for discrimination, cut waste, lower costs, and remove restraints to provide more opportunities for those who depend on state provided medical care where there is no other option. I would also support access to other forms of medical care and insurance including opening access to different forms of insurance. I support Freedom to Try policies and would support access to experimental and unconventional medical treatment. Speaking frankly, a healthier society will save the State money in the future, and lower costs for those who require regular medical attention.

Housing is the next crisis for Missourians. I would support a full audit of housing programs in Missouri to make sure those with disabilities who rely on housing assistance get what they need to live with dignity.

The difficulty to find Direct Support professionals has roots in a general lack of understanding and respect for the position. They are underpaid, undertrained, and overworked. By cutting waste in other areas of Missouri’s perplexing budget, we could free up dollars to help in these crucial areas. I will support private and nonprofit organizations who seek to help individuals live independently, again coming from the conviction that all individuals deserve respect and access to live their lives their way.

Innovation will lead the way in the future. Uber and Lyft are replacing taxi services, and I believe Missouri could be the leaders of innovation when it comes to transportation. I would encourage local municipalities to come up with more efficient ways to provide public transportation to those who need it, and inspire competition between local governments to serve their citizens with mobility issues.

A paycheck is most people’s main concern, and we know underemployment for people with disabilities is being ignored. I would support policies that encourage employers to hire and make accommodations for individuals with disabilities, and audit and restructure government run workshops and organizations who pay individuals a non-living wage.

Care centers are in need, and have been mismanaged too long. However, waitlists for waivers provide their own difficulties. I would audit our waiver programs and expand their reach to provide medical and non-medical support, and streamline the process of receiving benefits for individuals with disabilities, and stop the bureaucracies from causing even more problems.

Finally, I would like to ask for your vote because the libertarian platform is an inclusive one, and I want to make sure your needs are not ignored and your voice is heard. Other parties have agendas, I have one agenda, to let people live as the individuals they are in the way they want and enjoy the freedoms guaranteed by the Constitution. No other candidate will make sure that every individual is free to live the way they want, democracy sometimes means the 49% get left out. We know the current system isn’t...
Missouri Disability Voter Coalition

working, let’s try giving people freedom, inspiring innovation, and encouraging care for each other without government bureaucracy complicating our lives.
Background

My mother & sister have/had Huntington's chorea. I've served as a State Rep for 7 ½ years & I'm a business owner.

COVID-19 & Voting Access

We have made changes to voting by mail to help with these important concerns.

Medicaid Expansion

I think our state budget will be greatly affected.

Housing

We should look to see how other states have fixed this problem. I wasn't aware it was less than 5% - agree we need to address this.

Direct Support for Community Living

I know that we are struggling as a state to fill and keep these positions. More flexibility for caregivers might help offset the low state pay. Our budget has prevented needed increase.

Transportation

We need to put more funding towards it for our rural areas.

Employment

Our state has made some movement here. I think more incentives for hiring would be helpful.

Waiver Programs

I think we should expand waiver program if in-home services are less expensive & provide better quality of life.

Final Thoughts

Ways to increase employment would be beneficial to those with disabilities and the state. We should look to see what other states have success with.

Best, Holly Rehder
I received your organization’s letter concerning my candidacy for Missouri Senate District 33. So I will do my best to answer the questions.

As for my background, my father, Robert Mitchener became a quadriplegic following a freak accident while he served with the Missouri National Guard. While in St. Louis for an inspection of troops, he was staying at a St. Louis hotel overnight, got up in the middle of the night to use the restroom, and had a knee buckle on him, resulting in his falling and hitting his head and neck on the nightstand. He remained in St. Louis for a month for treatment, and then returned to our home in Jefferson City.

Because of his condition, my family made the decision to move back to Southeast Missouri, Ripley County, which was his home area where my grandparents resided. He felt small town life would give him more normalcy than continuing to live in Jefferson City. I was in 8th grade when we moved. This completely changed my life. Schools in Doniphan MO were drastically different from Jefferson City, where I had many good friends, including Eleanor Danforth, John Danforth’s eldest daughter.

My school counselor met with me before our move and instructed me that I would likely be largely on my own in educating myself in Southeast Missouri, as I was a gifted student and would likely not be challenged as I should be.

But our entire family, and myself adjusted. Dad was happy with the move, finding driving and even boating was possible in this small town environment. I graduated with honors and won a full ride scholarship. I chose Southeast Missouri State University in order to stay closer to my family. My bachelor’s degree was in communications, and my master’s was in elementary education. I say all this to explain that my family and I learned first hand the challenges of being physically impaired and learned what an impact that has on the entire family.

I was a newspaper reporter for five years after graduating from SEMO, writing for the Southeast Missourian, and often writing stories about issues surrounding the disabled.

Though I taught in Cape Girardeau Public Schools for 16 years, my classroom experience gave me first hand experience in meeting the needs of challenged students. Now, as a substitute teacher, I sometimes teach in classrooms of autistic children and kids with other learning and physical challenges. So I am well aware of those issues, and the need for more funding to help those students, not less.

In reference to your question about COVID19 issues, I think it might be helpful for disabled people and people at high risk to be able to vote by mail, internet, or even telephone. If they have no choice but to vote in person, I think they should have access to a smaller voting area with staff on hand to address their needs with a minimum of exposure and with safety protocols required.

In terms of the housing issue, I think grant money should be made available to the disabled to make changes to homes in which they live to make those homes accessible to them at no expense.

In terms of direct support personnel, perhaps the state could take advantage of federal grants for hiring more of those personnel, or perhaps college students majoring in education or the health services could have their education funded through a community works program designed to help the disabled. This would help both the student, and the community at the same time.

Missouri needs to dedicate more funds to transportation programs for the disabled. Again, the cost of such programs could be reduced by utilizing drivers and attendants who can work in exchange for educational scholarships in such situations. Perhaps personnel from various civic organizations could
also be used. The end result of whatever program implemented has to be better transportation for the disabled so that they may play a full role in our communities and society.

In addressing the employment issue, disabled employees deserve the same pay and benefits as any employee. Job training and education need to also be part of this program, again, so that the disabled are not marginalized in our communities. Perhaps tax credits can be used as an incentive for employers to hire the disabled.

The waiver programs need to also be addressed. Every person that requires help needs to have access to that help. It is the state's job to make sure that happens.

For my final thoughts, I would say that our society can no longer afford to marginalize anyone, including the disabled. We need every single person with their abilities to address the huge problems our nation faces. The job of government is to give a path forward to every single citizen. That creates a better society, and a better economy, where everyone has access to success.

Thank you for your time and consideration. You are, of course, welcome to ask me anything else via email, or telephone.

Sincerely,
Tammy Harty
Democratic Candidate for Missouri Senate 33
Position: State Representative – District 2  
Name: Mindi Smith  
Party: Democratic

Background:  
I have worked with children with a number of disability issues. I was also married for almost 19 years to an individual with cerebral palsy and help manages not only his care but our struggles to find and keep insurance coverage, which at times was cost prohibitive.

COVID-19 & Voting Access  
I have encouraged voters to utilize vote by mail and assisted with voting questions. I myself have asthma and requested a mail-in ballot online, which was not issued. I will help to ensure everyone who needs one gets one.

Medicaid Expansion  
Our son was one who was kicked off the rolls. It was a long, involved fight to get him coverage, and even with a college education, I did not understand what was needed to correct this issue. Employees in their office seemed just as lost. I will continue to fight for access to affordable healthcare for all.

Housing  
I will support efforts to ensure that more accessible and affordable housing is available for Missourians with disabilities. My children’s father has struggled with living on the 5th floor of a building where the elevator has gone out several times, and he had no option but to use the stairs. If he had been wheelchair bound, instead of “just” having difficulty walking with assistance of a cane, he would have been trapped either inside or away from his home for a week or more at a time.

Direct Support for Community Living  
I would support more funding is given to support paying for in-home care and personal attendants and their training through Medicaid programs.

Transportation  
I am aware of programs such as OATS for transportation. I would research coverage, options, and funding to support more availability for those in need of transportation to necessary locations such as grocery shopping and medical appointments.
Employment

I would support the incentive to increase employment of Missourians with disabilities by cutting support to companies who have lower rates of disabled individuals (where appropriate) and support more training programs and accessibility/assistive equipment or other needs (ergonomic chairs, magnifiers, etc) for those individuals who wish to seek employment.

Waiver Programs

A number one concern with waiver programs is the care actually received in community group facilities. So a better review system would be put into place to ensure no abuse or lack of care is present. I would support more in-home care and more regulation of group care.

Final Thoughts

I support equality for all, and have always been a champion of anyone with a lack of resources or support. I would carefully and thoughtfully review any issue brought to my attention and would do my best to see needs addressed when appropriate and when funding was available.
Missouri Disability Voter Coalition

Position: State Representative – District 7
Name: Rusty Black
Party: Republican

Thank you for including me.

Rusty Black
Position: State Representative – District 9  
Name: Karen Planalp  
Party: Democratic  

Background  
Bachelor’s (GS) Degree in Political Science: International Affairs, and Biology; MBA in November.  
- State of Missouri Civics Education Certification  
- United States Constitution Certification  
- State of Missouri Constitution Certification  
- State Representative Job Qualified  
- Legislative Education and Training  
- Endorsed by the Missouri Women's Leadership Coalition  
- Confirmed Christian - Holy Roman Catholic Church  
- U.S. Armed Services – Military Wife  
- Proud Mother of a Young Adult Academic Scholar  

VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCES  
Second Harvest Food Bank, Trails West, Open Door Food Kitchen, St. Joseph YMCA, Noyes Home for Children, Mayor’s Thanksgiving Dinner, Our Lady’s Garden at Our Lady of Guadalupe, State Federations and Labor Councils, St. Joseph Parks and Recreation/St. Joseph School District Basketball, St. Patrick’s Annual Fiesta, St. Joseph Christian School (Art), and VEST (Volunteers, Educators, Students Together) - St. Joseph School District. Karen has mentored community youth in politics, higher education achievement, Arms & Ammo - Target Range Safety, ACT preparations and testing, heart health matters, and; (together with her son), a children's lung-health initiative.  
Yes, I have experience with a disability; and both my parents were amputee disabled. Others so not always understand that sometimes it takes a little bit longer to do certain tasks, and patience is a virtue.  

COVID-19 and Voting Access  
On my introduction information cards, handed out to the public; I have a QR Code that directly takes one to the Secretary of State webpage to request an Absentee, Early, or Vote by Mail forms and requests. Additionally, on my cards I have a statement to contact my campaign if a Ride to the Polls is needed. I have suggested all disabled high risk voters, go to the election clerk the Saturday prior to Elections, between 8 am and noon, to vote in person with protected spacing, where a smaller crowd will be voting. On May 14, 2020, the Missouri House advanced a proposal to ensure voters can cast absentee ballots this year if they're worried about in-person voting during the coronavirus pandemic. House lawmakers approved an amendment to another election-related bill that would allow voters to request to have ballots mailed to them so they could avoid Election Day crowds. House lawmakers in response are trying to make it clear that any voter this year can request an absentee ballot. If they are afraid to go vote, because of COVID, they can request an absentee ballot.  

Medicaid Expansion  
Medicaid Expansion has already passed; however, I did advocate for Medicaid Expansion, and will diligently work for its enforcement. I will oppose any bills that attempt to overturn. With the pandemic of
nCovid19, more than ever Missourians need Medicaid Expansion. Via this link is the Analysis of the Fiscal Impact of Medicaid Expansion in Missouri; however, this data may not now apply, secondary to the pandemic. The topic headers remain the same, as does the introduction. This data will have to be resubmitted for accuracy; however, what does not change is the fact that the people of Missouri are living and dying secondary to this pandemic, and Medicaid Expansion MUST not be overturned. https://publichealth.wustl.edu/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Analysis-of-the-Fiscal-Impact-of-Medicaid-Expansion-in-Missouri-IPH.pdf

Housing

I will submit a bill that requires ALL Affordable Housing contracts to have an accessibility ramp and all ADA requirements at every individual dwelling, as part of the inspection in the approval process; and in compliance with Fair Housing standards.

Direct Support for Community Living

I will advocate for better compensation, benefits, training, and advancement opportunities for personal care aides; which will provide better care for people with disabilities who live independently.

Transportation

I will provide monthly trip vouchers to the Disabled, so they can pay a neighbor, relative, or trusted friend for transportation. In the event they have no person; the trip voucher can be used for a “Healthy Taxi” (clean, nonsmoking, van with lift).

Employment

Submit a bill that disallows asking if a person is disabled. Many employers find other reasons to circumvent the law in this area.

Waiver Programs

Each waiver is so different from the next; however a wait-list is across the board. I will submit a timeline for each waiver area; from the time of application arrival with a 72 hour turn-around; with increased trained efficient staffing to accommodate with each area.

Final Thoughts

I will advocate for ADA enforcement, and reinforce in print and social media, Disability Tips and Best Practices for Legislators and Staff. I am the best candidate to address the needs for the Disabled Community in District 9, because I have learned to care for the disabled, and have experience with a disability.
Position: State Representative – District 10  
Name: Colby Murphy  
Party: Democratic

Background  
I recently graduated with a bachelor’s degree in Political Science and have called District 10 my home for over 10 years. I have worked in healthcare since I was 18 (14 years). During that time, I have worked with countless individuals with physical and mental disabilities. Currently I am the Executive Director for a Medicaid and Veterans Affairs In-Home Health company and work for and represent hundreds of aged and or disabled individuals daily.

Covid-19 and Voting Access  
The first step to ensure those who are sick or disabled more ready voter access would be to make vote by mail an option for all and to not require they get it notarized if they suffer from any type of disability or preexisting condition. Secondly, we could ensure that all polling places are equipped with proper protective equipment and are following universal guidelines when it comes to infection control.

Medicaid Expansion  
Medicaid expansion needs to happen. Even more so to the degree than currently on the table. In a developed nation such as America no person should have to worry about being able to go to the doctor if they are sick or in need. In Missouri alone, Medicaid expansion could help cover over 200,000 individuals. A healthy Missouri is a prosperous Missouri.

Housing  
To address the availability of mobility impaired homes, we could offer tax incentives to current landlords who are willing to make their properties more accessible.

Direct Support for Community Living  
As someone in charge of an In-Home company I know the struggles of hiring and retaining quality direct support professionals. The shortage of these individuals is felt all across the state by all companies. The first step to address this problem would be to make available professional training programs (CNA, L1MA, etc.) at no cost to people interested in the field. Then provide them with a living wage and benefits to match the skill set they will provide. Part of an increased Medicaid expansion should include a higher pay out rate to In-Home companies so that they can provide better wages and training to those who are the front life staff responsible for caring for disabled individuals.

Transportation  
I feel Missouri has a good thing going with OATS transportation. To make it more effective, again part of a Medicaid expansion should also include better funding to make more OATS transportations readily available.

Employment  
In regard to employment I think again giving companies tax incentives to hire and train those with disabilities would be a good starting point in getting disabled individuals the work they need. Investing in organizations like UCP would be another great chance to ensure they are receiving the training they need to live a full life.

Waiver Programs  
Again, as someone who deals with HCBS every day I see the struggles individuals have to face when trying to receive the help they need. I believe the income limits are too low. So often in my line of work I see people who desperately need help fall through the cracks because according to the state they make too much, they fail their prescreen, etc. However, they cannot afford to pay privately for their cares and so often go without and end up in hospitals, nursing homes, or group homes. It would be so more affordable if instead of allowing these people to reach those stages, we increased funding for HCBS and their
department, and increased the maximum income levels for waivers. This would cut the wait times and allow more individuals to become eligible for service.

Final Thoughts
I began my career in healthcare right out of high school. I knew that I wanted to help people. I wanted to fight for the defenseless and be a voice for the voiceless. My whole adult life has been dedicated to helping those less fortunate than myself. Be they the young, elderly, or disabled. Healthcare and Medicaid expansion is the single most important issue to me. I will fight to make sure that we take care of those who need it most and that the resources are there. People with disabilities should be able to live a full life, without limits.
Position: State Representative – District 12
Name: Wade Hugh Kiefer
Party: Democratic

Background – I have a Bachelors of Arts from Mizzou, I went to a trade school for five years, I am a Journeyman Union Electrician, I am a School Board Member for the Smithville School District, and I am involved in many other aspects with my community. I am not funded by large PACs, I very connected with my constituents, and I have just as much at stake with livelihood that by constituents do. All of the aforementioned reasons are what makes me a qualified candidate.

I do not have a disability myself, but I have been/am close to those that do. My grandfather on my father’s side has dementia and needs regular assistance to complete his daily tasks. My grandmother on my mom’s side also had a disability needed much from family to help live on a daily basis. My cousin also had schizophrenia.

COVID-19 and Voting Access - I would push against the current administration and fight for everyone’s right to have mail in ballots. If we want to claim that we live in the best democracy in the world, then we need to start acting like it.

Medicaid Expansion – Healthcare and the Expansion of Medicaid is one of my top 3 issues that I am running on. Without the additional funding given to the state, it brings all of us down by limiting the scope of coverage with more expensive plans.

Housing – As a construction worker I have been on many jobs that are ADA for living quarters, but not all are. It should be a requirement that all new living complexes, HUD or not, have and meet the needs of those with mobility impairments.

Direct Support for Community Living – I absolutely agree. My family constantly struggles with finding my grandfather a caregiver. There needs to more grants for schooling, so that more students are more inclined to make it a profession. Secondly, health care plans must provide better coverage for such plans because many cannot afford support professionals.

Transportation – Overall, there is a lack of transportation in the state. Any new public-transportation must be conscious of the needs for seniors and those with disabilities. The introduction of policy would be the best course of action.

Employment – A deeper dive in the research is what I would need to most to find out the what the best course of action. I am also sure that MDVC has done this and have many ideas. I would be very open to hearing suggestions. I suppose better funding for particular employment programs that help those with disabilities and better tax incentives for employers. Like I said, I need to disaggregate the data.

Waiver Programs – Sounds like the program is running inefficiently and needs to be looked at. We need to see if it is an inherit fault of the program’s procedures, a lack of funding, or both. Similar to the former question, more research on my part is to be done and I would like to hear MDVC’s suggestions.

Final Thoughts – I am by no means an expert on policy that covers disabilities. All of the questions were answered with minimal research, but I am a strong proponent for those with disabilities. If any of my answers were not up to par, I am sure that I would change my answer in the light of statistics and data. Feel free to reach out for anything and I would like to thank you for your consideration.
Position: State Representative – District 14
Name: Ashley Aune
Party: Democratic

Background
I'm a small-business owner, wife, parent, and proud Kansas Citian with a passion for progressive politics. After growing up in Lenexa, KS, and graduating from the University of Kansas, I spent two years working for the American Business Women's Association. I then pursued a career in marketing and advertising—working for various brands and agencies in and around Kansas City—eventually opening my own virtual marketing agency in 2018.

I was raised by the son of dairy farmers and the daughter of a proud union household—both of whom taught me the values of integrity, compassion and a strong work ethic. These lessons have served me well in my life and my career, and I'm leaning into them as I work to be a voice for progress in the Northland.

While I do not have personal experience with a disability, I volunteered to assist and facilitate social activities with disabled classmates and adults in my community from 1997–2007.

COVID-19 and Voting Access
As a legislator, I believe it will be my responsibility to make sure our democratic process is accessible to every single voter. I plan on proposing and supporting legislation that supports measures to make voting more accessible like state-wide vote-by-mail, no-excuse absentee voting, and/or early voting options.

Medicaid Expansion
Medicaid Expansion in Missouri would provide desperately needed health care to hundreds of thousands of low-income Missourians and close huge coverage gaps in our healthcare system including children and folks with mental illness. Additionally, Medicaid Expansion would spare our hospital systems from the kinds of budget cuts that have recently closed too many rural hospitals across the state.

Housing
Affordable, accessible housing is critical for every single community in our state. I am very interested in working with advocacy groups to better understand the challenges and opportunities in solving this deficit and proposing or supporting legislation that makes a positive impact.

Direct Support for Community Living
I will support legislation that promotes the health, safety and autonomy of individuals with disabilities. From improving and expanding community programs and accessible transportation to transitional support, there are a lot of ways policy can help improve quality of life for disabled Missourians.

Transportation
Kansas City recently made the bus system fare-free, and I believe that is a fantastic step in the right direction in terms of ensuring the community has access to public transportation options. I will absolutely support policy that allocates dollars for reliable, affordable and accessible transportation.

Employment
I will support policies and legislation aimed at increasing employment opportunities for people with disabilities, and I will advocate to phase out subminimum wage. I also support implementation of the Missouri Employment First plan as well as policies that help families and individuals successfully transition to the next phase of their education or working journey.

Waiver Programs
I will support policies to expand HCBS programming that helps facilitate independent living among adults with disabilities.
Final Thoughts
I've had the incredible opportunity of working with children and adults with disabilities in a volunteer capacity, and those experiences have opened my eyes to the challenges of navigating our world with a disability.

I love that as a legislator, my job will be to find ways to improve the lives of folks in my community. I genuinely understand how far we still have to go in order to make sure we’re providing the best opportunities to everyone—regardless of ability—and I hope to join you in the fight to improve the quality of life for Missourians with disabilities.
Position: State Representative – District 15
Name: Maggie Nurrenbern
Party: Democratic

1. Background: As a mom, a teacher, and a union member, I understand well that we need legislators in Jefferson City who will advocate for our families. I am ready to be an advocate for each and every person in my district and for people all over Missouri whose voices aren’t being heard. I have a lot of experience with activism in the state of Missouri, fighting for progressive ballot measures and canvassing to elect Democrats. I know that I have the grit, passion, energy and integrity to do this work. As a public school teacher, I’ve learned a lot from my students with disabilities and I believe more has to be done at every level to fight for resources for people with disabilities.

2. COVID-19 and Voting Access: We are moving in the right direction of being able to vote by mail with Senate Bill 631. However, I believe this bill doesn’t go far enough. Missouri needs no-excuse absentee voting for all Missouri voters. As state representative, I will fight to make voting more accessible for all.

3. Medicaid Expansion: I gathered signatures to expand Medicaid and I’m confident that Missouri voters will finally get done what our legislature should have done years ago. Medicaid expansion is long overdue in the state of Missouri. Medicaid expansion would provide more affordable health care to those who fall between the gaps, saving taxpayers money and lowering healthcare premiums for all.

4. Housing: We have an affordable housing crisis in this state and I’m saddened to learn that so little housing is accessible to individuals with mobility impairments. I support programs to incentivize affordable accessible housing.

5. Direct Support for Community Living: I will fight for funding for any and all programs that support community living for people with disabilities. We must ensure that our direct support professionals received the training and a liveable salary to be able to best care for our individuals with disability.

6. Transportation: Again I will fight for funding to support public/para-transit transportation. I’d also like to use my platform to highlight the lack of access to such transportation.

7. Employment: I’m interested in learning from you all as to steps we can take to eliminate these disparities. We have to do more as a state to make sure working-age people with disabilities are able to work as they want.

8. Waiver Programs: I will be another supporter in the state legislature fighting for funding for the waiver supported program. There should be no waitlist for these programs.

9. Final Thoughts: As a teacher, I always strive to meet the needs of each and every student in my classroom. To be able to do that, I have to listen and learn and then adjust my approach. I look forward to learning from Missourians with disabilities as to what we need to do as a state to best address your needs. Thanks for being involved in the political process. I’d be grateful to earn the support of the Missouri Disability Voter Coalition.
1. **Background**

   - I was born and raised in and around the 16th District and am a product of the Liberty Public School system. Prior to running for office, I served nearly seven years with the USO Organization, traveling all around the world giving back to our military community and their families. I learned so much about service and honor during my time with the USO and was ultimately led to pursue a career in public service. Since January of 2019, I have been pursuing my Master of Public Administration degree at the University of Missouri-Kansas City, and am set to graduate this December of 2020.

   - I do not have any personal experiences with a disability or with an individual with a disability.

2. **COVID-19 and Voting Access**

   - Mail-In voting and absentee voting must be made the law of the land. I fully support all measures to make voting from the comfort of your home as safe and accessible as possible, especially for those with disabilities. I do not support the current notary requirement associated with Missouri’s mail-in voting.

3. **Medicaid Expansion**

   - I fully support Medicaid Expansion and see it affecting Missouri in many positive ways. Providing health care access to those who currently do not have any, supporting our rural hospitals and communities, and aiding our Missourians with disabilities.

4. **Housing**

   - I am open to sponsoring and/or co-sponsoring bills that will require developers or anyone who builds either public or private housing to include accessibility for those with mobility impairments. I would love to hear other ways we can address this issue as well.

5. **Direct Support for Community Living**

   - I am open to hearing any and all measures that would help and assist those with disabilities who live independently. I also would support any measures that will expand the direct support professional workforce, including higher pay and better benefits.

6. **Transportation**

   - I personally believe all public spaces, buildings, and areas need to be accessible for all people, especially those with disabilities. I am open to sponsoring/co-sponsoring legislation that would go towards making this a statewide requirement.

7. **Employment**
- I am open to all measures to address this issue. Off the top of my head, supporting worker protections for those with a disability, and supporting programs and/or initiatives that will help employ those with a disability. I would love to hear other ways we can address this issue.

8. Waiver Programs

- I personally do not know much about these waiver programs, and would love to learn more about them, as well as ways we can address this issue to benefit those with disabilities.

9. Final Thoughts

- I do realize and am aware that I am very green and do not have a lot of experience and/or knowledge on a lot of topics. I am making sure I am asking all of the questions necessary to understand all of these issues and to familiarize myself with ways we can address them going forward.
- I am running for this office because I believe all Missourians deserve a government that is fair and balanced, and that is representative of its citizenry. I also believe our government and elected officials need to serve the public and put the people first. I intend to be a public servant who leads with servant leadership and people-first priorities. Thank you for your time and consideration. Either way, I look forward to addressing these issues and standing with all Missourians with disabilities to better their quality of life and peace of mind.
Position: State Representative – District 17  
Name: Brandt Vircks  
Party: Republican  

**Background:**

Candidates for any elected position must be able hard-working, willing to listen to the voices of their constituents, be adaptable in handling unique situations that may arise, possess strong communication skills, and have empathy for others while maintaining their own values.

Throughout my time at the University of Missouri-Columbia, I had to exercise these traits. As I took a minimum of 15 credit hours a semester, I worked full-time throughout the last two years of my time at Mizzou as a manager, to pay for both my education costs as well as my general expenses. As a manager, I oversaw thirty to forty employees and handled hundreds to thousands of customers a day. Each day I had to be able to empathize with employees and customers alike insomuch that I could identify the root of the problem at hand; not only to find the most efficient solution, but also the one that improved the overall outcome.

After graduating with a B.S. in Management, with a minor in Entrepreneurship, I began my career at Cerner as a consultant. For the last four years, I have helped doctors, nurses, and other medical personnel around the country learn and implement Cerner solutions in their facilities. Now, as a Senior Learning Consultant working with the Department of Defense and VA, I have learned to be ready for new challenges and changes at a moment’s notice. I have continued to strive to improve my training content, keeping a careful mind to increase accessibility to all users.

While I have not had any personal experience with a disability, we are close friends with the Smith family (I have changed their last name for anonymity). This couple, both of whom have been blind essentially from birth, are very close friends with me and my wife. We have been there to pick them up for church, given rides to various errands, being with them at the hospital, and whatever else we are able to do to help. I have been able to see firsthand what many of those who live with disabilities, especially those who have been unable to work or find work, go through on a routine basis.

**COVID-19 and Voting Access:**

The right to vote is one of the most precious and treasured rights that we hold as citizens of the United States. With the effects of the current pandemic still ever prevalent, I am glad to see that SB 631 was passed which helped expand the ability for individuals to cast a mail-in ballot in response to concerns of the risks of in-person voting for the Primary and General elections. However, I do recognize that this is a temporary measure, and I also recognize that the provision which mandates that each bill be notarized has its own unique challenges. For example, for my friends mentioned previously, to access a notary would require transportation, and require assistance to fill out the ballot to begin with. For those who are immunocompromised, the notary requirement still necessitates going out in public, increasing the risk of catching COVID-19 or other illnesses. This was a good step in an emergency situation, but these sorts of risks will have to be considered in the future, while still maintaining voting integrity.

**Housing:**

As a first-time homeowner, my wife and I searched through many homes until we found our home in Pleasant Valley. Through those several months, we toured a variety of different homes, and many of them would certainly be difficult for someone who is mobility impaired. Simply finding an affordable home was difficult enough in and of itself.
When it comes to this matter, I commend the efforts of various organizations that help individuals and families make homes more habitable, create mobility-friendly homes and help new buyers purchase a home. As towns and cities throughout the state are unique in many ways, I believe that the most effective programs will be those that are closest to those in need, namely within the county, city, as well as private and nonprofit organizations. However, I will continue to learn about this issue to see where improvements may be made and will always ensure that those who are disabled have proper protections when purchasing a home.

**Direct Support for Community Living:**

It can easily be said that direct support professionals are often underappreciated for the valuable work that they do. This is an area where I would like to see increased focus, as the need for their services is expected only to rise in the coming years. If we don’t get ahead of this now, the shortage will only continue to increase in size, and it is those who have more difficulty living independently who will suffer the most. The three main points that I desire to work on is improving recruitment efforts, training, and compensation. I believe that if we focus on efforts to improve these three points, we will see increased morale and increased retention for those who do this crucial work. As we retain more direct support professionals in the field and within the state, we will be able to meet the rising needs, and provide the necessary care and assistance for all Missourians to be able to enjoy all other rights that they possess.

**Transportation:**

The available resources, as well as the various needs, when it comes to meeting transportation needs differs throughout the state. It can be identifiably easier to provide public transport for densely populated urban areas as compared to more rural communities. As such, a universal approach for the entire state would not be as satisfactory, but rather is best operated by each locality. However, I believe that Missouri should continue to show support for organizations such as OATS Transit as well continue to develop transportation programs through companies such as the partnership with Lyft.

**Employment:**

Article 1, Section 2 of Missouri’s Constitution in part reads, “That all constitutional government is intended to promote the general welfare of the people; that all persons have a natural right to life, liberty, the pursuit of happiness and the enjoyment of the gains of their own industry...” Being able to gain employment is an important part of the standards we hold. As such, assisting people with disabilities to find employment is an important topic for me.

I believe one of the best opportunities to address the disparity is through additional opportunities for education and training. Though this pandemic has brought many challenges to the Missouri educational system, I believe this can also serve as a great opportunity to build towards the future. I believe that Missouri colleges and universities can use this time to further develop online curriculum and content to serve all members of our community so that each person can have the education needed to find gainful employment in the workplace.

**Waiver Programs:**

This is an area that I am not as familiar with. However, this is certainly an area that I will continue to look further into, to see where waiting times may be reduced, and to ensure that adequate funding is provided.

**Final Thoughts:**
Position: State Representative – District 18  
Name: Wes Rogers  
Party: Democratic

**Background** What training, experience, and characteristics qualify you for this position? Do you have any personal experience with a disability or an individual with a disability?

I am the incumbent state representative for Missouri’s 18th District.

Prior to becoming a state representative I was an assistant prosecuting attorney and now I own a small business in addition to my legislative duties. I do not have any personal experience with a disability, but I am workers’ compensation lawyer so work with folks with disabilities every day and have a great passion for making sure my clients are treated fairly.

**COVID-19 and Voting Access** Many people with disabilities are high risk for COVID-19 and are concerned about potential exposure to the disease when voting. What, if any, steps would you take to address this problem?

No excuse absentee voting is the best way to address this and I very much support it.

**Medicaid Expansion** How do you see Medicaid Expansion affecting the state of Missouri?

Medicaid expansion is one of the best things we could do for our state. More access to healthcare is always a good thing and most of the funding comes from the federal government.

**Housing** According to HUD, less than 5% of homes are accessible to individuals with mobility impairments. Affordable accessible housing is a concern for many Missourians with disabilities. What, if any, steps would you take to address this problem?

This is a huge problem. Restoring LIHTCs would be an awful good first step.

**Direct Support for Community Living** There is a shortage of direct support professionals (personal attendants and other caregivers), to help people with disabilities live independently in the community. What, if any, steps would you take to address this problem?

So long as personal attendants and caregivers make such low wages, this will continue to be a problem. The best first step is paying these incredibly important workers what they are worth.

**Transportation** In many areas across Missouri, there are a lack of public/para-transit transportation resources for seniors and individuals with disabilities. What, if any, steps would you take to address this problem?

This issue is right at the top for me. Lack of public transportation transportation is not just a problem by itself, it amplifies difficult conditions and makes life even more difficult than it already is. The bottom line is the only way you fix this is by investing tax dollars in more access to transportation.

**Employment** The rate of unemployment or underemployment is much higher for individuals with disabilities than those without a disability. According to the American Community Survey, as of 2017, only 34% of all working-age people with disabilities in Missouri were employed, and 25% of people with a cognitive or intellectual disability were employed. What, if any, steps would you take to address this disparity?
I have never heard that number and that is really discouraging. This is not a policy strength for me, but I would certainly champion any ideas that help address this.

**Waiver Programs** There are 11 1915(c) waivers in Missouri. Recently, many individuals have experienced waitlists and the effects of limited funding for waiver supported programs. What, if any, steps would you take to address this problem?

Again, this is really too bad and it’s just an issue of the state needing better priorities. We need to invest in waiver supported programs.

**Final Thoughts** Is there anything else you would like to say to voters with disabilities?

Thank you for all you do. Please know you have an ally in me in any way I can be helpful.
Position: State Representative – District 19
Name: Ingrid Burnett
Party: Democratic

Background:

One of my best childhood friends was impacted with Cerebral Palsy and Developmental Delay. We played together every day, and I was considered a member of the family. This was in the late 1950’s & early 60’s prior to IDEA, and eventually he was sent away to live in a residential facility, and I was not provided the opportunity to visit or correspond. Later, when I was completing my Music Therapy degree program at UMKC, several of my practicum experiences included teaching guitar lessons and running group therapy sessions with young adults with Developmental Disabilities. My career path then led me to the role of Elementary School Counselor in the Independence Public School System where I had the privilege to work with many differently abled students to provide accommodations that allowed for environmental, social, and instructional adaptations depending on their needs.

COVID-19 & Voting Access

As a four year incumbent, I will continue to support and advocate for unencumbered mail-in voting and early voting.

Medicaid Expansion

Under Medicaid Expansion our uninsured population would drop by over 30% which means that more than one in three Missourians who currently don't have healthcare coverage would become insured. Medicaid expansion will also release more Federal dollars into Missouri’s budget for healthcare delivery.

Housing

I plan to continue to work with organizations such as Empower Missouri, The Affordable Housing Coalition in KC, Matie Rhodes and others to craft solutions that include accessibility conditions.

Direct Support for Community Living

As a member of the House Budget Committee, I have a record of supporting and advocating for increasing funding for direct support professionals.

Transportation

I am more than happy to work with any and all advocacy groups to increase the availability of public/para-transit transportation resources.

Employment

I think one area to work with more is Education providers with industry certification programs. Additionally, while I believe that sheltered workshops fill a role for employing people with significant disabilities, I think that they tend to be overused. Again, I am happy to work with advocacy groups who promote equal pay for equal work, aggressive employment policies for equal opportunity that includes the differently abled population of workers.

Waiver Programs

I need to learn more about how to support these through the budget process. My door is always open.

Final Thoughts
Missouri Disability Voter Coalition

Thank you for the opportunity to share my views with your constituents. I have served in the Missouri House now for 4 years, and have been a strong voice in my various roles for members of our community who deal with disabilities and for those who help provide care for them. I currently am appointed to the following committees:

· Budget

· Education Appropriations (Ranking Member)

· Fiscal Review (Ranking Member)

· Joint Committee on Education

I also serve as the House Minority Caucus Chair
Position: State Representative – District 21
Name: Robert Salus
Party: Democratic

Background: I have been a practicing attorney for approximately 12 years. I have been a prosecuting attorney for about six-and-a-half years, three of which were with the juvenile office wherein I specialize in abuse and neglect proceedings as well as juvenile certification and delinquency. In addition to my three additional years as a prosecuting attorney, I was a public defender for about three-and-a-half years. I have also been an Air Force Reservist wherein I am an assistant staff judge advocate. I am the incumbent representative for the 21st District. In addition to being a J.A.G. Reservist and a state representative, I am an associate with a law firm. The bulk of my practice is worker’s compensation and labor law. With regard to personal experience with a disability, my mother has been physically disabled for a several years.

COVID exposure: I voted for the bill that allows no excuse absentee voting and would be happy to assist in other ways. My firm plans on doing a class wherein those who attend and pass the exam will be notaries. I think this will also help those who are not considered high risk, are disabled, and do not want to go to the polls on Election Day.

Medicaid expansion: I think it would impact it in positive ways. The rural parts of the state have had many hospitals close and it also tends to be a location wherein many of its citizens are below the poverty line. I think it is imperative that we pass Medicaid expansion and I believe we will this year.

Housing: I am open to whatever suggestions you have. I see how this could be a problem and I am certain I would support legislation that would require stricter penalties and or more resources to achieving this goal.

Direct Support for Community Living: I would support legislation and funding that would see to it that we could add more support. Both my Grandma and Grandpa Sauls passed away this year. They both had a support professional who was like a part of the family.

Transportation: I would support legislation that would help with transportation for public/para-transit. I am open to additional whatever additional suggestions you may have as well.

Employment: I am open to additional suggestions but I have supported legislation in the past that would help in this way by co-sponsoring it. I will continue to support measures that help.

Waiver programs: I think funding is a big problem in the state of Missouri. Not to get too political, but it is very much the problem when you have those who want to make these changes in a super minority. As a general rule, I believe the function of government is to protect its people. I believe we have a real revenue problem in this state followed by a tax structure that gives away huge tax cuts for businesses that supply minimum wage jobs or slightly better. We are here because we have cut taxes so much that we have to take away from something else. The much needed internet sales tax is likely going to come with a subsequent tax cut. We are going to generate more revenue only to give it back to companies that already aren’t paying their fair share in taxes.

Final thoughts: I have and will continue to support you. These are difficult times and they are likely going to get more difficult until we start making real changes that have impact. The Missouri House consists of 48 democrats and 114 republicans. We need to elect more people who believe that our tax dollars need to go places that they aren’t realistically going. Until that happens, I will support you by voting for your issues, speaking about your issues, informing others about your issues, and working with republicans across the aisle to pass legislation that addresses your issues. As always, you may reach out to me at any time. If there is a bill coming up or if you would like me to do something you may contact me through email or my cellphone 816-509-5021. My door is always open.
Position: State Representative – District 22
Name: Yolanda Young
Party: Democratic

Background

What training, experience, and characteristics qualify you for this position?

I have worked almost three decades mobilizing neighborhood residents around issues that matter to them, and worked closely with community-based partners from various sectors in order to gain access resources. I am deeply passionate about this work and continue it to this day. I believe my experience at the grass roots level, my passion for and dedication to bettering the community for all residents, and my work as a freshman legislature in 2020 has helped me bring a fresh perspective to the legislature.

Do you have any personal experience with a disability or an individual with a disability?

Yes; as an employee of Ivanhoe Neighborhood Council--a non-profit community-based organization--I have worked with a number of individuals with disabilities. I have also provided support and assistance to relatives with disabilities.

COVID-19 and Voting Access

Many people with disabilities are high risk for COVID-19 and are concerned about potential exposure to the disease when voting. What, if any, steps would you take to address this problem?

I would first encourage potential voters to register. Secondly, people with disabilities have specific federal laws that protect their right to vote and those laws also make voting accessible to them. They need advocates and legislators to help ensure those rights at the state level. Before COVID-19, I introduced HJR 117 which seeks to remove voting restrictions on persons judged incapacitated. Additionally, I brought forward HB 2403 which would require election authorities to make available at least one electronic voting machine per polling location for blind or visually impaired voters. I also provided all of my constituents and potential voters to look at absentee voting as an option. As a state legislator, I voted in favor of a bill to allow our voters the option of voting-by-mail if they have concerns about physically being present at the polls in light of COVID-19.

Medicaid Expansion

How do you see Medicaid Expansion affecting the state of Missouri?

Expanding Medicaid could potentially mean that more than 200,000 Missourians would be able to obtain adequate healthcare coverage. If Missourians have adequate health care that they can utilize, it will undoubtedly increase their quality of life. Expanding Medicaid will also help to rebuild our economy by bringing back jobs and creating new ones.

Housing

According to HUD, less than 5% of homes are accessible to individuals with mobility impairments. Affordable accessible housing is a concern for many Missourians with disabilities. What, if any, steps would you take to address this problem?

Each week, I send out an email Capitol Report that provides information for those on my mailing list. I could share information or links to websites that will help individuals with disabilities look for a home that works for their specific needs.

Direct Support for Community Living
There is a shortage of direct support professionals (personal attendants and other caregivers), to help people with disabilities live independently in the community. What, if any, steps would you take to address this problem?

I can introduce and/or support legislation (such as expanding Medicaid) that would help strengthen the direct support workforce. If these workers can obtain proper training and receive livable wages with benefits, it will be a step into the right direction to retain these workers and reduce the high turnover rate in the industry.

Transportation

In many areas across Missouri, there are a lack of public/para-transit transportation resources for seniors and individuals with disabilities. What, if any, steps would you take to address this problem?

One way to address the problem is to encourage communities to utilize the transportation systems mandated by our federal laws under American Disabilities Act. I am an advocate of empowering communities to create relevant programming that positively impacts its members. As such, I would support and/or introduce legislation that provides funding for communities to design and implement a variety of transportation options for seniors and individuals with disabilities.

Employment

The rate of unemployment or underemployment is much higher for individuals with disabilities than those without a disability. According to the American Community Survey, as of 2017, only 34% of all working-age people with disabilities in Missouri were employed, and 25% of people with a cognitive or intellectual disability were employed. What, if any, steps would you take to address this disparity?

As a state legislator, I can introduce or support legislation that requires state agencies to support competitive integrated employment for individuals with disabilities.

Waiver Programs

There are 11 1915(c) waivers in Missouri. Recently, many individuals have experienced waitlists and the effects of limited funding for waiver supported programs. What, if any, steps would you take to address this problem?

As a state legislator, I could look for and speak in favor of legislation that will provide more funding for waiver supported programs.

Final Thoughts

Is there anything else you would like to say to voters with disabilities?

Voters with disabilities should have every opportunity to vote without excessive burdens just as an abled voter does. I will work to ensure policies do not discriminate against their rights and provide necessary accommodations in support of their right to vote. My service on the Special Committee on Aging also gives me an opportunity to hear proposed legislation that targets seniors who often have disabilities with needs for direct support, community living, at-home care, transportation resources, and employment. It is my goal to keep seniors and any registered voters with disabilities in mind as I seek to speak for or against relevant legislation. I will do all that I can to ensure that these voters can fully participate in our voting and elections, as is their right. Again, one example is HB 1203 which I brought forward requiring election authorities to make available at least one electronic voting machine per polling location for blind or visually impaired voters.
Position: State Representative – District 24
Name: Emily Weber
Party: Democratic

Background

What training, experience, and characteristics qualify you for this position? Do you have any personal experience with a disability or an individual with a disability?

Some of my family members were intellectually disabled and my father is now suffering from a severe form of rheumatoid arthritis that has made him go through multiple back and spine surgeries as well as knee replacements. He has done various forms of physical rehab for strength and pain treatment. I've also volunteered for a few political candidates who made sure their videos on social media were captioned for the deaf and hard of hearing. This is something that we have been trying to do on our campaign, too.

COVID-19 and Voting Access

Many people with disabilities are high risk for COVID-19 and are concerned about potential exposure to the disease when voting. What, if any, steps would you take to address this problem?

I am an advocate for early voting and vote by mail for Missouri. I am especially concerned for high-risk people and their exposure while voting. We need to make it possible for people to vote by mail without going through a notary, which our Governor is currently forcing them to do. Voting is a constitutional right and no one should have to risk their life or the lives of others to exercise that right.

Medicaid Expansion

How do you see Medicaid Expansion affecting the state of Missouri?

Expanding Medicaid will have many positive impacts in Missouri. During this pandemic we saw people working multiple jobs and considered essential workers, but still they couldn’t afford health insurance. They risked their lives for us, but if they got sick, they had no health insurance to help cover the costs of protecting their life. People with disabilities are usually unemployed because having a job would force them to lose their healthcare benefits but would not provide enough income for them to purchase healthcare elsewhere. Expanding Medicaid would allow people with disabilities to gain employment, but also keep their health coverage. Expanding Medicaid will also help keep hospitals, especially rural hospitals, open. This will benefit all residents of rural communities, especially people with disabilities.

Housing

According to HUD, less than 5% of homes are accessible to individuals with mobility impairments. Affordable accessible housing is a concern for many Missourians with disabilities. What, if any, steps would you take to address this problem?

We need to address wage disparities, but also make more affordable housing available for lower income renters and people with developmental disabilities. This will require increasing investment in affordable housing, particularly housing that incorporates the principles of universal design. Across the state, we also need to support more programs like Home of Your Own and the Missouri Inclusive Housing Development Corporation. Increasing tenant’s rights is also important. I currently support a local organization, KC Tenants, that is actively working toward this goal.

Direct Support for Community Living

There is a shortage of direct support professionals (personal attendants and other caregivers), to help people with disabilities live independently in the community. What, if any, steps would you take to address this problem?
I would support legislation mandating that direct support professionals make a living wage. I would also support programs that work with colleges and recruiters to provide more information on the career opportunities available to direct support professionals.

**Transportation**

In many areas across Missouri, there are a lack of public/para-transit transportation resources for seniors and individuals with disabilities. What, if any, steps would you take to address this problem?

Missouri has a severe lack of public transportation. I would like to address this for numerous reasons. As part of any expansion, I would work to find ways to create flexible, accessible, and affordable transportation for people with disabilities, not just in cities but also in rural areas.

**Employment**

The rate of unemployment or underemployment is much higher for individuals with disabilities than those without a disability. According to the American Community Survey, as of 2017, only 34% of all working-age people with disabilities in Missouri were employed, and 25% of people with a cognitive or intellectual disability were employed. What, if any, steps would you take to address this disparity?

Missouri has a lot of work to do in many areas. I have read the competitive employment plan developed by the Missouri Developmental Disabilities Council and I agree with their recommendations, including:

- People with disabilities should have early access to and receive the support they need to obtain well-paid jobs providing meaningful opportunities for community and social engagement and advancement.
- Agencies supporting differently abled people must increase outreach to people in different areas to help them gain support and opportunities to gain competitive employment.
- Individual plans should include clear goals and objectives for employment. • Schools should assist agencies working with people with disabilities as they transition from education to exploring career opportunities.
- Agencies working with people disabilities should collaborate with businesses to develop creative strategies to increase employment.
- Missouri does not look at other states that implement best practices. We should be consulting with states like Vermont that have created successful programs.
- Agencies that are supporting people with disabilities should have access to financial programs that help people earn and save money.

**Waiver Programs**

There are 11 1915(c) waivers in Missouri. Recently, many individuals have experienced waitlists and the effects of limited funding for waiver supported programs. What, if any, steps would you take to address this problem?

We need to make sure that these programs are funded. I would also contact organizations like yours to better understand why there are waitlists and to learn if the support individuals receive while waiting actually provides the help they need during that time.

**Final Thoughts**

Is there anything else you would like to say to voters with disabilities?

I can’t imagine the struggles voters with disabilities face day-to-day, but I will do my best and always be learning and thinking of ways to improve policies that would assist in making your lives a little bit easier.
Position: State Representative – District 25  
Name: Patty Lewis  
Party: Democratic

Candidate Information:

Patty Lewis, Missouri House of Representatives District 25  
Voters for Patty Lewis, P.O. Box 8691, Kansas City, MO 64114  
(816)289-3321  
Patty@PattyForMO.com

Background

What training, experience, and characteristics qualify you for this position? Do you have any personal experience with a disability or an individual with a disability?

I have been advocating for people my entire professional career. I have 20 years of health care experience as an ICU/Critical Care nurse as well as a health care Executive. As an ICU nurse, I cared for the most vulnerable patients in the hospital. As an Executive, I was responsible for leading teams, building business cases and identifying solutions to improve patient safety for health care organizations across the world. I received a Bachelor of Science in Nursing in May 2000. I have devoted a lifetime of community service. I currently serve on my Homes Association board as Vice President and serve on several other boards and committees through out Kansas City. I believe my experienced leadership and proven track record set me apart and will prove valuable in Jefferson City. I do not have a disability but have several family members and friends with disabilities. My aunt, Marijean, had down syndrome. For several years, I volunteered at Trails West State School.

COVID-19 and Voting Access

Many people with disabilities are high risk for COVID-19 and are concerned about potential exposure to the disease when voting. What, if any, steps would you take to address this problem?

I support making voting more accessible with mail in ballots without a notary for every election. I also support early voting. We need to make voting more accessible for all.

Medicaid Expansion

How do you see Medicaid Expansion affecting the state of Missouri?

I believe that Medicaid expansion will pass in August which will positively affect Missourians health and provide health care coverage for many who have been left behind.

Housing

According to HUD, less than 5% of homes are accessible to individuals with mobility impairments. Affordable accessible housing is a concern for many Missourians with disabilities. What, if any, steps would you take to address this problem?

I agree that affordable, accessible housing is a huge concern for many Missourians with disabilities. I will support funding legislation and policies to address affordable housing and improvements to housing for individuals with mobility impairments.

Direct Support for Community Living
Missouri Disability Voter Coalition

There is a shortage of direct support professionals (personal attendants and other caregivers), to help people with disabilities live independently in the community. What, if any, steps would you take to address the problem?

We need to provide a living wage for professionals who help people with disabilities live independently. We also need to listen to their needs and ensure they have the tools necessary to care and serve those with disabilities and provide continuing education programs.

**Transportation**

In many areas across Missouri, there are a lack of public/para-transit transportation resources for seniors and individuals with disabilities. What, if any, steps would you take to address this problem?

We need to adequately fund the transportation needs for our seniors and individuals with disabilities.

**Employment**

The rate of unemployment or underemployment is much higher for individuals with disabilities than those without a disability. According to the American Community Survey, as of 2017, only 34% of all working-age people with disabilities in Missouri were employed, and 25% of people with a cognitive or intellectual disability were employed. What, if any, steps would you take to address this disparity?

We need to educate our business community on proven strategies to advance disability inclusion in the workplace. We need to provide training and education for individuals with disabilities based on their skills to prepare them to enter the workforce.

**Waiver Programs**

There are 11 1915(c) waivers in Missouri. Recently, many individuals have experienced waitlists and the effects of limited funding for waiver supported programs. What, if any, steps would you take to address this problem?

We need to simplify the application process and make it more accessible to mitigate waitlists.

**Final Thoughts**

Is there anything else you would like to say to voters with disabilities?

I am extremely concerned with what is happening with the state of Missouri. Poor legislation and policies in place are leaving folks behind especially individuals with disabilities. I feel compelled to advocate for all those left behind and all Missourians for a better, brighter future. I have a very unique background that we desperately need in Jefferson City.
Position: State Representative – District 30
Name: Art Schaaf
Party: Democratic

1. Background: Master’s degree in Management, Former Program Manager for Kansas Vocational Rehabilitation Services Northeast Region. Prior experience as Director of Safety and Health Services/ADA compliance. I am a Disabled person as are my children.

2. Mail in Voting is one of the ways to ensure Disabled Missourians fully participate in our government. I will work to eliminate obstacles to voting for everyone.

3. Medicaid expansion is essential. It is embarrassing to deny medical care to anyone who needs it. I have witnessed the destruction of lives caused by reducing medical coverage for the uninsured.

4. Ensure options for finding and/or making housing adaptable by personally working with existing programs in our community to connect those with a need with the assistance they need. *See Medicaid expansion.

5. It is necessary to provide adequate pay for those who provide care for the disabled. The State legislature is a fine place to start. I will work to create sponsor and advocate for improving the lives of disabled persons and those who care for them. *See Medicaid expansion.

6. We need to expand opportunities for our disabled citizens to access safe affordable transportation. Local contracts with corporate or private transportation providers, Medicaid providers and county, city and regional providers must be emphasized and fully funded by the state.

7. As a former Program Manager for Disabled employment I have always believed that education, transitional support, evaluation and detailed planning result in better positions paying a livable wage. Too often less than optimal employment is the outcome because the organization considers any employment to be a viable outcome. I believe the best fit, including an emphasis on wages and benefits is the harder to achieve but better solution. I will work to introduce, co-sponsor and advocate for equitable opportunities for all.

8. Learn the root causes of opposition to effectively funding these waivers. Then actively advocate for elimination of waiting lists from the opportunities as well as exposing the delays and the enablers of the delays. In Kansas our funding was “fenced” in order to limit how and for whose benefit funds were used. Interestingly, our program resources were significantly reduced as waiting times grew. The number of providers we contracted with were significantly reduced and the client load my counselors faced grew exponentially. I suspected fraud but could not get any traction proving it.

9. The United States has a responsibility to treat all people equally. We also have a responsibility to provide the resources necessary so that all people can contribute to the maximum extent possible. By doing so we enlarge the tax base, to say nothing about providing a society we can all be proud of.
Position: State Representative – District 31  
Name: Rhonda R. Dolan  
Party: Democratic  

Background:
I am a single parent of three. I earned my bachelor’s degree in English Education and my master’s degree in Not-for-profit administration with a focus on workforce development for people with disabilities. My career has allowed me to provide problem solving, consultation and business development in a variety of industries including education, workforce development, real estate, agriculture and health care. Most recently I have undertaken the task of creating a technology-based solution for helping companies provide meaningful life/work balance support to their employees (part of the motivation for which is to provide work opportunities for individuals with disabilities, in rural communities and those seeking work-at-home options). My personal experience with individuals with disabilities comes mostly from my professional experience. I worked for Goodwill Industries for many years as a director of workforce development both at the local and national level. I worked throughout the country consulting for organizations in the assessment, development and implementation of offerings and services in support of individuals with disabilities so that they may gain fair and equal access to the workforce in their community. As someone with a learning disability myself, as teacher I incorporated my skills at assessing individual need and strength and teaching to each student rather than to the prescribed norm. My daughter has Type 1 Diabetes and she must advocate for herself daily.

Covid-19 and voting access:
This is a substantial concern and our elected officials have the duty and responsibility to ensure voting access for all. We should make the process clear, easy to navigate accessible. I support no-excuse absentee voting and mail-in voting for all. The additional covered excuses approved for absentee voting for August 4th and November 3rd during the past session are inadequate and do not address the needs of voters and certainly not voters with disabilities and those with increased risks of complications from this still not fully understood virus.

Medicaid Expansion:
Positively. There is little reason for our legislature to not expand Medicaid. Not only is it granting Missourians the benefits of federal funds intended for them but will save the state money and bolster the healthcare industry, providing and saving jobs. Beyond that, the Covid-19 pandemic has revealed how dangerous it is for Missourians to only have a realistic option of healthcare through their employer. I believe that no Missourian should have to be reluctant to take their child to the doctor or pick up a prescription for fear of cost because they are uninsured. The numbers back up the human and social need for Medicaid expansion in Missouri.

Housing
As with any challenges for which I seek solution, I would first listen to those who have a need for housing and their families, those whose work is to support these individuals, as well as housing authorities at local, state and federal levels. I would seek creative partnerships, tax credit and funding opportunities to develop housing either through building or retro-fitting existing structures. As a member of the legislature, the key is to first understand the severity of and details that create the need, become familiar with the barriers to achieving a solution, and to create an environment that is favorable to improving affordable accessible options for individuals. The answer is yes, the work is finding the way to yes. I will add that I both understand at the broad level the need for affordable, accessible housing and the value of independent living for all who desire it.

Direct Support for Community Living
Again, and as always, I will be open to listening to understand the extent of the need and the details that create and sustain the need. As always, funding is part of the issue, but it is rarely the only barrier to success. It is often easy for leadership to say that funding is not available, but it is necessary to listen and be open to creating solutions in multiple ways. The wages for direct support
professionals is traditionally very low which impacts the ability to recruit and retain support professionals, which creates not only a shortage but an issue of continuity of care for individuals. We need to look at ways to enhance the profession and improve worker engagement, support and benefits.

Transportation
Transportation is an issue in a plethora of ways in our communities and is a topic of personal interest to me. I think one important way to impact change is to ensure that individuals with disabilities and/or those who represent this valuable part of our community have a seat at the table in all transportation discussion. When we discuss transportation issues, people with disabilities must always be a part of the equation and the discussion. Where there is limited transportation, public/private partnership and creative solutions should be a part of the discussion. There are limits within regulations but when we discuss things at the state level, we must not lose sight that Missouri is vastly diverse in terms of demography and we must work to ensure localized solutions to state-wide issues.

Employment
I dedicated close to 10 years of my professional career to helping to advance the employment of individuals with disabilities. I believe in the power of work in the lives of all individuals regardless of disability, gender, race, age, or any other personal factor. First and foremost, we need to include all individuals in our thinking, discussions and debates. We have talent shortages in many areas, and this is an opportunity to advance the support through skills training, certification programs and employer awareness and partnership.

Waiver Programs
I believe we need an overall shift in policy that will affect our ability to address shortages in many programs even as needs grow. We have in Missouri 15 or more years of bad tax and other policy that have benefited select and typically wealthier populations of our state while contributing to continually reduced budget reserves leaving less for programs such as waiver programs and no rainy day fund to deal with crises such as Covid-19. It then becomes easy to blame budget holds on the crisis when in fact it is the outcome of failed policy over time. We need a shift in policy that will grow overall revenue while impacting individuals more fairly and allowing programs to be adequately funded and more importantly resourced effectively. Not all shortages are only results in funding. It is also necessary to assess the implementation of any program to determine its viability and sustainability. Elements such as pay, recruitment, employee retention, application and eligibility requirements among other factors are essential to success and access.

Final Thoughts
Ideas are all fine and well but if a candidate is not able to get elected these ideas will not be heard. I am a candidate with a strong field plan, modified and fluid in the wake of Covid-19, with a clear and identified vote goal and fundraising plan. I am proactive in all things I do and that includes campaigning, fundraising and learning about the issues that are facing Missourians every single day. Listening is one of my most used tools in my tool bag and it is the way in which we learn and from which we can create positive change. I care about the job of representing all Missourians and not about advancing my personal agenda. Further, there is a reality of a veto-proof majority in our State house and so any democrat elected into the current House has to understand the environment into which he/she is elected and have a strong ability to swim strongly against a current, knowing how not to fight the waters but conserve strength, listen to the current and slowly and steadily progress forward. Thank you for the opportunity to share my thoughts on these important issues.

Respectfully submitted,

Rhonda Dolan
Candidate for Missouri House District 31
www.dolanformissouri.com
816-607-1232
Rhonda@DolanforMissouri.com
PO Box 755
Missouri Disability Voter Coalition

Blue Springs, MO 64014
Position: State Representative – District 34  
Name: Rick Roeber  
Party: Republican  

1. I helped take care of a quadaplegic for several years. I am a trained chaplain. Masters in Chaplaincy.  
2. Social distancing for the vulnerable. More testing for those w/disabilities.  
3. Unknown at this time. It may or may not diminish services for those most needy.  
4. Gov’t subsidized housing must have accessibility to those w/ disabilities.  
5. Work w/ accredited schools to offer better fast-track training to provide more qualified individuals.  
6. Ensure state funding is adequate and appropriate to provide transportation to all that need it.  
7. Incentivize employers to hire more disabled workers w/ tax breaks  
8. With additional budget cuts because of Medicaid expansion, the legislature will need to get creative on funding.  
9. I will advocate for you. As someone who has cared for individuals w/ disabilities, I will do all I can to ensure full franchisement for you to make a better Missouri.
Position: State Representative – District 35
Name: Keri Ingle
Party: Democratic

Background- I have a BA in Criminal Justice, and a Masters degree in Social Work. I am a Licensed Master Social Worker in Missouri and Kansas. I have worked with individuals with disabilities through my work at the Children's Division, DeLaSalle High School, Truman Behavioral Health, and KU Health Systems. I am currently the State Representative for House District 35, and the Minority Whip for the Democratic Caucus.

Covid-19 and Voting Access- I am very concerned about protecting all citizens and their right to safely vote- particularly those with high risk conditions that make them more susceptible to exposure. I support mail in voting for all, even past this pandemic. I also support automatic voter registration and same day registration.

Medicaid Expansion- I fully support expansion and believe it will assist funding clinics and hospitals; however, it doesn't address the issue of low reimbursement rates- particularly for personal care providers. I fully support investing in reimbursement rates that provide dignity and stability to providers and their consumers- which results in more independence.

Housing- I would support programs and funding to increase access to housing that is accessible to all Missourians- particularly those with mobility impairments. Incentives to remodel homes to make them accessible is a great start.

Direct Support for Community Living- I think increasing pay and/or forgiving student loan debt are obvious ways to increase DSPs. This goes back to Medicaid reimbursement rates, as well as my concern that with increasing minimum wage amounts there will be a decrease in DSPs. I think the legislature must increase the reimbursement rates in order to promote the safety and independence of people with disabilities.

Transportation- Public and para-transit transportation resources are incredibly underfunded. For both economic growth and the health of Missourians, we must fund public transportation.

Employment- I support shelter programs, as well as day programs that connect individuals with disabilities with jobs in their communities- and provide continued support once employed. I would love to see growth in these programs and to see these programs in all regions of the state.

Waiver Programs- This goes back to funding. I fully support prioritizing funding for waiver supported programs.

Final Thoughts- I will always put the needs of vulnerable communities at the forefront of my work and advocacy.
Thank you for asking these important questions, organizing to advocate for our disabled family and friends!

~ The concerns of disabled family members and friends have influenced my entire life. My next older sister was intellectually disabled. Her mental health issues impacted our childhood, growing up in south St. Louis. Eventually she was helped immensely by a Christian ministry who trained her and helped her get licensed as a hair stylist. Tragically, though, she died too young at 55 of an asthma attack.

~ In high school I met friends who were deaf, and learned enough sign language to communicate a bit with them, experiencing some of the concerns of the deaf community.

~ A wonderful niece whose first-born child had spina bifida has learned many vital lessons for our entire family, as they’ve made the most of many difficulties.

~ In the past 30 years I have also personally learned the difficulties of family members with mental health issues, specifically bi-polar disorder, and for the past 4 years have been caring for my 30 year old daughter who struggles with almost continuous migraines.

~ The needs of the disabled, and the needs of the community in helping them, are issues I hope to address in the Missouri legislature.

Background adapted from my website:
~ Nola Wood has served our community in business and as a volunteer over the years, helping others as a distributor for a health technology company, and as an independent insurance broker, serving families and small businesses with health and life insurance.

Nola raised and home schooled her three children, supporting them after divorce when the children were 9, 11, & 13. She is an alumna of the With Hope in Mind classes for caregivers and family members of the mentally ill.

Nola has also served the community on the boards of Friends of Missouri Town, her homes association, the Greater KC Association of Health Underwriters, and the Dramatic Truth School of the Arts.

Nola is working hard now to restore common sense values to our representation in the Missouri legislature. If elected, she will work tirelessly to roll back over-regulation, cut waste, and pass needed reforms to restore vital economic opportunities for our people.

Now on to the rest of the questions in your candidate survey:
~ The problem of preventing health concerns from impacting voter participation was solved by Gov. Parson signing SB631, allowing anyone concerned about this to vote by mail in Aug. & Nov. this year.

~ As a health insurance professional I am opposed to expanding Medicaid in Missouri, specifically because it would get in the way of access for the disabled, exactly the community for which Medicaid was created. Medicaid expansion sounded like a good idea, but actually would create longer waits and less access to care for the disabled, putting healthy people in line ahead of them, competing for a limited number of caregivers and facilities. We need to move in the opposite direction, of getting big government out of the way of people's healthcare, keeping the Medicaid system for those who truly need it, for whom it was designed.
The problem of accessible housing comes home to me, as my own niece struggled with getting up the stairs to her room until friends from her church bought a lift that wonderfully improved her access. Having been in the real estate business in years past, I know how hard it is to guess who will want to buy a particular home, and how to best prepare it for them. I have seen that many times well-intentioned government regulations may actually prove to be counter-productive, increasing housing costs with cookie-cutter requirements that are not helpful in the end.

I'm not familiar with answers to increase the number of support professionals to provide more community living options for the disabled, but I'm glad to study the issues. The families I know who care for family members at home, as I do, have been able to juggle work from home options with providing for the needs of our loved ones. Sadly, the well-intentioned growth of big government has made that difficult for many, simply due to increasing expenses of some resources that should be questioned in the big picture. I believe we need to take a serious look at initiatives that sound good, yet raise the cost of living, making it increasingly difficult for families to do the obvious, of caring for our own loved ones in need.

The problem of accessible public transportation is one I hope we can work to address in ways that are truly helpful. My niece who uses a wheelchair has a lot of trouble navigating the wheelchair ramps at curbs on sidewalks because of the bumps, which we're told are installed to help the blind. There are no blind people in her neighborhood, but the bumps installed for their benefit prevent her from navigating the sidewalk by her own home in her wheelchair. It seems to be a glaring example of cookie-cutter government regulations which sometimes become counter-productive in practice.

The problem of under-employment of the disabled could get a big boost if we could push back against the mandates of the past for employer-provided health insurance. The "good idea" in the ‘30s, under FDR, of offering healthcare as an employee benefit has had numerous problems. A huge obstacle is that people with health issues are much less likely to get hired, because the employer must pay a higher cost to cover that person in a group policy. It drives up the costs for the entire group. Many businesses and organizations simply can’t afford the higher costs. This is one of many reasons why reforms should be passed making it more economically feasible for individuals to simply get and keep their own health insurance, preventing this issue from being an obstacle to employment. As federal government is being encouraged to push health insurance regulation back to the states, this is an area where I, as a health insurance professional, can particularly be helpful to the disabled community in our state. I am very hopeful that we will soon be working on real-life practical solutions in this vital area.

I am not familiar with the problems with the 1915(c) waivers, but will be glad to study this issue.

Voters with disabilities, and those who love them, can be sure I will approach the concerns of our disabled neighbors with the care and concern of a mom, friend, and aunt. I weep for our neighbors in need, and want to help find truly practical long-term solutions. I want to assure you that I bring a wide range of experience in health insurance, real estate, and volunteering, to serve our friends who need us to get government out of the way, to find real-world solutions.

As a member of the majority party in the legislature, with experience working with deliberative processes, I will also have more opportunity to make a difference for our disabled friends.

Please contact me with your questions, at Nola.Wood@sbcglobal.net or call me at 816.761.9828 on my landline, which rings over to my cell when I'm out, 816.820.3413 cell, & for texting.

Missouri Disability Voter Coalition

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Position: State Representative – District 36  
Name: Mark A. Sharp  
Party: Democratic  

**Background**  
What training, experience, and characteristics qualify you for this position? Do you have any personal experience with a disability or an individual with a disability?  

I am the current Missouri State Representative from the 36th District after winning a special election in November 2019 and being sworn in to office in January 2020. I have a Bachelor’s degree in business marketing and later got my teaching certification. I have been a classroom teacher and coach for the past several years. I have personally known many students with disabilities during my teaching career and am firmly committed to assuring equal opportunities for everyone.  

**COVID-19 and Voting Access**  
Many people with disabilities are high risk for COVID-19 and are concerned about potential exposure to the disease when voting. What, if any, steps would you take to address this problem?  

I voted for Senate Bill 631 which the governor recently signed into law allowing everyone 65 and older and all persons with underlying health conditions that make them particularly vulnerable to contracting COVID-19 to vote by absentee ballot in the August and November 2020 elections without having to get their signatures notarized. This legislation also allows all voters to request mail-in ballots, but their signatures must be notarized. Unfortunately this law expires at the end of 2020.  

**Medicaid Expansion**  
How do you see Medicaid Expansion affecting the state of Missouri?  

It is way past time that Missouri join the 36 other states that have expanded Medicaid. This issue was put on the August 4 ballot by initiative petition which I signed. It will expand Missouri’s Medicaid eligibility threshold to 138 percent of the federal poverty level with the federal government paying 90 percent of the cost of expansion. This would extend eligibility for Medicaid coverage to approximately 230,000 Missourians who currently have no health insurance. I am vigorously campaigning for its passage.  

**Housing**  
According to HUD, less than 5% of homes are accessible to individuals with mobility impairments. Affordable accessible housing is a concern for many Missourians with disabilities. What, if any, steps would you take to address this problem?  

The most effective thing Missouri can do to expand affordable accessible housing is to reinstate the low income housing tax credit program which disgraced former Governor Eric Greitens unwisely cancelled. I strongly support reinstating this urgently needed program.  

**Direct Support for Community Living**  
There is a shortage of direct support professionals (personal attendants and other caregivers), to help people with disabilities live independently in the community. What, if any, steps would you take to address this problem?  

Missouri’s public community colleges should be the prime source of training for direct support professionals, but they have been chronically underfunded by the Missouri General Assembly, and this fiscal year the governor has worsened the situation by withholding funds the General Assembly appropriated for community colleges due to the downturn in state revenue caused by the coronavirus pandemic. I will continue to advocate for adequate funding for our community
colleges and dialogue with their leaders, particularly in the Kansas City area where I am best connected, on the urgent need for such training programs.

**Transportation**
In many areas across Missouri, there are a lack of public/para-transit transportation resources for seniors and individuals with disabilities. What, if any, steps would you take to address this problem?

Missouri lags behind almost all states in funding public and para transit. If I am reelected I intend to again seek appointment to the powerful House Budget Committee or the Appropriations Subcommittee for Public Safety, Corrections, Transportation and Revenue which will allow me to have more influence in advocating for adequate funding for public and para transit.

**Employment**
The rate of unemployment or underemployment is much higher for individuals with disabilities than those without a disability. According to the American Community Survey, as of 2017, only 34% of all working-age people with disabilities in Missouri were employed, and 25% of people with a cognitive or intellectual disability were employed. What, if any, steps would you take to address this disparity?

As a member of the House Workforce Development Committee, I was pleased we were able to pass legislation this session to require Missouri’s professional licensing boards to grant licenses to all persons licensed in other states whose licenses are in good standing in their home states which will at least expand employment opportunities to some people. In my Weekly Capitol Report I frequently publicize the Missouri Department of Economic Development’s Missouri One Start website [https://missourionestart.com/now-hiring](https://missourionestart.com/now-hiring) which connects workers to companies currently hiring and allows them to fill out applications online. I welcome the opportunity to dialogue with advocacy organizations to expand employment opportunities for persons with physical or cognitive disabilities.

**Waiver Programs**
There are 11 1915(c) waivers in Missouri. Recently, many individuals have experienced waitlists and the effects of limited funding for waiver supported programs. What, if any, steps would you take to address this problem?

The 11 1915(c) waiver programs offered through the Missouri Department of Health & Senior Services and the Department of Mental Health that provide Medicaid funding for home and community based services to individuals who otherwise would meet the eligibility requirements for Medicaid-funded institutional care should be better funded if Medicaid expansion passes in the August 4 election. As mentioned earlier, I intend to try again to get appointed to the House Budget Committee so I can play a larger role in securing adequate funding for these programs which will be extremely important if the current governor who is an opponent of Medicaid expansion is reelected.

**Final Thoughts**
Is there anything else you would like to say to voters with disabilities?

Having personally faced blatant employment discrimination as a biracial African-American, I am personally committed to assuring fair treatment for ALL residents of our country in all aspects of life – employment, public accommodations, etc.
Position: State Representative – District 44  
Name: Jacque Sample  
Party: Democrat

Background

What training, experience, and characteristics qualify you for this position? Do you have any personal experience with a disability or an individual with a disability?

I have been an occupational therapist for 21 years so have lots of experience with persons with disabilities, their families, and the systems they must navigate. I also have a son with autism. My professional work and personal experience has directly led me to wanting to be a Representative so that I can write policy that is desperately needed to empower persons to independently participate in their life. Too many times we have had policy makers in place who have not worked or lived the “front lines” of life with a disability. It is time to change that.

COVID-19 and Voting Access

Many people with disabilities are high risk for COVID-19 and are concerned about potential exposure to the disease when voting. What, if any, steps would you take to address this problem?

I support absentee voting, voting by mail, and/or early voting. This year, this would mean calling on the Governor to allow that. In November, it will mean electing new leadership and creating policy that makes voting accessibility a non-issue in future years.

Medicaid Expansion

How do you see Medicaid Expansion affecting the state of Missouri?

I sincerely hope Medicaid Expansion will result in the re-opening of smaller, rural hospitals to make sure people in all areas of our state have access to healthcare. I hope that the expansion will cover more persons and that we will not have a repeat of this year’s Medicaid “dump” where thousands lost coverage without notice. In addition, I hope the expansion allows a closer drill down of specific Medicaid policies that impact how, when, and who provides services. Practitioners, such as occupational therapists, should have input on these policies.

Housing

According to HUD, less than 5% of homes are accessible to individuals with mobility impairments. Affordable accessible housing is a concern for many Missourians with disabilities. What, if any, steps would you take to address this problem?

I think one way to address accessible housing in a proactive manner is to impact building code development. In talking with constituent leaders, the importance of local control has been emphasized. So, building codes should still be under local control, but I think the state could provide a very specific guideline and potential enforcement for basic accessibility codes for all new buildings (for example: at least two accessible entries/exits; at least one fully accessible bathroom; wider doorways; open plan design; turning radius requirements in hallways and on sidewalks, etc.). To retroactively address accessibility requirements, I think it would be beneficial for all insurance providers to cover the cost of home accessibility evaluations at a minimum and assist with or provide rewards (i.e., rate reduction or incentives) for home modification to increase accessibility. This would not only benefit those with mobility issues, but also increase the likelihood that all person(s) can remain in their homes for as long as possible as they age.

Direct Support for Community Living
There is a shortage of direct support professionals (personal attendants and other caregivers), to help people with disabilities live independently in the community. What, if any, steps would you take to address this problem?

I think that we have an opportunity to be very creative in solving this problem. We can pull from already established health programs and schools and offer not just pay, but college credit, or a scholarship based on hours worked as a care attendant. The less creative, but very important “easier” solution is to increase the pay offered and/or minimum wage rates to attract additional care attendants.

Transportation

In many areas across Missouri, there are a lack of public/para-transit transportation resources for seniors and individuals with disabilities. What, if any, steps would you take to address this problem?

Again, I think many of our barriers can be addressed by organizing and collaborating with programs already in place. It is a matter of developing a system that can be easily monitored and implemented. For example, tracking all vehicles in Missouri licensed as accessible vehicles and creating a regional “Uber” type of system. This would obviously require lots of development, but I think it is feasible. Perhaps more presently, working with city councils to discuss the need for accessible transportation when they are making decisions regarding infrastructure and purchasing of new equipment for their city. I honestly think that many leaders never consider the need for a wheelchair accessible police car or ambulance, etc., let alone a taxi. It might be beneficial for cities to look to the private sector that are travel destinations for those who have disabilities. For example, I am a huge Walt Disney World fan. They go to great lengths to ensure all guests can fully access all parts of the parks, attractions, etc. By reviewing their plans, cities do not have to reinvent the wheel when it comes to being accessible (although with a slightly lower budget).

Employment

The rate of unemployment or underemployment is much higher for individuals with disabilities than those without a disability. According to the American Community Survey, as of 2017, only 34% of all working-age people with disabilities in Missouri were employed, and 25% of people with a cognitive or intellectual disability were employed. What, if any, steps would you take to address this disparity?

Though autism specific, this exact issue was a large portion of my doctoral capstone. First, I believe public schools need to adjust how they are thinking about and preparing all students for graduation and life after school. This involves thorough evaluation of their strengths and limitations and successfully matching them to a career tract that uses their strengths, is of interest, and pays a living wage. Second, if we can successfully address the public transportation issue, some of the employment problems may be rectified, as the person can now actually get to their workplace. Third, if there is only one positive thing that comes out of the COVID-19 experience, I think it has shown that many, many jobs can be completed successfully and efficiently online. That will potentially make more jobs available as remote positions opening up the job market for persons with disabilities. And finally, while not directly answering this particular question but related, healthcare should not be tied to employment.

Waiver Programs

There are 11 1915(c) waivers in Missouri. Recently, many individuals have experienced waitlists and the effects of limited funding for waiver supported programs. What, if any, steps would you take to address this problem?

I think it is important to clearly determine the “why” behind the delays and the waitlists. I personally have not looked into the reasons, but I am sure others have and know. Again, it will take a direct approach at attacking the “why” and making the processes more efficient. And it will not be a single ask. It will be a
Position: State Representative – District 47  
Name: Charles (Chuck) Basye  
Party: Republican  

**Background**  
I have been a state representative since my election in November 2014. I do not have a disability, nor do any of my immediate family members. My wife’s oldest brother, Robert, is legally blind. I have witnessed what he has been through in his life since we first met in 1981. He has inspired me to try to advocate for persons with disabilities.

**COVID-19 and Voting Access**  
The legislature passed Senate Bill 631, which I supported, that will allow no excuse absentee voting plus mail-in ballots if certain protocols are followed. I feel this is a step in the right direction for voters that provides easier access to voting, especially for citizens in high-risk categories concerning the Coronavirus.

**Medicaid Expansion**  
The voters of Missouri will decide on August 4, 2020 whether Medicaid is expanded in the state. I have never supported expansion, however, I believe the solution would be to reform the Medicaid program. With the Constitutional requirement for a balanced budget, expanding the Medicaid roles without reforms will harm the funding of education which would be harmful to our state in many ways.

I do not know of any person wanting to keep health care opportunities from any citizen.

**Housing, Direct Support for Community Living, Transportation & Employment**  
Like most state funded programs, these areas of concern will require more attention and action from the Missouri General Assembly. Even in times of limits on budget resources, I feel we should try very hard to provide more funding for these programs. I pledge to work with all groups that advocate for citizens with disabilities to provide more resources for these areas of need.

**Employment**  
This is an area where we as a society could and should do better. I would be willing to work with any advocacy groups such as Paraquad, Missouri Association of Rehabilitation Facilities, Missouri Developmental Disabilities Council, Missouri Disability Empowerment and others to champion legislation to facilitate better employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities.

**Waiver Programs**  
As previously mentioned, appropriate funding is critical for waiver programs and I will make an effort to advocate for more funding in the future. I will ask interested parties for guidance on how to achieve more funding and work my legislative colleagues, especially on the budget and appropriation committees.

**Final Thoughts**  
In 2019 Senate Bill 514 was signed into law by Governor Mike Parson that contained language from HB399 that I sponsored. That legislation expands therapy coverage for children with developmental disabilities outside of the autism spectrum by requiring health insurance companies to fund those critical therapies. During the 2020 legislative session, I sponsored HB1540, which would allow parents and/or guardians with a special needs child to audio record Individual Education Program (IEP) meetings with school officials. This legislation was proceeding well but unfortunately failed to pass due to losing 6 weeks of the legislative session due to COVID-19.
Position: State Representative – District 47  
Name: Adrian Plank  
Party: Democratic

**Background**

As a union carpenter, I've had the privilege to work alongside folks with disabilities several times. In one case, an extraordinary young man named Patrick, worked with me on an extensive project to outfit offices with various furnishings. Patrick was driven. Even though he had, as a 10-month-old, survived a severe seizure that caused him to lose many motor functions throughout his life. Despite these challenges, Patrick could handle any task assigned to him, and he would perform with an efficiency that put some of our other guys to shame. Nothing slowed him down.

As the 47th District’s representative, I will have Patrick in mind when it comes to legislation that empowers folks with disabilities. I know, from experiences as much as from the data, that enabling people of all walks of life to be able to work and enjoy all the opportunities available in Missouri is the right thing to do.

**COVID-19 and Voting Access**

I am in favor of a general expansion of voting access, especially regarding voting by mail and "no-excuse absentee" voting. Every citizen should have the right to make their voice heard through their representatives, and voting is an essential part of making that right uninfringeable. For folks with disabilities, having to find and access their polling places can be an extra challenge on top of the many roadblocks that lots of voters already experience in getting their chance to cast their ballot.

Making mail-in ballots easier to access and use would serve that end not only now, during COVID-19, but in general as we work toward more equity in our communities. Beyond 2020 and COVID-19, establishing an election holiday and allocating funds to set up a wider range of transportation options on election day are also important steps that I will fight to take.

**Medicaid Expansion**

For years we have been fighting to expand Medicaid in Missouri. The data is on the side of expansion. Economically, it makes more sense to expand the program and utilize the Federal dollars that folks are already paying. Morally, it is imperative that we make some effort to provide greater quality and range of access in the healthcare that is available to Missouri citizens.

I will fight for the expansion of Medicaid in Missouri.

**Housing and Direct Support for Community Living**

This is a huge problem for lots of folks. Making a building into a home that is not only accessible, but comfortable, isn’t cheap, but that doesn’t mean it isn’t important. While many people take it for granted that they can count on having space, internal accessibility, and ease of movement in a place they are renting, this is not always so for folks with disabilities.

It is important that our legislature addresses the kinds of regulations we place on builders and renters that want government subsidies. If we are going to allocate funds for builders and renters through from the public’s money, the least we can do is ask that they prepare spaces that are useful for the whole public.

**Transportation**

In much the same way that buildings which use public funds (whether or not they are in the private sector) should be held to higher standards with the disabled in mind, we should also be willing to use the money we allocate for public transportation to expand access for those who have disabilities.
Employment

Whether it’s from personal experience, or simply by looking at the data, there’s no reason for us to suppose that folks with disabilities don’t deserve the same employment opportunities as everyone else. Aside from the moral imperative that I think is present in ensuring that folks with disabilities get work opportunities, there is an economic imperative, especially going forward following COVID-19. We need as many folks in our community as possible with as many opportunities to work at their fingertips as possible.

Waiver Programs

As I understand it, the system used to process waivers is out of date and cumbersome. It’s time we invest in a better processing program and bring the technology up to date in order to streamline the application process and increase efficiency. Those who overcome the challenge of disability to not need extra challenges place in their way by outdated systems.

Final Thoughts

I want to be a part of solving these problems. For voters with disabilities, I am listening, and I’m eager to add my voice to theirs in Jeff City.
Position: State Representative – District 50
Name: Kari L. Chesney
Party: Democratic

1. Background

a. My name is Kari Chesney, and I am running to represent Missouri’s 50th House District. As a veterinarian and researcher, I plan to bring an evidence-based, data-driven approach to policy in Jefferson City. As a veterinarian, I have ample experience in agriculture and healthcare – working with animals of all sizes and all scenarios (clinic, farm, etc.). My veterinary training also includes disaster preparedness and public health – two areas that are sorely missing from our current legislature. I am also a life-long student of the public education system and a strong ally of fully funded public education for all students regardless of their zip code. I grew up in a union household, watching my mother found the support staff union at her elementary school. I understand how vital unionization is to the working class and will fight for workers’ rights if elected. I have limited, but important, experience with disability policy. As a member of the Public Transit Commission in Columbia, MO in 2017, I assisted in recommending policies for the Columbia transit system that benefitted our communities with disabilities, including opposing increases in cost of paratransit. I hope, as an elected official, I can learn even more from disability advocates and help develop strong, inclusive policies to help move Missouri forward for all of us.

2. COVID-19 & Voting Access

a. I was very pleased that Governor Parson signed the temporary bill to allow non-notarized absentee voting for illness/COVID-related purposes for the 2020 elections. However, this temporary allowance does not go far enough to address voter access in our state. Missouri is one of the only states that still requires an excuse for absentee voting and is one of ten states that requires a notarized absentee ballot (except for the 2020 elections only in the instance of illness). In my opinion, there is no reason why the state should need to know why you choose to vote absentee. Some individuals may feel uncomfortable telling the government why they are voting absentee, which could cause some people to just not vote. My hope would be that Missouri moves to offering absentee voting to anyone without an excuse needed. I would also like to see Missouri move away from the notarized absentee ballot. This creates obstacles for our communities with disabilities, those without personal transit, and those that may not understand the notary process. With study after study proving that wide-spread voter fraud does not exist, there is no reason for many of the roadblocks we currently have to voting in Missouri. In the best-case scenario, Missouri would implement a permanent absentee ballot list. This would be helpful particularly to people with disabilities by decreasing the number of roadblocks each election. If elected, I would be open to writing such legislation or co-sponsoring with other members of the legislature.

3. Medicaid Expansion

a. Studies from states with similar census data to Missouri have shown time and time again that Medicaid expansion has increased job numbers, decreased emergency health visits, and greatly benefitted the health of their communities. In my opinion, there is absolutely no reason why Missouri should not expand Medicaid. We already pay federal taxes into the pot of money that is set aside for Medicaid expansion – we just don’t receive that money back to our state. Several rural hospitals and clinics in our state have closed recently and directly cited lack of funding due to a refusal to expand Medicaid as one of the main reasons their operations were unsustainable. These closures put lives at risk by forcing our rural citizens to travel long distances to get healthcare. This can be life-threatening in emergency situations. In addition, expansion of Medicaid would increase the number of individuals that qualify for the service – a move that is sorely needed in our state given how strict the current qualifications are, especially for single adults (1/4 federal poverty line). We need Medicaid expansion for our state and our communities, and I am proud of the work our campaign did over last summer and fall to get signatures on the petition to bring Medicaid expansion to the 2020 ballot.
4. Housing

a. Unfortunately, there are far too few rental properties that meet needs and requirements of our communities with disabilities. I would push to require implementation of basic features for housing availability for persons with disabilities in all new builds and renovation plans for rental properties, including step-free entryways and single-floor plan options, wide-width doors and hallways, specialized door handles, handrails, and accessible light switches and outlets. These few basic features are simple, but sorely lacking from most rental properties. I would also love to work with builders and architects to find ways to implement additional features in all rental properties, such as elevators and accessible kitchens and bathrooms. I would also love to be a contact for persons with disabilities to find funding for renovating housing or renting. Navigating the different grant programs and available funds can be difficult, and I will make assisting those in my district and beyond a priority when it comes to housing.

5. Direct Support for Community Living

a. Unfortunately, our current administration has decided that caregivers (attendants, nurses, daycare providers, etc.) are not vital enough to our communities to merit living wages and benefits. That is completely unacceptable and has caused a lack of support professionals. Current Medicaid provider rates perpetuate poverty-level wages. Greater state (and federal) investment could lead to higher wages. For example, rate setting is vastly outdated and does not reflect the realities of the support professional field. Many support professionals are highly trained, which means they can find career options in many other healthcare-related fields. Low SP wages results in a loss of these vital individuals to other areas of healthcare. Another way that the state could support these providers is through investigation of and investment in new technologies that could make the job more efficient and streamlined. Call services, virtual meet-ups, support professional access networks could all be useful to the group. Allowing support professionals to network could lead to potential options for bargaining and unionization – allowing better wages and benefits. I would be a strong advocate for the support professional communities and would love to address their concerns and solutions together if elected.

6. Transportation

a. Public transit in Missouri is abysmal for all who require the service – and even more so for those individuals with disabilities. Our state has one of the lowest per-person rates for funding public transit, at less than $0.25 per person. Yet, we have the sixth-largest public transit system in the country (mostly thanks to local taxes and support of larger city transit systems). Compare that to Illinois, which spends over $20 per person on public transit, and you can starkly see that we have a big problem in Missouri. Missouri Disability Voter Coalition 2020 State Candidate Survey Kari Chesney, Candidate MO-50 Our communities with disabilities are one of the main customers of public transit, and accessibility needs to be addressed. As a member of the City of Columbia Public Transit Commission in 2017, we worked on addressing some of these concerns. However, our state just does not support public transit as it should. Personally, I would like to see Missouri state collecting sales tax from online purchases to split between education and transportation/infrastructure – which could drastically increase the funding for public transit in our state. I am definitely open to meeting with leaders and individuals invested in disability issues to address these issues and brainstorm additional options.

7. Employment

a. Our federal government currently provides a free, nationwide service that educates employers about strategies for recruiting, hiring, retaining, and advancing people with disabilities called The Employer Assistance and Resource Network on Disability Inclusion (EARN). I would like to see a similar system implemented in Missouri that specializes in small business opportunities for these individuals. While big corporations, like Walmart and McDonalds, have strong programs for persons with disabilities, I would like to see more of our small ‘mom and pop’ shops able to support employment for these individuals. These local businesses tend to be more engrained in the community and better able to train and nurture
Position: State Representative – District 56  
Name: Michael Davis  
Party: Republican

**Background:**  
As an educator, I have worked with children with disabilities

**COVID-19 and Voting Access:**  
Social distances and absentee voting options

**Medicaid Expansion:**  
Increasing wait times for those who truly need Medicaid, e.g. the disabled.

**Housing:**  
Government should encourage accessible homes

**Direct Support for Community Living:**  
Schools should provide education in direct support professions

**Transportation:**  
Public transport should be disable friendly

**Employment:**  
The government should encourage the hiring in win-win scenarios

**Waiver Program:**  
Medicaid should only be provided for the truly needy, such as the disabled.

**Final Thoughts:**  
I oppose Medicaid expansion, which would add able-bodied working adults to the program and increase wait times for the disabled.
Background
I have worked with individuals with disabilities in several capacities. My adopted father runs a summer camp where there are camps designed for people with specific disabilities. I have worked camps that are designed for individuals with individual needs and understand their need to be heard and listened to and not treated as simply their disability.

COVID-19 & Voter Access
The Covid-19 pandemic has been handled so poorly by the Republican Governor and Republican Supermajorities in both the House and Senate that it is virtually impossible to find something that was handled or addressed correctly. The answer is simple we must expand vote by mail and remove the notary requirement. This is truly the safest and most logical step to take to ensure the safety of Missouri voters. There has been no guidance given to County Election commissions on social distancing or proper procedures which is causing polling locations to handle this disease seemingly on their own.

Medicaid Expansion
Expanding Medicaid is my top priority for my campaign and one of the reasons that I entered the race was to protect the decision of Missouri Voters once it passes. We have seen with the Republican led initiative to overturn over 1.4 million votes on Clean Missouri that they care nothing for the will of the voters. Medicaid Expansion will create over 100,000 jobs in Missouri, add 225,000 people to healthcare rolls, and allow billions of dollars already paid by Missouri taxpayers to come back into our state. Expanding Medicaid will drive the premiums of private insurance down and boost the economy as people will no longer have to worry about catastrophic medical debt and have more discretionary spending power.

Housing
I would work on and sponsor bills that would have make Missouri communities build and renovate housing to make them more accessible to Missourians with disabilities. I would work with local Habitat for Humanity organizations, property management companies, and local contractors to ensure that we can meet a threshold of accessible housing to insure the independence of Missourians with mobility impairments.

Direct Support & Community Living
I think this issue will be helped with Medicaid Expansion. The increased income to local facilities will allow them to hire more staff and increase pay to encourage more people to become direct support professionals. This would allow more independence for many Missourians with disabilities and allow them to be more active in the community and be a benefit to not only them but to the whole community.

Transportation
Lack of access to transportation is a common concern, especially in rural areas in Missouri. Once again, I think that the problem comes down to a lack of monetary resources in state and local budgets that can be resolved with the influx that Medicaid Expansion will bring to the state of Missouri. Montana is seeing an increase of $350 million to $400 million increase in state economy in the first year of Expanding Medicaid, with only a third of the jobs that is projected to be created in Missouri. This new money that will be introduced in our state will allow community and state organizations to provide better transportation options to all Missourians, including seniors and individuals with disabilities.

Employment
This is simply a violation of the American with Disabilities Act and should not be tolerated. I would investigate the reasons why employers are not hiring individuals with disabilities and work with advocacy groups and community organizations to make sure that this is no longer allowed or ignored. Individuals with disabilities cannot be truly independent or reach their potential if employers refuse to allow them to
perform at their full capacity. Missouri's businesses and communities suffer when we do not see past a disability and use it to dictate the life or potential of an individual.

**Waiver Programs**
Expanding Medicaid will in my opinion fix some these issues. Individuals with disabilities who live in rural areas where hospitals are closing due to lack of funds can reopen and begin to serve the people of that community again. The new careers that will open in healthcare will help with wait times since there will be more medical professionals treating patients. The increased revenue to Missouri’s budget will help with funding issues.

**Final Thoughts**
I promise to listen and learn and use the knowledge that I gain from you to tirelessly work and advocate for you, and make sure your rights are protected and your voices are heard at the State Capitol.
Missouri Disability Voter Coalition

Position: State Representative – District 71
Name: LaDonna Appelbaum
Party: Democratic

Background

I am happy to say I finished my freshman term. It was an honor to sit on the Health and Mental Health committee and also the Insurance Policy committee. I plan to stay on both where I will hear issues relating to disability in both. I do not have a personal disability but I am a breast cancer survivor. During my journey I became close friends with a young lady who lost her entire hip and leg to cancer. She has been an inspiration to me and has given me some ideas for bills to sponsor and or co-sponsor that will help people with all kinds of disabilities. I have a BS in Sports Medicine and worked in healthcare for over 20 years.

Covid -19 and Voting Access

I believe we need a statewide mail in ballot. I proudly voted in favor of SB 631, which allows for mail-in voting and expands absentee voting during COVID. I will support further efforts to expand mail-in ballot access and no-excuse absentee voting in the future.

Medicaid Expansion

I am so happy that Medicaid Expansion is on the August Primary ballot. I have been fighting for Medicaid Expansion and Health Care for All since 2008. I believe that Medicaid expansion will not only help people who are uninsured or underinsured, but it will strengthen our rural communities across the state.

Housing

More than two decades after the passage of the ADA, housing is still not accessible for all who need it. Frankly, this is unacceptable. We should explore the possibility of establishing a statewide building code that is in line with the ADA.

Direct Support for Community living

As a state, we need to deepen our bench of qualified healthcare workers and focus on training people as direct support professionals. I am proud to serve a district with a naturally occurring retirement community (NORC) and it is clear that these residents strongly benefit from living in a community rather than in a nursing home. It is important that the state of Missouri emphasize the value in community living. With Medicaid expansion, we should be able to pay providers much better.

Transportation

The decrease in OATS service to folks with disabilities in the St. Louis area is detrimental. We should be doing everything we can as a state to ensure that everyone has the ability to travel where they need to go. We need more accessible routes and more people who are qualified to provide assistance to those who need it.

Employment

Everyone has the right to make a livable wage, whether or not they have a disability. I appreciate the value of sheltered workshops, but I believe there are other ways to incentivize businesses to hire people with disabilities that do not result in people with disabilities being paid below minimum wage.

Waiver Programs
Education Waivers: School-age children have limited time to receive a quality education. Everyone should have access to fair, quality education, regardless of their zip code, income, or disability status.

Final Thoughts for voters with disabilities

I have proudly spent the last two years serving all constituents of the 71st District. I am here for all of them. I listen to what their concerns are and I return phone calls and emails personally. Since I can’t knock on doors during this virus, it is really important for me to communicate virtually. Whenever it is safe to return to in-person work, I will gladly meet with anyone who requests it.
Position: State Representative – District 81
Name: Steve Butz
Party: Democratic

Background:
Currently, I am a primary care giver for my mom who is immobile due to complications of age. Directly responsible for care and communication with the home health care team.

Covid-19:
Doing EVERYTHING I can to inform folks how to vote either absentee or via mail in ballot. I would very much like to see this option expanded. It was/is a heavy lift for us to get this legislation finished this via SB 631. If it goes well, I am hopeful this will be expanded beyond the 2020 election cycle.

Medicaid Expansion:
Critical increase in health insurance coverage for Missourians. I have written extensively for/about this issue for the August ballot on my State Rep Facebook page and address it in every town hall format. In addition to good public policy and compassion, this is an issue that unites rural Missouri with more progressive urban areas.

Direct Support for Community Living:
I am familiar with this issue and it is at the core a matter of paying a just wage to the caregivers. Increasing the reimbursement rate in the state is the only concrete first step I can think of. In learning about caregivers for my mom I have discovered that Missouri does not license home healthcare workers and at a minimum a base level of skill and competency needs to be uniformly enforced.

Transportation:
By helping a wheelchair confined neighbor I discovered that the public transit option works fairly well.....at least in the City of St. Louis. A problem that needs immediate correction is the weight limitation on the lifts. The fully functioning chairs that allow for maximum mobility weigh hundreds of pounds and then of course the person’s weight in the chair. I have found this to be a huge impediment and these lifts need to be “modernized”.

Employment:
I hate to say, I do not know, but I do not know. I am more than willing to learn and my hunch is employers such as myself need to get past the fear of the unknown and take a chance on these individuals wanting an opportunity. (Sorry for the weak answer on this one.)

Waiver Programs:
In my first term in the Legislature I can assure there is a race to the bottom in terms of public/state funding for the common good. “If only we can lower taxes another % people and business leaders will come flooding into our state.” As a business owner-manager I reject this notion. There is a point where lack of public investment is detrimental to the citizens and in Missouri, we are there. The waiver supported program is just one more example and I can assure you when a vulnerable community is at risk AND they are relatively few in numbers and are not especially well connected the results will speak for themselves. I would like to think that in my freshman term I have been known as a voice for these types of issues and hope to build on that in my second term.

Final thoughts:
I am sensitive to the challenges that voters with disabilities face and I have tried to become as educated and involved as quickly as possible. I will continue to do so and only ask that you keep me informed, challenged and accountable.
Position: State Representative – District 82
Name: Donna M.C. Baringer
Party: Democratic

Background:
My 66 years of life qualify me for this position. Yes, I know several people who are disabled.

COVID-19 and Voting Access:
Observing all C.D.C guidelines would help to address this problem.

Direct Support for Community Living:
We should encourage high school students and retired people to volunteer to help.

Transportation:
Houses of worship should participate to help address this problem.

Employment:
Lower taxes on business owners would encourage more jobs for those with disabilities.

Waiver Programs:
I do not have enough knowledge about the waivers to answer this question.

Final Thoughts:
I care about your problem. I also care about people who are being aborted just because they will be born handicapped. We must protect and help all human beings.
Position: State Representative – District 82
Name: Donna M.C. Baringer
Party: Democratic

**Background**

What training, experience, and characteristics qualify you for this position?

_Began working in community development for a non-profit within the city of St. Louis in 1999. Served as Alderman of the 16th ward for City of St. Louis from 2003-2016. Currently in my 4th year as the 82nd district State Representative._

Do you have any personal experience with a disability or an individual with a disability?

_My nephew and brother in law were both in a wheelchair as well as both parents of my sons’ friend who are also neighbors are both deaf._

**COVID-19 and Voting Access**

Many people with disabilities are high risk for COVID-19 and are concerned about potential exposure to the disease when voting. What, if any, steps would you take to address this problem?

_I have made my constituents aware of voting alternatives such as drive up absentee at the polls or at the city board of elections._

**Medicaid Expansion**

How do you see Medicaid Expansion affecting the state of Missouri?

_I was in favor of Medicaid expansion and wrote at length on the need for to my engaged district that voted in favor at the polls in August._

**Housing**

According to HUD, less than 5% of homes are accessible to individuals with mobility impairments.\(^1\) Affordable accessible housing is a concern for many Missourians with disabilities. What, if any, steps would you take to address this problem?

_I have always promoted universal design of housing especially around metro link stations and I was a Civil Rights Enforcement Agency (CREA) commissioner for the city of St. Louis._

**Direct Support for Community Living**

There is a shortage of direct support professionals (personal attendants and other caregivers), to help people with disabilities live independently in the community. What, if any, steps would you take to address this problem?

_Supported the changes that now allow family members to be paid as caregivers for their time._

**Transportation**
In many areas across Missouri, there are a lack of public/para-transit transportation resources for seniors and individuals with disabilities. What, if any, steps would you take to address this problem?

*Would support solutions to this issue, however federal funding is where I would look first.*

**Employment**
The rate of unemployment or underemployment is much higher for individuals with disabilities than those without a disability. According to the American Community Survey, as of 2017, only 34% of all working-age people with disabilities in Missouri were employed, and 25% of people with a cognitive or intellectual disability were employed. What, if any, steps would you take to address this disparity?

*Work to find why these numbers are as they are and seek a solution*

**Waiver Programs**
There are 11 1915(c) waivers in Missouri. Recently, many individuals have experienced waitlists and the effects of limited funding for waiver supported programs. What, if any, steps would you take to address this problem?

*Look for a solution as to why there is a wait list for the waivers improve from there.*

**Final Thoughts**
Is there anything else you would like to say to voters with disabilities?

*I have had personal experience beginning in 1990 on the difficulties those with disabilities had maneuvering about the city of St. Louis. As an elected official I worked diligently to make St. Louis more accessible. As a CREA commissioner I worked with small businesses to address how to make their buildings handicap accessible.*
Position: State Representative – District 83  
Name: Jo Doll  
Party: Democratic

**Background**  
What training, experience, and characteristics qualify you for this position? Do you have any personal experience with a disability or an individual with disability?

I’m a licensed physical therapist with over 25 years of healthcare experience in the St. Louis area. As a physical therapist, I’ve worked with countless individuals with disabilities. I also spent multiple summers in college working at a group home for developmental disabilities, in addition to working at an after school program for children with disabilities through my local YMCA.

I’ve also served on the Webster Groves School Board since 2017, and was just named Vice-President of the School Board this past month. Creating an inclusive education system will be a top priority of mine in Jefferson City, and I will support HB 1568 and HB 1569 to regulate and limit the use of seclusion and restraint in schools across the state of Missouri.

**COVID-19 and Voting Access**  
Many people with disabilities are high risk for COVID-19 and are concerned about potential exposure to the disease when voting. What, if any, steps would you take to address this problem?

First and foremost, we should be allowing everybody to vote by mail if they choose. Although our Governor and Republicans in the state legislature have only somewhat expanded access to voting by mail, I am hopeful the courts will see the danger that voting could pose to people’s health and lift the notary requirement for voting by mail. If the courts do not, we need to work with voting rights organizations to help identify notaries and build a grassroots effort to inform voters.

In the long term, we need to pass Wiley Price’s bill HB 1393, which would allow no-excuse absentee voting, and we should also join other states that have instituted measures for early voting.

**Housing**  
According to HUD, less than 5% of homes are accessible to individuals with mobility impairments. Affordable housing is a concern for many Missourians with disabilities. What, if any, steps would you take to address this problem?

Missouri has several tax credit programs for real estate developers, including credits that help facilitate the rehabilitation of historic buildings. We should focus on expanding tax credits for developments that build low-income housing. These housing developments would then be required to be ADA compliant and accessible for those with mobility impairments.

I would also hope to collaborate with federal legislators to put pressure on HUD to take on chronic nuisance ordinances that unfairly target people with disabilities by allowing landlords to evict tenants based on certain incidents, including 911 calls.

**Direct Support for Community Living**  
There is a shortage of direct support professionals (personal attendants and other caregivers), to help people with disabilities live independently in the community. What, if any, steps would you take to address this problem?

Whenever there is a shortage of workers in a field that is particularly important, governments can use the tax code to recruit new people into the industry. I think that enacting tax credits for direct support professionals could lead to more people pursuing this work.

**Transportation**
In many areas across Missouri, there are a lack of public/para-transit transportation resources for seniors and individuals with disabilities. What, if any, steps would you take to address this problem?

Missouri’s lack of investment in public/para-transit transportation resources reflects our state’s lack of investment in infrastructure overall. When voters denied the gas tax to fund infrastructure in 2018, it seemed Governor Parson gave up on his infrastructure plan. We must work with elected officials on both sides of the aisle to invest in our infrastructure, and as a state representative, I would ensure that para-transit systems would be allocated their fair share of funding.

**Waiver Programs**

Three are 11 1915(c) waivers in Missouri. Recently, many individuals have experienced waitlists and the effects of limited funding for waiver supported programs. What, if any, steps would you take to address this problem?

I would support increased funding for waiver supported programs. Building an inclusive state for individuals with disabilities requires allocating the appropriate resources. Our legislature is currently falling short in that regard.

**Final Thoughts**

Is there anything else you would like to say to voters with disabilities?

If people with disabilities were a formally recognized minority group, at 19% of the population, they would be the largest minority group in the United States. Yet too often folks with disabilities in my state get left out of the conversation. I promise to be a State Representative that always centers the experiences of people with disabilities, and protects their rights at all costs.
Position: State Representative – District 88  
Name: Tracy McCreery  
Party: Democratic

I am seeking re-election to my fourth and final term in the Missouri House, 88th district.

I have always sought to put people first, both professionally and as a community volunteer. At a young age my parents instilled in me the importance of volunteering. I’m inspired by Margaret Mead who said, “Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it’s the only thing that ever has.”

Much of my community service is focused on helping those who do not have a voice or powerful lobbyists. I have volunteered for Big Brothers Big Sisters of Eastern Missouri to help young people in our region and for Safe Connections (as board chair and committee chair) which helps those who are victims of relationship violence, sexual assault, and/or childhood sexual abuse.

I’m a founding member of the St. Louis Rescue & Restore Coalition which advocates for victims of human trafficking through public advocacy, training and outreach. I was also an early member of the St. Louis Million Mom March, joining in their fight against gun violence and the devastation it causes.

I’m on the board of the Consumers Council of Missouri and consider myself a consumer advocate.

I hold a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration (marketing major) from The Ohio State University.

**COVID-19 and Voting Access:** I support making voting by mail as easy as possible and did not support the bill that required a notary for many who will choose to vote by mail. During a pandemic we should be making voting easier which will reduce the risk of virus spread.

**Medicaid Expansion:** Reliable and affordable health insurance, via Medicaid Expansion, will allow more people to work, even if they have disabling health conditions. Expanding Medicaid will bring our tax dollars home and will not only provide affordable healthcare for Missourians who make under $18,000/year but will also create jobs and help keep rural hospitals open.

**Housing:** I support restarting the Low Income Housing Tax Credit program. I also support the adoption of universal design so that more housing options are available.

**Direct Support for Community Living:** I support increased funding for home and community based services and I would support a wage pass through so that any rate increase goes to the workers and not the company that employs them.

**Transportation:** I would support grants to local cab companies to buy accessible vehicles so they can offer transportation services at competitive rates. I think the state should help fund public transportation. We should continue to think outside of the box for example, provide Uber/Lyft vouchers.

**Employment:** As a state representative I will continue to support the Missouri Department of Vocational Rehabilitation and the County’s Productive Living Board. I admire the work that Paraquad does and would like to see their employment services available to more Missourians.

**Waiver Programs:** A waitlist is simply unacceptable! I have consistently voted for waiting list reduction funding and when Medicaid Expansion passes in August 2020 I look forward to getting the expansion implemented as quickly as possible.

I serve on the Missouri HealthNet Oversight Committee and will continue to ask the tough questions on why the state is not funding vital services for our most vulnerable.
**Final Thoughts:** I would be honored to have your vote. Please reach out if you have additional questions.
Missouri Disability Voter Coalition

Position: State Representative – District 89  
Name: Luke Barber  
Party: Democratic

Background
As a Self-Advocate with Autism. I am working two jobs, as a bagger at Schnucks and as a Self Determination instructor at Easterseals Midwest. I was studying Social work/Public Policy for my pursuit of the bachelor’s degree. I am Perseverant, Determined and Hardworking. I will listen to my Constituents and sponsor the stuff they care about. I am a Partners in Policy Graduate of 2018.

Luke was one of the founders of the Able-Disable Partnership at UMSL which is a student club focused on advocating for students with disabilities, especially for needed building modifications.

COVID-19 and Voting Access
Many people with disabilities are high risk for COVID-19 and are concerned about potential exposure to the disease when voting. What, if any, steps would you take to address this problem?

I would encourage those with disabilities to request an Absentee ballot on either the Confined to home due to disability or taking care of someone who is, which is No Notary required.

The other option; which is at risk for Covid 19, which the Notary requirement is being challenged in the courts. The decision is expected at the end of June / early July.

Voting by mail should be allowed to those who do not feel safe going to the polls during the Pandemic.

Any tactics used to limit voting is Voter Suppression and disrespects the political best practices of democracy.

Medicaid Expansion
Expanding Medicaid eligibility in Missouri to adults aged 19 - 65, whose income is 133% of the federal poverty level or below, which would effectively when adjusted for inflation would expand Medicaid to those with incomes at or below 138% of the federal poverty level under the Affordable Care Act; prohibiting any additional restrictions or requirements for the expanded population to qualify for Medicaid coverage than for other populations that qualify for Medicaid coverage; and requiring the state to seek maximum federal funding of Medicaid expansion. This will increase the asset and income limits. It will expand access to care and support as most direct support is funded by the government healthcare through the department of health and senior services. I was impacted by the Medicaid Purge. The issue turned out to be outdated computer systems that are so old that IT and Computer Science Professionals can’t service it. This computer system is Called Fortran. It did not cross reference the Automatic Eligibility lists of Food stamps, Medicaid, and Social Security / Supplemental Income. It is also important to note that those who receive Targeted case management are prohibited from using private insurance because it isn’t a billable treatment. (During the government shut down in February 2019, Luke received a letter from MO Healthnet saying he was kicked off Medicaid after his paperwork was reviewed. He was one of the hundreds of thousands of people kicked off the Medicaid program despite qualifying and submitting all needed documentation to prove so. Luke knew this had to be a mistake on their part and attempted to contact them and left a message stating he was unable to attend the scheduled review meeting due to a final exam he had for school. No one contacted Luke after he communicated his need to reschedule and he was without health insurance for three months and had to jump through hoops to obtain medication in the interim. Luke has autism and relies on his medication to assist in his day to day living. He worked with his psychiatrist and had to get a waiver for the 30-day supply rule for his medication and was able to get a 90-day supply of his medication that lasted him through his time of being uninsured. As Luke states, “I am so glad I was able to get my medication covered. If I would have had to get off my medication suddenly, it would have been a bad situation”. Luke was able to connect with Missouri Protection and Advocacy lawyers that took his case pro-bono and helped him prove his need for Medicaid. Though Luke was able to eventually reinstate his Medicaid, the process was grueling and time consuming. Luke works part time in addition to being a student. He states that the amount of time he put into searching for documents and meeting with lawyers to reinstate his Medicaid cut into his time for extracurricular school activities and job training opportunities. The documentation needed to reinstate his Medicaid included letters from his psychiatrist and caseworker, transcripts from previously attended school, letters from financial aid from his current school and more. Despite the hassle, Luke says, “I did everything in my power to dot the I’s and cross my T’s because without my health insurance, I have nothing. Without it I could not do the integrated Community based living I am currently achieving; I would have been forced to live in group

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Luke considers himself lucky to have found a resource to help him reinstate his Medicaid. He worries about the people that don’t know about organizations like Missouri Protection and Advocacy. Luke is studying Public Policy and Social Work and hopes to build a career in advocacy and policy so that he may advocate on behalf of people with disabilities.

https://missourihealthcareforall.org/stories/luke-st-louis

Housing
Focus on housing development that will be affordable that will be built with universal design. Many areas have high density of housing, but do not have the accessibility needed unless you install it yourself. We should make it easier to make home modifications to fit the needs of individuals with disabilities. Homes should be able to be lived in if you decide to have children or get married or other life changing events. With many findings that one-story homes are all they can get without grab bars, stairlifts, elevators, etc. This limits the ability to have a family if you choose to have a relationship.

Direct Support for Community Living
Raise the wages of direct support professionals to be above the cost of living. I would incentivize education and entry into the field. I would require that we screen students and job applicants’ motives to ensure they are entering for the right reason, and not the wrong ones; they shouldn’t boss or control nor engage in abuse or neglect. We need quality when we are trusting someone to support us.

Transportation
Public transit is inefficient and doesn’t go to all places. This creates unintentional barriers as people with disabilities decide to attend events and gatherings with their peers or when they are seeking employment. When I was originally seeking employment, I have had to turn down jobs simply for lack of transportation. I have seen many locations that provide services, such as the Arc or Easterseals and others lose the bus stops that were nearby. As Someone who uses public transportation as their only mode of transportation, I have experienced the struggle of navigating around town. If Elected, I would seek additional funding so Accessible Public transportation can expand and be more efficient and go to many of the places we go. I will also make it so no person with a disability should have to walk farther than they are able or walk on unsafe roads or the shoulder of the road. I would make sure the frequency is often enough so that the public / paratransit is no longer than two-three times what would be expected for cars in high traffic. For example, if a car can travel the distance in a half hour with heavy traffic like during rush hour; then a bus should be able to travel the same distance in an hour to hour and a half. This would be the expected time a route should take reasonably and should be what we expect and demand from public transit.

Employment
I would focus on ending Frictional Unemployment as unmatched to jobs that fit their skills. Many individuals with disabilities are underemployed. Many do not get jobs for fear of loss of support and benefits; however with special needs trusts and achieving a better life experience (ABLE) accounts individuals can save and plan for their financial future without the loss of what they need to be members of the community.

I would find ways where we could work 30 + hours per week if we so choose and make it so the services we need could be received through private insurance or universal health coverage. The income and asset limitations are set up to not be able to live off our wages. While those who work and make a living have a better quality of living and have higher self-esteem and a feeling of being productive.

Waiver Programs
As a person with a disability, I didn’t qualify for waivers. I think the eligibility criteria is too strict and the waitlist are too long, we need to increase funding for programs like this. I have the Traditional Medicaid only.

Final Thoughts
Many of the services and programs are underfunded. We need people who have used the services and programs in Government. " Those that know the system should be in charge of helping to operate it."
Position: State Representative – District 90
Name: Barbara Phifer
Party: Democratic

Thank you for your email this week. I intend to work on issues of accessibility to high quality education and medical care for all Missourians as the State Representative for District 90. I would love to talk with the people at Paraquad about the issues that are particularly important to this great organization. As a first time candidate, I am learning in a more in-depth way about issues that are important to many different groups that comprise our community.

As a State Representative, I will work to ensure that every Missourian has access to the resources that they need to live life to the fullest. I would like to know more about the work of Paraquad, and when we are able to meet in person again, I will make sure to come to some of the events that you sponsor.

If you have any questions about who I am, I invite you to look at my website, votephifer.com, or my facebook page @electbarbaraphifer.

Thanks for contacting me!
Barbara
1. **Background**
   I was diagnosed with ADHD about a year after I graduated law school, which finally explained why I had to work 3 times harder than my classmates. As a lawyer, I advocated for children with disabilities and worked with families to get resources and accommodations that their children needed in school. I consider myself to be a disability advocate.

2. **Covid-19 and Voting**
   SB 631, assuming the governor signs it, gives an absentee voting excuse for people with significant medical conditions during 2020, so they can vote by mail with no notary required. It allows everyone to vote by mail if their ballot is notarized. My campaign plan this year is to have volunteers call through voters in my district and inform them of the new voting procedures.

3. **Medicaid Expansion**
   I am a strong supporter of Medicaid expansion. I believe expansion will help people with invisible disabilities get healthcare access, especially since expansion will allow adults with no children and no government-recognized disabilities to have Medicaid.

4. **Housing**
   We need to modify our building codes to require universal design so homes and office buildings are accessible to all.

5. **Direct Support for Community Living**
   I believe the state needs to give resources for higher pay for direct support professionals and to encourage people to go into that field.

6. **Transportation**
   I support public transportation throughout Missouri, and I believe we need to expand para-transport and make sure it is sufficiently funded.

7. **Employment**
   I have filed an Employment First bill since my first year in office (2017). I have worked with government and private officials to address the disparity in employment. In 2019, I served on CSG’s task force “The future of the workforce for people with disabilities”. I have worked with Bobby Sullivan, SEED, and CSG to expand workforce options for people with disabilities.

   Missouri’s education system does not sufficiently prepare many children with disabilities for the workforce. We have segregated education systems and even schools for the severely disabled. Students with IEP do not have to have the same career counseling that “typical” students are required to have. These are issues that need to change.

8. **Waiver Programs**
   The waitlists for 1915 (c) waivers are a tragedy for individuals waiting for services and for their families, and counterproductive for the state. Denying them resources only costs the state more money. We need to use our resources efficiently by providing for people who need them most, such as fully funding the 1915 (c) waiver program.

9. **Final Thoughts**
   Congratulations on the 30 year anniversary of the ADA! This groundbreaking legislation has paved the way for community integration for so many. We still have a long way to go, but it is important, in
this time, to recognize how far we have come.

I have begun putting together a coalition of people with disabilities in my district. I plan to consult with them with disability-related legislation.

Here is a list of disability-related bills I filed this year and their progress:

- **HB 1270** did not pass because of Covid-19. This bill removed the requirement that mail to blind pension recipients be sent certified. It got fairly far along in the process before the Legislature recessed due to Covid, and was on the Consent calendar. I fully expect this bill will pass the next full session of the Legislature.

- **HB 1273**, relating to verification for public assistance, did not pass. This bill removed a 3rd party contractor from the verification process for Medicaid and other public assistance benefits. After I filed this bill, it was brought to my attention that this 3rd party would be able to provide better verification than the Department was doing and reduce paperwork load on recipients. The contract was not yet in effect when I filed the bill. I do not intend to file this bill next year.

- **HB 1276**, the "Employment First" bill, did not gain any traction this year. This bill would require agencies that work with people with disabilities to make competitive, integrated employment a priority when helping secure services for people with disabilities. I plan to file this bill again next year.

- **HB 1673**, which gives 1 year of continuous Medicaid eligibility to people with disabilities, did not pass. Medicaid allows such continuous eligibility for children (although Missouri does not do this), but we would have to request a waiver to do this for adults. I do not plan to prioritize this bill next year.

- **HB 2358**, which requires the Office of Administration submit a report to the Legislature about the governor's Missouri as a Model Employer initiative, got a Senate hearing as **SB 978**. Again, because of Coronavirus, it did not gain traction. I plan to file it again next year.

- **HB 2439** did not gain traction this year. It requires DSS to follow federal law when determining eligibility for Medicaid. I plan to file it again next year.

- **HB 4542** did not gain any traction this year. It encourages state agencies to engage in practices that encourage disability inclusion. I plan to file it again next year.
Thank you for sharing the Missouri Protection & Advocacy services disability survey with me. Please find my responses to each point in this letter.

Background

I graduated from Rockhurst University in Kansas City with a B.A. in Political Science as well as an MBA. I worked on political campaigns following graduation in 2012. I then worked for the Archdiocese of St. Louis for about 5.5 years, first in the Pro-Life Office and then for over four years as spokesperson. I now work for a local marketing agency. I have served on the junior board for a local foster care agency, and I am a certified college and high school basketball official. I recently completed the FOCUS St. Louis Emerging Leaders program. I am married to my wife of 7.5 years, and we have four children. As to my experience with disability, I don’t have any in my immediate family, but I grew up in Fulton, MO, which is the home of the Missouri School for the Deaf, so I recall many interactions with the staff/students who were always full of life and energy. I also have a great admiration for my aunt, who took care of my grandmother and also her mother-in-law (both of whom were severely disabled following heart attacks and other health issues) in her own home for the better part of a decade.

COVID-19 and Voting Access

Voting is the cornerstone of our democracy. As such, in emergency situations, we need to make sure it remains widely and safely accessible to all while maintaining the integrity of the voting process. I believe that we should expand early in-person absentee voting to allow all who feel unsafe to file their ballots before Election Day in November. We should keep the requirement that absentee ballots be notarized, and expansion should be such that it gives individuals the time and ability to meet this requirement. Safety and integrity are key to the voting process, and while COVID-19 provides challenges, there is no reason we cannot meet those challenges in ways that uphold our democratic principles.

Medicaid Expansion

Missouri must absolutely make healthcare more accessible as dozens of states already have. I am cautious about the need to make it an amendment to the state’s Constitution, as such amendments are difficult to later adapt for rapidly changing fields like healthcare. I also believe we need to implement Medicaid expansion in such a way that is fiscally sound and does not create huge budget shortfalls. We should explore expansion options that put consumers in charge of their healthcare, for example, through fully-funded HSA accounts. These types of programs have been shown to reduce healthcare costs.

Housing

Often, those who renovate their homes can count the expenses as a medical cost if the remodelling is done for the sake of accessibility. However, reassessment can bring increased property value. We should ensure our method of taxation does not penalize those who renovate their homes to provide greater accessibility. Additionally, construction companies who work to incorporate accessibility into their home plans should receive some kind of tax benefit as well.

Transportation

Cities across Missouri, as well as the state as a whole, have talked about revamping public transportation for years now. Public transportation as funded by tax dollars, and as such, taxpayers deserve to have equal access to these facilities, especially if we want to make them more central to our urban environments. In addition to increasing transportation specifically geared at the elderly and individuals...
with disabilities, we should ensure that all public transport is easily accessible to anyone with impairments.

**Employment**

People with disabilities are a diverse group: they are young, old, married, single, and fall into any other category you can think of. All people deserve to have their needs met and deserve employment opportunities that meet those needs. I’m in favor of helping employers make reasonable accommodations to hire people with disabilities, and would generally be supportive of other types of programs to address discrimination against those with disabilities.

**Waiver Programs**

I am always in favor of reducing wait times and cutting through the red tape of government bureaucracy. Those entitled to services deserve to receive access to them in a timely and respectful manner. I do not know much about all 11 1915 (c) waiver programs, but from what I can tell, it seems they are designed to help people in need of medical care stay in their homes. I firmly believe in that principle that people should be given every opportunity to stay in their homes despite disabilities or other health issues.

Thank you again for soliciting my input on these important issues.
Position: State Representative – District 93  
Name: Bridget Walsh Moore  
Party: Democratic  
314-691-7992  
bridget@bridgetformissouri.com  

**Background**

As a person with a disability, I have a unique perspective to legislature regarding such matters. In 2014, I had a hemipelvectomy due to growing stage 3B osteosarcoma. As I was amputated at the age of 26, I also can relate to how able-bodied people simply do not think of the daily struggles of people with disabilities as I certainly did not until faced with them.

**COVID 19 and Voting Access**

I called Gov. Parson’s office regarding the removal of the notary requirement for absentee voting and advised voters to do the same. I am also assembling a team of notaries to make voting absentee easier while we practice social distancing.

**Medicaid Expansion**

Medicaid Expansion would bring tens of thousands of children back into the system where they have access to medical insurance. Working families would not live in constant fear of illness or injury. People with disabilities could receive the healthcare they need in terms of prescriptions, equipment, and aides. With the assistance and affordability of aides, more people with disabilities could live independently in their homes, as is their right.

**Housing**

Having to move due to my amputation, this is a very personal issue for me. My husband and I had to leave our home in the city for something further away from our desired neighborhood as nothing was accessible. I think we could develop a program with realtors to encourage their clients to make renovations to a house before it goes on market that would allow more accessibility. If we target areas with public transportation access and walkable neighborhoods, we could work with the local government to improve sidewalks and curb cutouts. We could sell the idea to current homeowners as a refund on personal property taxes if they make the changes now, that would allow them to stay in their homes longer as they age and then more marketable when they go to sell.

**Direct Support for Community Living**

There was a program that paired nursing students with people with disabilities in the past. I think that is a great way to recruit more people to the profession. Also, we need to support the fight for $15 so that these people, who are so much more than a caregiver, can make a decent living and provide for their families. We could offer tuition assistance for those who agree to be aides for a certain number of years, similar to how they recruit rural doctors.

**Transportation**

I think MetroLink and the city/county bus system has been LONG overdue for a facelift that could improve accessibility measures, but we have to get the revenue to do it. This means allowing police
officers on the MetroLink, to ensure safety to attract more riders. We can seek out federal resources to update our existing facilities and possibly create more.

**Employment**

We could start by making places of business more accessible; it's hard to apply for a job if you can't get in the front door. We can also use all of our new-found knowledge and ease of technology since the lockdown and working from home to become the norm, to truly integrate people with disabilities into the workforce. This also starts at the education level, to ensure equal opportunity to all forms of learning.

**Waiver Programs**

I would see why there is inadequate funding for these programs and encourage any for-profit businesses that may benefit to apply pressure to government for funding. I would try to allocate Medicaid expansion funds to ensure that people with disabilities have options when it comes to medical care that best serves them.

**Final Thoughts**

As a person with a disability I want to see people who look like me in government. I will fight with all I have to bring to light the everyday struggles for people like me, because people with disabilities have more able-bodied advocates than they realize. I want to double the income cap on the marriage penalty for people receiving SSI. I want to ensure that everyone who drives a car has the ability to rent one when necessary, as I do not. The problem is not apathy, it’s ignorance; people just don’t know, but when I talk to people of all walks of life and explain the situation, they vehemently support change. I want to be a voice for change.
Position: State Representative – District 94
Name: Jean Pretto
Party: Democratic

Background What training, experience, and characteristics qualify you for this position? Do you have any personal experience with a disability or an individual with a disability? I am a retired educator and retail auto dealership manager. I have many years of accumulated wisdom as well as a Master’s degree in Education Supervision and Administration. Thankfully, I have no disability, but I have cared for several family members with various limitations.

COVID-19 and Voting Access Many people with disabilities are high risk for COVID-19 and are concerned about potential exposure to the disease when voting. What, if any, steps would you take to address this problem? I have been fighting for mail-in voting since the last election cycle. I am keeping my social media contacts abreast of what they need to do in order to vote safely.

Medicaid Expansion How do you see Medicaid Expansion affecting the state of Missouri? By restoring healthcare to 50,000+ Missouri children and perhaps restoring some of the hospitals and treatment facilities that have been darkened.

Housing According to HUD, less than 5% of homes are accessible to individuals with mobility impairments. Affordable accessible housing is a concern for many Missourians with disabilities. What, if any, steps would you take to address this problem? I believe that when a new housing development is started a certain percentage of them should be accessible. I also believe that in the case of older homes being sold that the cost of any retrofitting should be shared between buyer and seller with some assistance from the state.

Direct Support for Community Living There is a shortage of direct support professionals (personal attendants and other caregivers), to help people with disabilities live independently in the community. What, if any, steps would you take to address this problem? Offer scholarships for students that may be interested and pay them better.

Transportation In many areas across Missouri, there are a lack of public/para-transit transportation resources for seniors and individuals with disabilities. What, if any, steps would you take to address this problem? This, I’m not sure about how it could be addressed, but it needs to be.

Employment The rate of unemployment or underemployment is much higher for individuals with disabilities than those without a disability. According to the American Community Survey, as of 2017, only 34% of all working-age people with disabilities in Missouri were employed, and 25% of people with a cognitive or intellectual disability were employed. What, if any, steps would you take to address this disparity? Incentivize private manufacturing to employ workers with disabilities that are still very capable of doing certain jobs.

Waiver Programs There are 11 1915(c) waivers in Missouri. Recently, many individuals have experienced waitlists and the effects of limited funding for waiver supported programs. What, if any, steps would you take to address this problem? We must stabilize our Social Security funds so that these individuals can expect swift and regular recurring funds.

Final Thoughts Is there anything else you would like to say to voters with disabilities? It is my hope that any obstacles you may face in your effort to vote can be minimized. And, if I can help in any way, please let me know.
Thank for allowing me to share my answers with the Missouri Disability Voter Coalition. My name is Ann Zimpfer and I am the Democratic Candidate for Missouri House District 95.

Background -

My personal experience as the mother of an adult son with a Developmental Disability qualifies me in a unique way. I am also a recently retired Elementary Teacher with a number of years in a classroom setting supporting students with Special Needs.

As a mother, I wear a hat that is not familiar to everyone, but I can be a voice for people with disabilities and their families, along with the village that supports them. I can speak from experience on a myriad of issues facing the Special Needs Community. Even within that group everyone's journey is different.

COVID-19 and Voting Access-

First, we are all pleased that this year, in particular, the Governor will allow absentee voting. He still needs to take that next step and allow this voting without the notary requirement.

Medicaid Expansion-

Medicaid will give many families in the low income range health care. It will also close the coverage gap. I don't know that all Missouri Citizens realize that Medicaid also effects many adults and children with disabilities. We need to make sure that these needs are met as well. We need to take in mind waiver programs and take a closer look at the personal financial limits of these citizens when applying for Medicaid.

Housing-

When I look at the statistic you quote, it is mind boggling. I am not sure what the answer is at this point. But, this is a glaring example of the number of Missourians who are overlooked due to a disability. Many state, local and city ordinances make it challenging for individuals to make accommodations in their home. Perhaps a continuity of policy across the state. Many individuals purchase homes without accommodations but additionally, they might not be able afford to make the modifications needed. The question then is, how do we find resources for individuals to access organizations that can help.

Direct Support for Community Living -

This question hits very close to home. My son is a client of Sunnyhill, Inc. and lives in one of their many supported homes. Staff turnover is a huge concern in this business. The state must recognize the significance of these staff members in the lives of the folks they support but also as employees of many different agencies. Funds going to these organizations must be increased to pay support staff a salary equal to the important work they do every day.

Transportation-

Again, the answer is funding. In the St Louis area we have Call a Ride, and some other private transportation businesses, but the rules for many are difficult to follow, such as time windows for pick up. In rural areas public transportation for individuals is not there. This only adds to the isolation of many people.
Missouri Disability Voter Coalition

Employment -

Though the percentages are low, there are some programs in place to address these needs. Funding is the answer again. We need to be able to support a variety of employment. Individuals with disabilities are exactly that. We cannot look at this as a one size fits all. We need to support Voc Rehab for individuals who need minimal initial supports, we need to provide more opportunities for competitive employment, we need to support and continue funding for sheltered workshops and we need to educate employers. Education is key to help alleviate much of the stigma associated with employees with varying disabilities.

Waiver -

This is an area in the state budget that continues to be underfunded. It's as if at the state level, nobody recognizes these citizens. The voice of this community is not heard. Many politicians seem to not see or listen.

Final thoughts

There is a community of citizens in this state who are not always recognized. Sometimes in the classroom, in public spaces and in the work force. This community deserves dignity and respect and, unfortunately, that is not always the case.

As I developed my platform in this election I knew that I wanted to pay close attention the community of citizens with special needs. I was looking at my education platform and my healthcare platform and then after listening to the House session one day I had that "aha" moment. I knew right then and there this platform couldn't be a piece of any of my other platforms, this deserved to be a platform all on its own. Individuals with special needs have a place in my platform and I hope I can be that voice in Jefferson City.

I look forward to hearing from you as we move ahead.
Position: State Representative – District 96  
Name: Erica Hoffman  
Party: Democratic

Hello, thank you for allowing me to fill out the Missouri Disability Voter Coalition 2020 State Candidate Survey. Here are my responses to your questions:

**Background:** Since 2012, I have been diagnosed with Ulcerative Colitis, an inflammatory bowel disease. This has had a debilitating impact on my life at times and as a result, has led me to be a much stronger advocate for public restroom access. I also understand the extremely high cost of medication because of my disease and look for ways to help reduce medical costs and price gouging. 

I taught High School History and Government at Fox High School where they offered "class within a class" CWC, and I worked with Autistic students. As a teacher, I made many additional accommodations outside the required mandates in order to allow children to maximize their learning potential and have a stress-free and supportive environment.

In addition, I volunteer for several children and family organizations and make sure to advocate for restrooms to be available in places like public parks and schools to be available at all times.

Other advocacy work I've is that I was part of a group called C-PLAY in the Lindbergh School District that helped to advocate for ADA accessible playground equipment. We did multiple fundraisers, raised awareness, advocated to the Lindbergh BOE and as a result, they agreed to install rubberized surfaces and ADA playground features and equipment that all children could play on.

Also, I have family and friends who are hearing impaired and understand some of the challenges they face.

**COVID-19 and Voting Access:** I think everyone should be allowed to do mail-in ballots in the state of Missouri.

**Housing:** I would look for ways to increase ADA accessible housing that allows Missourians with disabilities to live as independently as possible and find ways to fund it.

**Direct Support for Community Living:** Look for ways to increase their salaries. Look for ways to offer more education and training opportunities for adults to help guide them into seeking this as a career choice.

**Transportation:** Help to prioritize transportation needs for those with seniors and individuals with disabilities. Look for ways to fund it - not cut services.

**Employment:** Look for ways to encourage employers to hire those with a disability through tax incentives, educate employers, seek input from companies who regularly employees and use that to educate other employers.

**Waiver Programs:** These need to be fast-tracked and prioritized. Individuals should not have to wait to receive waiver supported programs.

**Final Thoughts:** I would like to learn more about how to advocate and help those with disabilities in Missouri. We can do better for our residents.

Thank you for your time
Position: State Representative – District 98  
Name: Angie Schafer  
Party: Democratic  

Background  
I have lived in the West County area for more than 25 years. My husband Jeff and I have three children, two grandchildren, a wonderful son-in-law, and a lovable dog named Ollie. Over the years I have volunteered in nearly every aspect of my children’s school, scout, and church lives, allowing me to develop strong relationships with our parents and teachers and experience the diversity of concerns and issues we face as a community. As a Realtor, I have the opportunity to meet residents from our District every day. My ability to connect with people from all walks of life and my passion for this community is what makes me good at my job. It is also what will make me a great Candidate for the 98th District.  

I have an aunt who was permanently disabled at the age of 8 when she was struck by a hit and run driver. After more than six months in the hospital, she emerged with paralysis on the right half of her body, damaged eyesight and damaged hearing. At 68, she has lived mostly on her own although always less than a block away from relatives. She is active in her community and church and has a passion for helping children. I’m certain she wishes circumstances were different, but in spite of everything, she has led a courageous life.  

I don’t think we really think of her as being disabled, she’s just Aunt Theresa (often cranky - 😎); but we all know that when it’s time to eat, someone offers to make her a plate and make sure she has a straw and a place at the table (we have a VERY LARGE family and table seating is at a premium!) She uses a little cart to carry her belongings around town or to and from my parent’s house. No one makes a fuss but everyone takes care.  

COVID-19 and Voting Access  
I think the voting process we put in place for 2020 is ridiculous. It is unnecessarily complicated and confusing. We should have instituted vote-by-mail for the greater good.  

Medicaid Expansion  
I totally support Medicaid expansion and hope to be part of the General Assembly that gets to implement it. Republicans have a history of not following through with the will of the people. More than 200,000 Missourians (probably more now) fall into this health care gap. Quality, affordable healthcare should not be a privilege but a right.  

Housing  
This is something I would need to have more information on. I can offer that when it comes to businesses, I tend to notice when they are not accessible and wonder if the business owner really understands the needs of the community.  

Direct Support for Community Living
This is another area I would need more information on. Of course I would support programs that offered assistance in this way but am not exactly sure what that would look like at this time. I would be interested in learning more about this.

**Transportation**

Transportation in Missouri can be a challenge for anyone and even more challenging for those with physical disabilities. I would support programs that provided ride/commuter services for seniors and individuals with disabilities. Just thinking of my aunt, she does have the opportunity to take a van to the grocery or department store but not necessarily a doctor’s appointment or legal appointment. If it weren’t for my parents and another uncle, she would be stuck or have to pay for an expensive Uber or Lyft service.

**Employment**

If a person is qualified to do a job he/she should be considered a serious applicant no matter his/her physical ability. As for those with cognitive or intellectual disability, I would pretty much say the same thing. If one is qualified to do the job, then they should be offered equal opportunity.

**Waiver Programs**

Everything always comes down to funding. No one wants to raise taxes but everyone wants their projects. Unfortunately, it seems in Missouri it’s a continuous fight to have these sorts of programs funded – you know, the kind of programs that help PEOPLE instead of corporations. I will give you an example of my frustration with this:

Fourteen(ish) years ago, the First Steps program was at risk of losing state funding. Our then governor wanted to nix it. I have a very dear friend who has a child with Autism and she’s a strict republican who doesn’t believe in supporting “socialist” projects. However, she and her family benefited greatly from the first steps program.

During a political conversation, I made the mistake of saying “Don’t worry. I’ll vote to make sure your son has the services he needs.” That didn’t go over well and she didn’t talk to me for a long time. I did vote against that governor. She did vote for him. He won. He cut funding for First Steps.

A few months after the election, she called and asked if I would mind recording the 10 o’clock news. I said sure, but what’s up. She said, “I’m in Jefferson City with a busload of moms and a stack of petitions and we are speaking at hearing against cutting funding for First Steps.” I bit my tongue so hard I think it bled. If I recall, they got a little movement but not a lot. She never said I was right and she still, to this day, votes against her own needs because she wants smaller government and lower taxes! She could never admit that it just doesn’t work.

The bottom line is I would do what I can to fund programs that help people while trying to keep taxes lower. If we stop giving tax breaks to big companies and the wealthiest of our community, there might be a few bucks for doing good.

**Final Thoughts**

I think we’ve covered just about everything except schools. I know there are specific schools/education within each district that are required to be ADA compliant but even those schools sometimes struggle to
Here are my responses to the questionnaire:

**Background**

I won a special election in Nov. 2019 and as an incumbent I'm hopeful I'll win again and be a voice for those in the 99th District. In my home, we do not have anyone with a disability though my mother became deaf two years ago and now has a cochlear implant.

**COVID-19 and Voting Access**

This year, they can take advantage of recent legislation that passed allowing those at risk for COVID-19 to vote by mail. Depending on what box they check on the absentee ballot, they may or may not require a notarized ballot. I would encourage everyone to vote absentee who can as there will likely be fewer polling locations. In the future, we need to make it easier for citizens to vote and I would support efforts around no-excuse absentee voting, mail-in voting, etc.

**Medicaid Expansion**

I'm so glad Medicaid Expansion passed and believe the funding coming into Missouri will help certain populations and rural areas that have seen their healthcare options diminish.

**Housing**

I would encourage and support efforts at the local, regional and state level to advance ways to make affordable accessible housing more available. I did sponsor a bill to aid those with PTSD this past session, but it did not get assigned to a committee.

**Direct Support for Community Living**

I was unaware of this situation and see an opportunity to promote this need and work with programs that train these direct support professionals to fill this need.

**Transportation**

I received calls from constituents about reduced services prior to COVID-19 and know that now this is a critical problem. I believe in supporting those in our community who are most vulnerable and would advocate for funding to restore these services.

**Employment**

Given these statistics, I see the need to improve the disparity around employment for those in the disability community. I would reach out to local businesses and assist in connecting them with individuals in the hopes that elevating this issue with the appropriate decision makers would be a start. From there, I would defer to those in this community for ideas and serve as a conduit to improve the situation.

**Waiver Programs**

I would advocate for individuals affected by this program and support funding efforts to address the waitlist problem.

**Final Thoughts**
Missouri Disability Voter Coalition

I've spoken with constituents who are affected by recent cuts and I want them and you to know I hear you. As a member of the House minority, I will continue to be a voice for this community and advocate for them in the MO Legislature.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my thoughts.
Position: State Representative – District 100
Name: Helena Webb
Party: Democratic

Background
What training, experience, and characteristics qualify you for this position? Do you have any personal experience with a disability or an individual with a disability? I do not have a family member with a disability.

COVID-19 and Voting Access
Many people with disabilities are high risk for COVID-19 and are concerned about potential exposure to the disease when voting. What, if any, steps would you take to address this problem? Be better prepared for the next crises with PPE for vulnerable people as well as health care workers.

Medicaid Expansion
How do you see Medicaid Expansion affecting the state of Missouri? It will help by providing increased coverage and better outcomes for people, it will create jobs and improve our economy.

Housing
According to HUD, less than 5% of homes are accessible to individuals with mobility impairments. Affordable accessible housing is a concern for many Missourians with disabilities. What, if any, steps would you take to address this problem? I do not know much about this issue, but would like to know more.

Direct Support for Community Living
There is a shortage of direct support professionals (personal attendants and other caregivers), to help people with disabilities live independently in the community. What, if any, steps would you take to address this problem? Work to improve funding for these positions at the state level.

Transportation
In many areas across Missouri, there are a lack of public/para-transit transportation resources for seniors and individuals with disabilities. What, if any, steps would you take to address this problem? I plan to advocate for more public transportation, but this would require a tax of some kind, possible use/sales tax to the public.

Employment
The rate of unemployment or underemployment is much higher for individuals with disabilities than those without a disability. According to the American Community Survey, as of 2017, only 34% of all working-age people with disabilities in Missouri were employed, and 25% of people with a cognitive or intellectual disability were employed. What, if any, steps would you take to address this disparity? Promote and/or increase incentives to companies who employ those with disabilities.

Waiver Programs
There are 11 1915(c) waivers in Missouri. Recently, many individuals have experienced waitlists and the effects of limited funding for waiver supported programs. What, if any, steps would you take to address this problem? This would require more personnel and funding. The current GOP elected officials are against more government and spending, but I would advocate for more funding and additional staff to handle requests.
Final Thoughts

Is there anything else you would like to say to voters with disabilities? This is going to be an even tougher time for people with disabilities, since the GOP is taking this opportunity (COVID 19) as a reason to slash programs. I will advocate for the disabled. I am 100% convinced, my opponent will not.
Position: State Representative – District 102  
Name: Tracy Grundy  
Party: Democratic  

Background  
I have a Bachelors Degree in Education from the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh. My passion has always been in working with children and adults at all levels and seeing them achieve their highest potential. My Master’s Degree is an MBA from the University of Mary Washington in Fredericksburg, Virginia where I also have a concentration in Human Resources. In my Human Resources career, I was involved with creating an environment that supported inclusion and diversity. I am very familiar with ADA and Workers Compensation regulations.

COVID-19 and Voting Access  
I believe that we should make absentee voting easier for individuals, not only in times of Covid-19 but for all elections going forward. The additional requirement of a notary is ridiculous for those who are unable to get to the polls and I would waive that block for them.

Medicaid Expansion  
Missourians absolutely need to pass the Medicaid expansion which will be on the ballot in August. Missouri is one of 12 states that did not pass Medicaid expansion with the AHCA when it was first offered and subsequently left funding on the table. It is now time to ensure that all citizens of Missouri have the ability to have the healthcare coverage that they deserve.

Housing  
There is a lack of affordable housing in Missouri, especially in the St Louis area. With the additional problem of less than 5% of homes accessible to individuals with mobility impairments, lack of affordable housing is a critical need. As a legislator, I would support bills that would create a higher percentage of housing available for Section 8. I would also support tax incentives for builders to make more units accessible to residents with mobility issues.

Direct Support for Community Living  
According to Indeed.com, the average hourly wage for a caregiver in Missouri is $11.51. This is not a livable wage. We need to raise the average wage of hourly workers in Missouri to a minimum of $15 per hour in order to attract individuals to careers such as personal attendant or caregiver.

Transportation  
Title II of the ADA prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in public transportation services, such as city buses and public rail (subways, commuter trains, etc.). Public transportation services must: Comply with accessibility requirements in newly purchased vehicles; Make good faith efforts to purchase or lease accessible used buses; Remanufacture buses in an accessible manner; Provide paratransit (assisted transportation) where they operate fixed route bus or rail systems, unless it would cause an undue burden. As a State Rep, I would work to ensure that Title II was followed across the state.

Employment  
As a human resource professional, I have found that working age people with disabilities are ignored by most companies, either by choice or by lack of understanding. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) prohibits employment discrimination on the basis of workers' disabilities. The ADA also requires employers to provide reasonable accommodations -- changes to the workplace or job -- to allow
employees with disabilities to do their jobs. As a State Rep, I would work to support Gov. Parson’s initiative to set annual goals on state workforce participation by people with disabilities and evaluate progress each year.

Waiver Programs

Currently the waiting list in Missouri for services could be several years if the prioritization of need score is low. There are about 3,300 people on the waiting list for services in our state! As a State Rep I would work with Missouri Department of Social Services MO Healthnet Division to reduce the waiting time and improve the waiver process.

Final Thoughts

Please support my candidacy for State Representative for District 102. I have the knowledge, the background and the passion to improve the lives of our disabled citizens.
Position: State Representative – District 104  
Name: Jessica DeVoto  
Party: Democratic

What training, experience, and characteristics qualify you for this position? Do you have any experience with a disability or an individual with a disability?

I’m qualified for this position because I care deeply about the needs of the people, including individuals with disabilities. I’m not a career politician. I’m running for one reason and one reason only: to serve my constituents and to give a voice to the voiceless. As far as experience with disabilities, I’ve struggled with my weight from a very early age. I was bullied throughout school, it’s tiring to walk too far, and sometimes I have trouble fitting into small spaces. Although this is not a disability as such, I imagine these are some of the same struggles that individuals with disabilities contend with, and this has made me more sympathetic to that. Also, I went to school with someone with a disability. A friend and I met with her at a local cafe this past summer to catch up, and she needed help just to get the door open. That really got me thinking we need more comprehensive legislation and enforcement regarding accessibility.

Many people with disabilities are at high risk for COVID-19 and are concerned about potential exposure to the disease when voting. What, if any, steps would you take to address this problem?

This has been a huge concern this cycle. I believe we need to approve no-excuse absentee voting. This would require no excuse (unlike the current absentee voting) and no notary (unlike mail-in voting) and could be requested by mail, in person, or online (unlike mail-in voting). Also, I think we need to transition to an online voting system. Tax returns and censuses can be returned online, so the means is definitely there to make that possible.

How do you see Medicaid expansion affecting the state of Missouri?

It will ensure that hundreds of thousands of Missourians, including children, keep their insurance. This allows people to go to the doctor and receive treatment before their medical conditions get out of hand, which ends up costing the state and individuals more money (in other words, “penny wise, pound foolish”). Moreover, it makes more funds available for 1915(c) waiver programs. More on that below.

According to HUD, less than 5% of homes are accessible to individuals with mobility impairments. Affordable accessible housing is a concern for many Missourians with disabilities. What, if any, steps would you take to address this problem?

I think we could offer grants and/or tax rebates to encourage people to create accessible homes (single-family and multi-family). Additionally, as prescribed by Olmstead, it’s important that if a building or neighborhood is not 100% accessible that the accessible and non-accessible units be intermingled and not segregated (eg one apartment building is accessible and one is not, or one side of the street is accessible and the other is not), that way people with disabilities have at least some access to all areas of the property.

There is a shortage of direct support professionals (personal attendants and other caregivers), to help people with disabilities live independently in the community. What, if any, steps would you take to address this problem?

Again, Olmstead says that people with disabilities need to be able to live independently in the community and not be relegated to nursing homes if at all possible, and for some, having a personal support professional is an integral part of that, as they need their help to perform essential functions such as going to the restroom, getting dressed, or even cooking and eating. More steps need to be taken to attract and retain these professionals, not the least of which would be increasing the minimum wage for these types of jobs. Very often, caregivers will quit because they can make more on unemployment than
by keeping this job. These types of jobs are far more physically and mentally demanding than the average office job, and their level of pay should reflect that.

In many areas across Missouri, there are a lack of public/para-transit transportation resources for seniors and individuals with disabilities. What, if any, steps would you take to address this problem?

We need to appropriate more funds to transportation projects, including making public transportation more accessible and training drivers in things like operating and maintaining wheelchair lifts and strapping down wheelchairs, and we need careful oversight and accountability to make sure they’re sticking to the plan. I’ve heard horror stories about para-transportation always being late and generally sub-par, so to speak. We either need to make drastic improvements to this system or defund it and use those funds to make improvements to public transportation. I’d be open to discussion as to which way to go on that.

The rate of unemployment or underemployment is much higher for individuals with disabilities those without a disability. According to the American Community Survey, as of 2017, only 34% of all working-age people with disabilities in Missouri were employed, and 25% of people with a cognitive or intellectual disability were employed. What, if any, steps would you take to address this problem?

Perhaps we could offer tax deductions or credits to companies that hire at least 25% people with disabilities.

There are 11 1915(c) waivers in Missouri. Recently, many individuals have experienced waitlists and the effects of limited funding for waiver supported programs. What, if any, steps would you take to address this problem?

Again, Medicaid expansion will work wonders here. If Medicaid has more funding, then by extension, there’s more funding for waiver programs, which will in turn reduce the waitlists. We may also want to consider removing the restriction that an individual can only be on one waiver program at a time, because currently, the only way to switch waiver programs is to give up your existing waiver and get on the waitlist for the new one. As an aside, we also need to change the names of some of the waiver programs (such as “Medically Fragile Adult”). Many of them are out of date and sound derogatory by today’s standards. It may not seem like a big deal, but that can compound the problem by giving people an inferiority complex.

Is there anything else you would like to say to voters with disabilities?

If you have concerns about accessibility or anything else, don’t hesitate to write to me in Jefferson City. I will listen and take action.
My name is Christine Hyman and I am running for Missouri State Representative in House District 105, which is parts of St. Peters and St. Charles in St. Charles County. I am a longtime activist and advocate. After spending the early part of 2020 testifying multiple times in Jefferson City, against harmful legislation, I knew I needed to take the next step and run for office myself to grant residents of my district the advocacy and listening that I was searching for myself.

COVID is most definitely going to make voting hard this cycle but it is so important that everyone get out to vote. I will have volunteers driving people to the poles in both August and November. We need to make voting accessibility easier. Vote by mail helps, we need to remove the notary requirement. Absentee voting should be available to everyone. Curbside voting should be implemented at every polling location. My uncle was a Veteran who was diagnosed with MS in his 50’s. As a veteran he would never give up his right to vote, however, it was always difficult and took at least two family members to help him navigate long lines and inside polling locations. This year we should be diligent with mask wearing and even bringing our own pens.

Medicaid expansion is on the August ballot, so we all need to vote. Medicaid will bring coverage to hundreds of thousands of Missourians who fall in the gap for either not making enough money or making too much money but are still unable to afford insurance. Medicaid expansion will also re-enroll all of the children who are eligible but were dropped. I fully support Medicaid expansion in Missouri, we are leaving federal dollars on the table when so many Missourians need coverage. 1915(c) waivers should be accessible without waiting lists that can cause an individual to lose independent living.

Housing for folks with mobility issues should be a given. Landlords should be held accountable for reasonable modification, at the landlords expense, including parking, ramp access, and lowering countertops to make living comfortable.

In St. Charles County we have SCAT (St. Charles Area Transit), where each vehicle is wheelchair equipped and has low cost fare (.25 or .50). The hours of operation should go past 3:00pm to allow for after work hours, and I would love if they would run on the weekends, because life doesn’t stop on Saturday and Sunday.

I support funding to increase the amount of personal attendants and other caregivers so people with disabilities can live independently in their community. I also believe employers should be able to participate in state programs to employ and empower people with disabilities. I know they exist, because in my time working in Human Resources, I sought out those agencies. Reasonable accommodation should be easily implemented.

My goal is see a more accessible Missouri which accommodates everyone from housing to employment. I look forward to working with everyone when I make it to Jefferson City.
Position: State Representative – District 108
Name: Susan Shumway
Party: Democratic

Background: I have been a local church pastor, on committees in my county, many church committees, and worked as a chaplain for years. I have several auto-immune diseases which at times make walking difficult and have a placard to help. I have worked with differently abled people at the hospital and in my church. A few years ago, I joined with 3 others to help 2 Intellectually disabled guys in my church who all of a sudden found themselves without a home and guardians. I continue to help Sam and Dan and refer to them as my brothers.

COVID-19 and Voting Access: I will push for vote via mail and early voting so that there is not the exposure.

Medicaid Expansion in Missouri would save so many lives by giving healthcare to the people who can’t afford it, allowing them to receive necessary treatment earlier in the disease process. I have stood at the bedside of a person who didn’t have money for asthma meds while life support was removed and allowed him to die. If Medicaid was expanded I might not have to do this again.

Housing: Push for increased funding to the organizations that are helping with this issue already. Reach out to church and other religious organizations to increase awareness and push for assistance.

Direct Support for Community Living: I am a big believer in education. There need to be education in the community that continues to de-mystify and de-stigmatize mental health issues so that people are not intimidated by working with one of the best communities out there. There also needs to be a push for Missouri’s tax structure to change in order to have additional money for services.

Transportation: Addressing our tax structure in order to fully fund services such as these is a priority. I’m tired of needed services being cut.

Employment: I would give tax credits to companies/corporations who would hired people with different abilities.

Waiver Programs: This would go back to the tax structure being addressed.
Position: State Representative – District 110  
Name: John Kiehne  
Party: Democratic

Background: John Kiehne is a 5th generation Missouri native that was born and raised in St. Charles, Missouri, spent many years in Boston, Massachusetts and now calls Labadie his home along with his wife Michelle and their family. John attended public schools in St. Charles County as a child and studied applied music at Webster University for a few years. His parents and most of his family are/were public educators in Missouri and his family has owned a farm in Southeast Missouri for over 130 years.

John has been working as a professional musician/ small business owner for nearly 35 years performing, writing, producing, marketing, and booking musical acts as well as providing private musical instruction for students of all ages and abilities. He also spent 6 years as a foster provider and the last 13 years as a committed foster advocate. John and his wife have now transitioned into acting as legal guardians for two disabled adults as well as two young children. John has had extensive experience interacting with a variety of State agencies such as Children’s Division, the Department of Mental Health, public schools and educational entities such as Special School District, and a wide variety of organizations and providers in the Behavioral Health realm. John also sits on the Board of Directors for Heartland Independent Living Center which is based in Owensville, MO and provides in-home services to disabled residents in Gasconade, Maries and Franklin Counties.

John was first motivated to run for office as a result of his frustration from trying to address the challenges involved in connecting critical services to disabled family members and clients due to systemic issues, poorly-written and administered policy, and crippling bureaucracy.

John is campaigning to earn the opportunity to be an effective advocate for his family, neighbors and community not to mention his entire State in order to improve the lives of each and every Missourian. He believes that every resident of Missouri should have access to quality, affordable Healthcare, that we must support hard-working Missourians as well as businesses large and small, and that each and every child in the State of Missouri should have access to a quality public education regardless of their zip code, income, race, gender, ethnicity, faith or ability.

COVID-19 and Voting Access: Missouri, America, and the world are dealing with an unprecedented crisis as a result of the novel coronavirus. The COVID-19 disease has caused our former way of life- which we now realize that we took for granted- to be a great risk to not only our most vulnerable citizens but due to the many unknowns involved with COVID-19 making it a possible risk to anyone who may become infected with it and anyone that those infected may come into contact with.

While in the past there have been efforts to prepare for an event such as this it would appear that due to a vacuum in preparedness and leadership we’re facing a crisis that could have possibly been mitigated through immediate, decisive and well-planned, informed action.

In countries where the coronavirus has been better addressed by testing, tracking and isolating many thousands of lives have been saved. Unfortunately, many leaders in Missouri and the U.S. in general seem unwilling (and in some cases are unable) to successfully institute those types of efforts. As someone who has a number of family members who are elderly, suffer from underlying health conditions or are in residential/ skilled nursing facilities, the lack of will from leaders to prioritize the safety of American citizens- including our most vulnerable- is frankly somewhat disturbing.

That being said- in the absence of more committed and robust efforts from our government (and from citizens as well) in light of an ongoing public health emergency I believe that “vote by mail” and no-excuse absentee voting is a necessity in order to protect voters as well as polling place volunteers- who are often older folks who are more
Missouri Disability Voter Coalition

likely to be vulnerable to COVID-19. There are actually a number of other U.S. States that have been successfully “voting by mail” for many years and I see no reason why these methods couldn’t be successful in Missouri.

In regard to providers it’s still a challenge to procure PPE so I would like to see more connections and collaborations in place to make sure that Healthcare professionals and providers have adequate protective gear in order to do their critical, essential jobs as safely as possible.

Medicaid Expansion: I support accepting Medicaid Expansion in Missouri- which would provide access to quality, affordable Healthcare to a few hundred thousand currently uninsured Missouri residents while also providing a life preserver to struggling rural Healthcare providers and perhaps help to re-open closed facilities or build new hospitals in areas of Missouri where hospital services may be an hour’s drive away or more.

Medicaid Expansion is 90% Federally-funded, has been shown to be revenue-neutral where the program has been instituted correctly, has already been accepted and instituted in 37 States as well as Washington DC, and we’ve already been paying into a program that we don’t have access to for a number of years. In my experience there are many disabled folks who are underserved due to lack of access to Healthcare and there are some that are also some who are reluctant to access services due to a perceived stigma in doing so. In the rural areas that we’re used to dealing with providers may be quite a distance away and transportation can often be an issue for those seeking services as well as those providing services. Accepting Medicaid Expansion would at least be a part of the puzzle to help underserved residents of Missouri to have better access to preventive treatment and health maintenance as well as critical services required by someone who’s ill, injured or disabled.

Housing: As someone who has been trying to place two disabled adult charges in appropriate housing in Missouri I can testify that this particular issue is a crisis in many parts of our State. Whether it’s trying to find appropriate housing that is affordable for someone on a fixed income that may also need to have physical accommodations in place to address a physical disability or trying to find appropriate placements for those requiring a higher level of care there are many disabled Missouri residents that are being underserved and put in situations that can be dangerous to themselves and possibly others where a higher level of care is necessary.

I believe that communities in our District and Statewide should make it a standard practice to make sure that development takes providing affordable housing into consideration as well as working on creative solutions to provide affordable housing by repurposing existing structures, encouraging and forging community collaborations and so forth.

We need to not only improve funding for affordable and possibly assisted and supported housing but we also need to change the policies that prevent needy people from having access to appropriate housing due to having the “wrong diagnosis”. I believe that the success of our society is based on how we support the least able of us more than how we venerate the most able of us. No disabled person should be homeless or without proper housing in a nation as prosperous as the United States of America.

Direct Support for Community Living: I believe that it’s imperative that we have the opportunity to provide the disabled with caregivers who are trained and supported not only for the clients’ safety and well-being but so that with strong, committed supports those residents may be able to make progress and work toward having more fulfilling lives. As someone who has cared for and taken responsibility of disabled children and adults I recognize the challenges that those situations may present for a caregiver and the importance of training and guidance for those individuals providing care.

As someone who works with an Independent Living Center (and who has also accessed in-home services for disabled family members) I’ve seen firsthand the value of providing quality supportive services to those in need so that they can reside in the least restrictive environment possible. Unfortunately it can be very challenging to hire and retain staff to provide these services due to lack of funding as well as the travel required for providers in many
Position: State Representative – District 111  
Name: Daniel (Vern) Cherry  
Party: Democratic

1; I have no training with persons with disabilities. I did have an aunt and uncle who, in their later years, used an electric stair climber to access the second floor.

However, when early in my practice of Dentistry at Cardinal Glennon Hospital I treated children with disabilities which was covered by Catholic Charities and they seemed to be mostly from the Cape Girardeau area.

When I left the hospital my office was accessible but the patients I saw were those who, overtime, became handicapped in some form and I continued to treat them.

2. Covid-19 and voting access. Voting by mail is the best answer.

3. Medicaid expansion- Absolutely!

4. Housing. Accessibility to housing. This would require formula which relates the degree of incline to height vs. length to access the entrance, and that depends upon the space available. It would also have to be weather proof.

5. Direct support for community living. This problem would best be addressed at a community college level. The problem I have in answering your questions is that you do not present numbers to support public financial support.

6. Transportation. Jefferson County has difficulty is supporting public transportation, there is too few riders.

7. Employment. We can’t force employers to hire whom we feel they should employ.

8. Waiver Programs, I have no knowledge in this area.

9. Final Thoughts. Without accompanying facts and locations in the State, cities, or counties where the distribution is concentrated it is difficult to generalize solutions.
Position: State Representative – District 113
Name: Dan Shaul
Party: Republican

1. Background What training, experience, and characteristics qualify you for this position? Do you have any personal experience with a disability or an individual with a disability?
   a. Regarding being qualified to hold the office of State Representative, I meet the needed requirements but also have over 25 years of organization leadership and have served on several boards and with many nonprofit organizations. In regard to what qualifies me in the eyes of the Missouri Disability voter coalition, I have fought for the needs of those with disabilities not only over the last six years while serving in the Missouri House of Representatives but also the last nine years serving on the Windsor C-1 Board of Education and also on the allocation committee of the St. Louis Variety Club.

2. COVID-19 and Voting Access Many people with disabilities are high risk for COVID-19 and are concerned about potential exposure to the disease when voting. What, if any, steps would you take to address this problem?
   a. This a very real issue. The legislature passed SB 631, which was signed by Governor Parson, allowing for more opportunities for voters to vote via absentee or mail-in voting given the pandemic we are experiencing. As chairman of the House Committee on Elections and Elected Officials I am proud to have been the House handler for this important legislation and to continue ensure fair, trustworthy and transparent elections.

3. Medicaid Expansion How do you see Medicaid Expansion affecting the state of Missouri?
   a. We need to be very careful that with how this expansion is funded. My biggest concern is how will the expansion of Medicaid effect the funding of existing programs. I will ensure that the current programs that are serving those most in need continue to get the required resources to fulfill their mission.

4. Housing According to HUD, less than 5% of homes are accessible to individuals with mobility impairments. Affordable accessible housing is a concern for many Missourians with disabilities. What, if any, steps would you take to address this problem?
   a. I believe that this is a real and existing issue facing many across the state of Missouri. I feel that the state of Missouri should act as a facilitator to ensure that public and private organizations work together to maximize their positive impact on those who have disabilities.

5. Direct Support for Community Living There is a shortage of direct support professionals (personal attendants and other caregivers), to help people with disabilities live independently in the community. What, if any, steps would you take to address this problem?
   a. My approach to this would be very similar to my approach to education. By reducing redundant overhead and excessive regulations, we would be able to focus more resources where they are needed, in the class room in the terms of education or in the hands of the caregiver when discussing the arena of health care instead of corporate boardrooms.
6. Transportation In many areas across Missouri, there are a lack of public/para-transit transportation resources for seniors and individuals with disabilities. What, if any, steps would you take to address this problem?
   a. As with the previous question, we need to ensure that highest percentage of funding is used for these seniors and individuals with disabilities.

7. Employment The rate of unemployment or underemployment is much higher for individuals with disabilities than those without a disability. According to the American Community Survey, as of 2017, only 34% of all working-age people with disabilities in Missouri were employed, and 25% of people with a cognitive or intellectual disability were employed. What, if any, steps would you take to address this disparity?
   a. I will continue to fight for the funding and the expansion of funding for programs that will provide employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities. I have had the opportunity to visit and work with an organization in my district that provides employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities. These types of organizations not only offer employment opportunities but creates a much needed community for greater interaction. I will continue to support these organizations however I can.

8. Waiver Programs There are 11 1915(c) waivers in Missouri. Recently, many individuals have experienced waitlists and the effects of limited funding for waiver supported programs. What, if any, steps would you take to address this problem?
   a. We must continue to try and get the most out of the monies that the State of Missouri has. I will continue to review our budget and try to find ways to move resources from ill performing programs to programs that truly serve those in need.

9. Final Thoughts Is there anything else you would like to say to voters with disabilities?
   a. I would like to keep the line of communication open so that I am aware of issues that you may have. Please let me know what we can do to help you. I look forward to continuing to learn about the issues that you face on a daily basis so that we can find solutions that truly benefit you.
Good morning, hope you are well
I am happy to respond to your questions, thank you
My experience with this, I have actually had family members who have had disability, some due to an illness they were born with, others developed a disability due to an illness later in life. As an employee at a public school district I was around students with disabilities, so I am aware of the difficult situation they can be in

I would like for our state to make sure and provide the care and support needed for our disabled citizens. We need public housing, accessible travel to get to the doctor or store, if in school necessary transport and guidance to maintain their livelihood
Medicaid Expansion is necessary to make sure healthcare is available to those who depend on it and need it for their way of life. Necessary equipment for survival should be available to all who depend on this for their daily life. Our rural areas need to be able to provide the needed help so desperately needed
I would want to look into what funding is available to help with necessary home improvements for the disabled
We need to offer caregivers benefits and pay necessary to keep them employed, so they can continue to provide these services.
There should be transportation services provided for our disabled citizens, through some type of medical insurance like the Medicaid system, used to be in place.
I think with training, we could provide an opportunity for several disabled citizens
I would have to reach out and get more information about the financial waivers, how is this funded, what can we do to achieve more funds that are desperately needed

Voters with disabilities, you matter and can provide your voice to help make a difference. Every person has a right to vote and be heard, I hope all of you will exercise that right. Vote absentee, vote by mail, Vote in person, just make sure and vote on November 3rd. We can all make a difference, be safe and thank you for this opportunity

Cynthia D Nugent
Candidate for State Representative District 115
Sent from my iPad
Position: State Representative – District 116
Name: Dale Wright
Party: Republican

**Background:** I’ve worked in Healthcare Administration for 47 years, working with many people with disabilities the entire time. I served on a sheltered workshop board for twenty years. During my time as a Missouri State Representative I’ve visited and assisted numerous organizations serving citizens with misc. disabilities.

**COVID – 19 and Voting Access:** I support mail-in voting and for those who wish to vote at the polls, I support providing transportation.

**Medicaid Expansion:** I introduced HB 2552 which would allow recipients to continue receiving their Medicaid benefits while obtaining gainful employment. The bill died in the senate but would have given Medicaid recipients the opportunity keep their medical coverage while having the dignity to provide for themselves. Once their salaries rise to a sufficient level, recipients would eventually be able to voluntarily go to the open market to purchase healthcare insurance coverage, which would then save the state of Missouri an anticipated $638 million to over a billion dollars per year. With this model in place Missouri would be financially ready to expand Medicaid.

**Housing:** Tax credits could be made available to those developers willing to build affordable, totally accessible housing.

**Direct Support for Community Living:** Salaries for direct support people are woefully low and don’t attract enough workers to want to work in this field. By adopting my Medicaid bill there would be sufficient funding to address this and many more areas of need in the state.

**Transportation:** In my area SMTS operates a bus service. This could be expanded to other areas of the state, if they are not already there.

**Employment:** Again, my HB2552 incents people to work, if they can, and have the dignity of providing for themselves. It would expand workforce opportunities.

**Waiver Programs:** My bill would lessen the resistance for waivers in my opinion.

Final Thoughts: We must make serving those who cannot help themselves a priority and insist on those who can to do their part to contribute to our society and economy.
Position: State Representative – District 126
Name: Jim Hogan
Party: Democratic

Background:
I have been a teacher for over 40 years and worked for two years at the Missouri Department of Education. Therefore, I know the educational system and what it needs to be effective. I come from a family of farmers. I know the importance of farming and family farms to Missouri’s economy. I believe in the rights of ALL individuals to have the right to secure a viable income to support themselves and their families.

I have been a Type 1 diabetic since I was two years old. Even though diabetes is not a visible affliction, it does preclude me from getting certain jobs. I feel great distress for those with diabetes that cannot afford health insurance. Purchasing insulin and supplies would be nearly impossible.

My wife was diagnosed with progressive multiple sclerosis in 2000. She passed away in 2011. I have been through having to make our home accessible, purchasing wheelchairs and scooters, purchasing an accessible vehicle, and avoiding stores that did not have adequate access methods. In addition, her medical bills were astronomical.

Voting Access
I believe, particularly in this pandemic, that absentee voting should be opened up to any person wishing to do so. The disabled should not have to put themselves at risk in order to exercise their constitutional right to vote.

Medicaid Expansion
I do believe that there is a huge number of people in Missouri that would benefit from Medicaid expansion. There may now be many more that have lost their insurance benefits as a result of losing their jobs due to the pandemic. However, I have to be truly honest in saying I think it will be very difficult to get Medicaid expansion legislation to pass with a possible $1 billion dollar deficit in the Missouri state budget.

Housing
A fund should be set up to assist in making homes accessible to those with disabilities. I had no assistance from anywhere when I had to sell the home we were living in, buy another home, and make it accessible for my wife’s wheelchair. I could not have done it had I not had sufficient funds to make the home usable for her.

Direct Support
Those people are angels. The problem is the lack of them. Their pay needs to be sufficient to entice young people to get into this line of work. Advertising needs to be done to entice them into these occupations. Courses need to be set up statewide to get people trained to serve as caregivers. Screening of applicants would need to be intense.

Transportation
All public transportation systems across Missouri, such as OATS, should be mandated to have vehicles capable of transporting those with disabilities.

Employment
Unfortunately, Discrimination happens. I recently applied for a job and, I truly believe, the only reason I wasn’t hired was my age. The disabled many times have the same thing happen to them. We have
antidiscrimination laws on the books, but enforcement is impossible. Until we get more employers that see the person and their knowledge instead of their disability the change will be slow to happen. Education needs to be expanded. I would never be in favor of saying a business must hire a number of disabled citizens. That defeats what we would be after.

Waiver Program

Missouri needs to expand the number of individuals the waivers will allow. This would entail more people to process and work with the disabled persons but would shorten the wait times. The problem for a while will be the availability of funding for expansion.

Final Thoughts

There is yet so much that needs to be done for our disabled citizens in Missouri. I would be in the fight for assistance to them in many of the programs mentioned above. The major problem we are going to experience in the near future is balancing the Missouri budget with a huge deficit due to the Corona virus. Those moneys had to be spent to help get our citizens through this pandemic. There is also the lack of state taxes coming in due to so many people being out of work at this time. Although assistance to the disabled would be a high priority to me, simply being able to balance the budget with decreased income will be the biggest problem for the next few years.
Position: State Representative – District 128  
Name: Marvin Manning  
Party: Democratic  

**Background:** I have been a Missouri public school teacher for 35 years. Each year, I have taken part in team activities to evaluate individual education plans and accommodations for many physically and mentally challenged students. As a music teacher, I am actively involved each day in providing accommodations to ensure that each student has an opportunity to learn. Closer to home, my spouse has dealt with severe hearing loss over the past twenty years, resulting in successful cochlear implant surgery in the fall of 2019. As a church lay leader, I have been involved in two large building projects, and I have worked to make sure that our facility is not only accommodating but also welcoming to the physically disabled. I have been a member of the local Lions Club for 25 years, providing eye and hearing services to many members of our community.

**Covid 19:** A universal Vote by Mail without notarization should be an accepted practice. I see that the ACLU and Voter Protection Coalition have taken active stances in securing these rights for all voters and I support these efforts. The Missouri General Assembly should not be a roadblock to achieving this; instead, the Legislature should be leading the charge to accommodate voters.

**Medicaid Expansion:** It is unconscionable that this opportunity has been left on the table for so long by the Missouri General Assembly. Approval on the August ballot will provide immediate benefits to rural hospitals and their patrons, but will no doubt touch off a litany of bills in the Legislature designed to throw up roadblocks to implementation. I will work for swift implementation of expansion.

**Housing:** I live across the street from a set of residential low-income apartments. A number of residents have disabilities or mobility issues, and these single-level units are not 100% ADA compliant in providing ramped access through the campus. Subsidized housing units need financial incentives paired with regulation and inspections to not only ensure more units, but also to guarantee that units meet standards for livability and accessibility.

**Direct Support for Community Living:** In much the same way that we forgive student loans for teachers who work in disadvantaged regions, we should support training programs for caregivers that will ensure that we have an adequate number. These programs should have subsidized training that is contingent on taking part in the professional care workforce in areas of greatest need.

**Transportation:** OATS has been a successful program that too often has to depend on local support or charitable grants. Subsidized transportation needs a boost from the state government to ensure a successful network for seniors and disabled persons.

**Employment:** everyone has a talent or skill that can be harnessed for a productive and rewarding pursuit. The State of Missouri has a responsibility to open avenues for success for each individual. Incentives for businesses, such as tax credits, to expand openings for this group of people would be the best course of action.

**Waiver Programs:** Each of these 11 programs are of significant value to participants and any delay in providing services can lead to other detrimental health conditions, both physical and mental. I will work to ensure that delays are minimized by working with MODDC to uncover discrepancies in waiver administration.

**Final Thoughts:** All Missouri citizens are guaranteed the right to live productive and rewarding lives under our Federal and State Constitution. The parameters of physical and mental disabilities are constantly changing but our mission to accommodate should not. I am a strong supporter of early evaluation in our schools and also in providing services as soon as possible to address deficiencies.
My thoughts expressed in this survey may be broad and, in some instances, superficial to the needs of our disabled citizens. I am willing to listen and learn more about how we can team together to help make life better for each. Good government depends on organizations such as the members of the MODDC to advocate for those in need. As a legislator, I would be compelled to listen to and assist in the needs of our state’s disabled population.
Position: State Representative – District 130  
Name: Dave Gragg  
Party: Democratic

**Background**

What training, experience, and characteristics qualify you for this position? Do you have any personal experience with a disability or an individual with a disability?

This is the first time I’ve run for office, but I have had several perspectives on how government affects people’s lives every day. I grew up in rural Missouri. After college I spent 11 years as a newspaper editor and reporter covering local issues in four states. I moved back to Missouri in 2010 and started an insurance and financial services agency in 2011.

No, I don’t have experience with a disability. My closest experience would be helping some of my clients with some of their insurance needs.

**COVID-19 and Voting Access**

Many people with disabilities are high risk for COVID-19 and are concerned about potential exposure to the disease when voting. What, if any, steps would you take to address this problem?

Obviously, most of us have no idea how to deal with this. When I’m outside of my area of expertise, I usually try to listen to the experts and make your own call when experts disagree. I hope the governor is right to reopen the state and leave the call to local governments, but I really wish he would do more to encourage the use of masks.

That’s my advice for folks with or without disabilities.

**Medicaid Expansion**

How do you see Medicaid Expansion affecting the state of Missouri?

As a net positive and it should have been done 10 years ago.

**Housing**

According to HUD, less than 5% of homes are accessible to individuals with mobility impairments. Affordable accessible housing is a concern for many Missourians with disabilities. What, if any, steps would you take to address this problem?

Like a lot of things on this survey, I don’t know the issue well enough to give a good answer here. Are we talking about all houses or just HUD housing?

If we’re talking about HUD housing, I would think that a home that is accessible for folks with mobility impairments would be eligible for higher rents/more rent assistance. (Yeah, I’m giving a little bit of a “let the market decide” answer, but again, this is a bit outside of what I know directly.)

**Direct Support for Community Living**

There is a shortage of direct support professionals (personal attendants and other caregivers), to help people with disabilities live independently in the community. What, if any, steps would you take to address this problem?

This isn’t just a problem for the disabled, but elderly folks as well, especially as we Baby Boomers continue to age.
Increasing incentives for DS professional education and raising their pay over minimum wage seems like a smart first step.

**Transportation**

In many areas across Missouri, there are a lack of public/para-transit transportation resources for seniors and individuals with disabilities. What, if any, steps would you take to address this problem?

Got no ideas here, I'm afraid. Public transportation doesn't seem to be a big priority in Missouri for anyone.

**Employment**

The rate of unemployment or underemployment is much higher for individuals with disabilities than those without a disability. According to the American Community Survey, as of 2017, only 34% of all working-age people with disabilities in Missouri were employed, and 25% of people with a cognitive or intellectual disability were employed. What, if any, steps would you take to address this disparity?

Open to suggestions here, but those numbers don’t surprise me.

**Waiver Programs**

There are 11 1915(c) waivers in Missouri. Recently, many individuals have experienced waitlists and the effects of limited funding for waiver supported programs. What, if any, steps would you take to address this problem?

Again, outside my area. It sounds like the same problem our state has with a lot of social services — not enough people to deal with the need. In this case, not enough administrative staff to handle requests. As much as Republicans like to decry and defund the bureaucracy, some of it is necessary to get things done.

**Final Thoughts**

Is there anything else you would like to say to voters with disabilities?

I’m obviously not as well versed on a lot of these issues as I’d like, but I am always willing to listen and learn.
Thank you for the correspondence of May 21st. I am happy to respond to your organization. My background includes nearly 40 years in banking in southwest Missouri. I also spent time in the Missouri House in the 1980s. After leaving the House I spent 30 years on the Board of two different Social Service Not For Profits serving people with disabilities. At the urging of long time State Senator Emory Melton and his son Stan I joined Lakes Country Rehabilitation in Springfield. When this organization merged with Alternative Opportunities I was asked to remain on the board for the combined entity. I have very strong feelings for organizations that are represented by MARF. In Emory Melton's words to me “they are one of the best uses of taxpayer money. In many cases we are helping people come off government assistance and begin to become contributors to the system themselves”.

People with Disabilities need to be allowed to vote absentee. They are too vulnerable to be forced to vote by traditional methods. I believe the Legislature, Governor and Secretary of State Jay Ashcroft are in the process of seeing that this happens. I fully support this effort.

Medicaid Expansion is fine if we have the resources to provide it. The question is in this environment where the Legislature has already cut $450 million out of next years budget we will need to find an extra approximate $250 million to pay for the state’s portion of the Medicaid funding. I'm concern that many other areas of the budget will suffer including programs that serve the mentally ill and those with disabilities. One way of generating additional revenue is to pass the Wayfair bill. There is no reason that we are providing large out of state internet firms with the advantage of not paying sales tax when selling to Missouri consumers. This could generate additional revenues and level the playing field with Missouri retailers.

Housing is an area that needs to be addressed by Missouri Housing and Development Corporation (MHDC). They are doing some but not enough for the amount of facilities they are building. When revenue comes back we can look at tax incentives to encourage additional residences for people with special needs.

Community Living and Transportation are other areas where we need new funding sources. I again go back to Wayfair as an option to generate additional income.

Additional funding for MARF related facilities that provide job coaching, training and placement would be a great help in increasing employment. The Waiver programs I will have to study more. If I was aware of them I have forgotten.

Finally I would encourage you to visit with John Bardgett whose lobbying firm represents MARF in Jefferson City. John knows my background, abilities and my desire to represent people with disabilities. I look forward to the opportunity to work with you and your organization in Jeff City.
Position: State Representative – District 135
Name: Vicke Kepling
Party: Green

**Background**
I am the mother of an adult with disabilities. My son was born extremely premature (one pound, 26 weeks gestation) and had a brain bleed during delivery that left him with cognitive disabilities. I became his advocate, nurse, and caretaker. When it came time for him to enter kindergarten, the school district in North Carolina gave us only one option, for him to attend a separate school way out in the country. I did not know about education laws at that time and was a mess. I connected with the Parent Training and Information Center (PTI) there, the Exceptional Children Assistance Center (ECAC), and learned about the law and how to advocate for my son's educational rights. His Individualized Education Program (IEP) meetings were horrible for me, but I worked for him to attend his neighborhood school in first grade. He was the first student with his severity of disabilities to attend that school. I graduated from Partners in Policymaking in 2004 and started helping other parents. I volunteered for over 15 years, attending countless meetings. My son and I moved to my home state of Missouri in 2009, and I worked against moving preschoolers with disabilities out of their neighborhood schools and into separate centers on two occasions here in Springfield. I volunteered with MPACT and served on its Board of Directors for five years.

**COVID-19 and Voting Access**
We did not have an election in Springfield this month, but I support voting by mail and other measures to increase our democratic rights.

**Medicaid Expansion**
Until we have a national healthcare system, which I support, the state of Missouri needs Medicaid expansion. We are one of 14 states that have not expanded Medicaid and have watched as 120,000 people were kicked off during a software switch last year and as rural hospitals have closed. I believe in NO AMERICAN LEFT BEHIND, and right now people are falling through the cracks, including people with disabilities. We live in the richest country in the history of the world, and leaders must work to make healthcare available to everyone. That includes Missouri.

**Housing**
Honestly I do not know much about housing for people with disabilities. My son is 22-years-old and lives with me. I have visited a young friend with disabilities that lived in senior living in Springfield, which I’m not sure was the best fit for him. Thinking about the issue, I'm sure each community may be different. Affordable housing needs to be made available for everyone, and people with disabilities should have access to supported living wherever they live, should they choose it.

**Direct Support for Community Living**
When I lived in North Carolina, I visited my “Partners” friends, a married couple, who lived in a nice apartment complex with assisted living Winston-Salem. It was a nice set-up. The apartments had parking, and folks were free to come and go as they pleased. There was someone that checked in on the couple and a van with driver who took residents where they needed to go. Higher functioning residents helped other residents with medication and other things. While I know that the program would have to be altered in situations, I thought it was a good example of what assisted living should look like. We to provide housing and support but let people be as independent as possible.

**Transportation**
Missouri needs to work on having transportation in all areas, even if it's a van with one driver in smaller communities. Here in Springfield, my son uses the Access bus for people with disabilities, and it has had its own challenges due to his varying shifts and hours at work. Still, I'm happy this service is available for him. Some of my friends with disabilities use the city bus and have shared with me the problems with it: the need to switch buses, the limitation of hours, the distance to get to the bus, and the lack of destinations. A friend with disabilities serves on the City Utilities Busing Board and works to make things better locally.
Employment
This is an issue that I am learning more about. There are four employment service providers in Springfield, and our experience with two of them has not been great. While Vocational Rehabilitation has been helpful, the management of the service providers needs some work. Again, though, Springfield is lucky to have services, and I wonder how employment issues are handled in rural areas, like in the southeast portion of the state.

My son has worked in a dining hall of Missouri State University for two years. Each year, he starts out with 20 hours. Then, as the semester proceeds, his days and hours are cut, usually to ten or so hours. When the virus hit, he was laid off from his job. His varying hours adversely affected transportation. Many of these issues are related.

Waiver Programs
While I am not an expert about the programs, it seems like the only way to help with the waitlists is to provide additional funding and expand Medicaid.

Final Thoughts
I have been an advocate for my son since the day he was born. He gave me my voice, and I have been using it for the last twenty years. My activism started with disability issues, and I worked very hard for educational inclusion for my son and others. I even researched how “least-restrictive environment” was defined by all fifty states one time. Over the years, my activism has expanded, and I care about many issues. I now see things from a broader view and am frequently disappointed with the happenings in Jefferson City.

Should I be elected, I would be happy to advocate for disability issues.
Position: State Representative – District 156  
Name: Dale Speelman  
Party: Democratic

1. Background: I have chronic, suicidal depression, along with Meniere’s disease, bilateral hearing loss, arthritis of the hips, knees, and ankles, a non-working reproductive organ (this really hurts), type 2 diabetes, right-hand tremors, radiculopathy on my left side, and a lot of others. Aside from taking care of myself, I have helped my mother, who had severe osteoporosis, and hearing loss in her final days. I have also helped many disabled veterans in their daily endeavors.

2. COVID-19 and Voting Access: I would caution the more susceptible people to wear a mask and keep in mind to maintain a 6-foot distance between people. However, if that person knows he/she cannot get out to vote, contact the respective county election board and ask for an absentee ballot. Additionally, voting districts have set-up drive-thru voting where the voter stays in their care and the information is brought to them.

3. Medicaid Expansion: Unfortunately, because of the virus and the shut-down of many businesses in Missouri, as well as, the rest of the nation, tax revenues are down. This has already caused the Governor to cut funding for many public services. For the foreseeable future, I do not see any increase or expansion in Medicaid. I would push to keep funding at a previous level without cutting services.

4. Housing: I would push for a chance in the state building codes to include elevators for all apartment buildings taller than one-story. I would also push for ADA compliant apartments reserved for impaired individuals. Additionally, I would push for reduced cost of living arrangements for individuals with recognized disabilities.

5. Direct Support for Community Living: High school and college students, within the state of Missouri, have a community service obligation prior to graduation. Using these available students could be one solution. Also, persons who have elected to do community service in, in lieu of fines could be another solution. Direct recruitment of college grads… A state sponsored solution would be to increase monthly compensation for all experienced care-givers employed through various agencies throughout the state.

6. Transportation: My idea, at this time, would be to set up a transportation system, similar to county ambulance districts, where there would be three hubs located in a county. These hubs would also be located in three different areas of a county to cover all the areas of need. Depending upon the location of transportation need, the person would call the hub closest to their address and request transportation. Funding for this service could come from a tax increase or the person would pay for the transportation at time of service.

7. Employment: Unfortunately, despite laws that are in place to prevent prejudice and discrimination against any type of disability in hiring, an employer can still choose not to hire a disabled person. The state could offer incentives such as tax rebates or provide a stipend to the employer for hiring the disabled.

8. Waiver Programs: Unfortunately, at this time, I have nothing to offer on this program. If elected, I will study this program and offer a solution.

9. Final Thoughts: I do understand how difficult it is for a disabled person to fine a job in the private sector. It seems the only jobs to which any type of disability can be hired are county, state, and/or federal jobs if that person meets the qualifications for the job posting. I would seriously try to make hiring of disabled more attractive to the civilian sector, if elected.
Thank you for the questionnaire. I am happy to answer your questions.

Background:

My nephew is paraplegic and I am bipolar so I am very familiar with prejudices and obstacles disabled people face whether it is physical or mental. My nephew is not an angel by no means, however there have been more than once where he has had issues with law enforcement and his condition. Being denied his wheelchair or accusing him of faking his disability (he has leg spasms which is interpreted as faking). When applying for a job I have to identify myself as being disabled because there have been times when bipolar has affected me to the point of not being able to function. I see my nephew's daily struggle and I see the change in people's faces when I tell them I am bipolar.

COVID-19 and Voting Access

Until legislation is changed where there is no excuse voting by mail or the mail in ballot does not have to be notarized the best method of improving access is information. Drive up voting is available for anyone wanting to cast their vote at the polls curbside instead of going in the building. Voters need to know where to get their ballots notarized. We need to make it easily understandable how to vote by mail. My goal would be to allow all Missourians to vote by mail.

Medicaid Expansion - I am 100% behind Medicaid expansion. It would improve our healthcare ranking from 43rd in the nation and prevent closing of rural hospitals.

My suggestion is the following services should be managed under one agency - Housing, Direct Support, Transportation, and Waiver Programs. I believe you could streamline the work process, improving service and reduce stress on the individual.

I had reviewed housing before and at one time owners received a tax incentive to build accessible housing. I have heard landlords don't want to deal with subsidised housing because they are difficult to manage. There needs to be improvement in the rental process and incentives for upgrades in current housing or new construction. It may be beneficial to group housing based on type of disability so specific needs can be addressed by a community manager and improve access to direct support.

My nephew states he has had issues receiving direct support. I haven't seen any type of recruiting for these positions except private companies. I think active recruiting would increase accessibility and must be competitive with CNA positions.

In the short term the only way I see improving transportation without having to purchase more equipment and hire personnel is to work with companies like Uber. They could actively recruit specialty transportation - disabled people could drive disabled people with their own specially equipped vehicles. Having the private sector invest in this specialty transportation may be an untapped revenue stream. Going forward any government transportation vehicle should include para transportation.

The employment issue has two parts: the prospective employee and the hiring company. From personal experience with my nephew he has a college degree, but his has a quiet personality and lack of real world experience is a hindrance. I think disabled people would benefit from job shadowing which may build confidence and help them identify the type of work that would interest them. This could be done in the private and public sectors with minimal cost. I think there is a big gray area with the hiring company not understanding what limitations a disabled person may have so it creates a hesitation in hiring. I think a thorough guide to interviewing disabled people should be developed and more personal questions should be allowed to ask.
Bottom line we have to look for solutions that do not require a huge growth in budget as we both know is hard to obtain. Today people communicate in sound bytes and for a politician to generate interest form other lawmakers it is the same. I can support a one byte at a time approach as it would be clear and concise for other lawmakers to understand. That byte subject and suggested solution must come from the disabled and disabled support communities.

I hope this helps you understand my position and would be happy to listen to your suggestions.
Thank you for your interest in my candidacy and for the opportunity to answer your questions.

1. Background: I was a duly elected Alderman for the city of Oronogo, MO for over 2 years. As for my experience with people struggling with disabilities, I am a licensed physical therapist assistant. This is my profession and has been for the last ten years. I work with each patient to improve their quality of life and to advocate on their behalf for services and needs they require. I deal with all people from all walks of life struggling with injury or chronic illness.

2. Covid-19 and voting: I advocate for mail in/absentee voting. No one should have to risk their lives to exercise their constitutional right to vote.

3. Medicaid expansion: I am all for it and strongly believe in healthcare as a right. I have seen in my career people struggle with either bad/uncaring insurance companies or having none at all.

4. Housing: strong enforcement of the ADA. I believe housing that does not allow for persons with disabilities is discriminatory and should be held accountable by state and federal law.

5. Direct support: I would personally like to see state investment in companies that help people stay in their homes. I am uncertain what aid Missouri provides at this time and need to pursue further research on what, if anything, has been done.

6. Transportation: Prior to stepping down as Alderman I was attempting to get public transportation for elderly, poor and disabled citizens to come into Oronogo. I strongly encourage all municipalities to look into affordable public transportation (for social, economic and environmental reasons) as an option for their citizens. Missouri may be able to subsidize poorer communities who cannot afford it.

7. Employment: This is a truly unfortunate time for employment as unemployment has hit about 41,000,000 and I have no idea of how many are under employed. The State of Missouri must be an EEO. I would also approach corporate America and see what kind of cooperation we could get from them. Each person should be allowed the dignity of work within their capacity and to have education to increase their capacity.

8. Waiver programs: This is a problem that has a lot of different applications for specialized groups. The autism waiver was apparently allowed to expire. But dealing with the wait times I would look to hire more staff to process the applications. This would create more jobs while simultaneously helping more people get the services they need.

Again, thanks for allowing me to address these issues with you. Our state needs to serve all people with dignity and respect regardless.