

# REPRESENTATIVE BRENDA LANDWEHR

## Why We Need a Taxpayers Bill of Rights

A Taxpayer Bill of Rights (TABOR) would place strong constraints on the future growth rate of state spending. And it would provide Kansas an automatic refund when tax collections exceed the TABOR limit. It requires voter approval for tax increases, and it limits state revenue growth to the rate of population growth plus inflation. **Tax collections over the limit must be refunded back to the taxpayers.** Taxpayers can override the limits by popular vote.

As you can see in the inset graph, over the last 30 years, **Kansas spending has increased 1,119%**, while **Kansas wages increase only 348%** during the same period. When government spending is growing three times faster than Kansas wages, you would think King John and the Sheriff of Nottingham have hijacked Kansas government. Our goal is for Kansas to be a great place to live where **government serves the people, not the people as servants of the government.**

This is a bipartisan failure. Democrats and Republicans have governed over this unsustainable and embarrassing spending spree. When families and busi-

nesses spend more than they make, they go bankrupt. By following our California brethren into the spending abyss, we are creating a crisis. Accounting gimmicks and status quo spending are inappropriate and an inadequate response to the problem. To those who would say let the elected officials make the decisions, I say the taxpayer should be allowed to approve tax increases. I think with a 30 year history of failure, we need to **give taxpayers a vote.**

The Baby Boomers have provided us with more taxes than we could ever ask for, but times are changing and they will soon be retiring. Senator Stan Clark, Chair of the

President's Task Force on Medicaid Reform 2003 said: "If State Budgets would increase tax receipts by 5% annually and Medicaid costs continue to increase at their current rate by 2020 Medicaid will consume the entire budgets of every state in the union. Doing nothing is not an option."

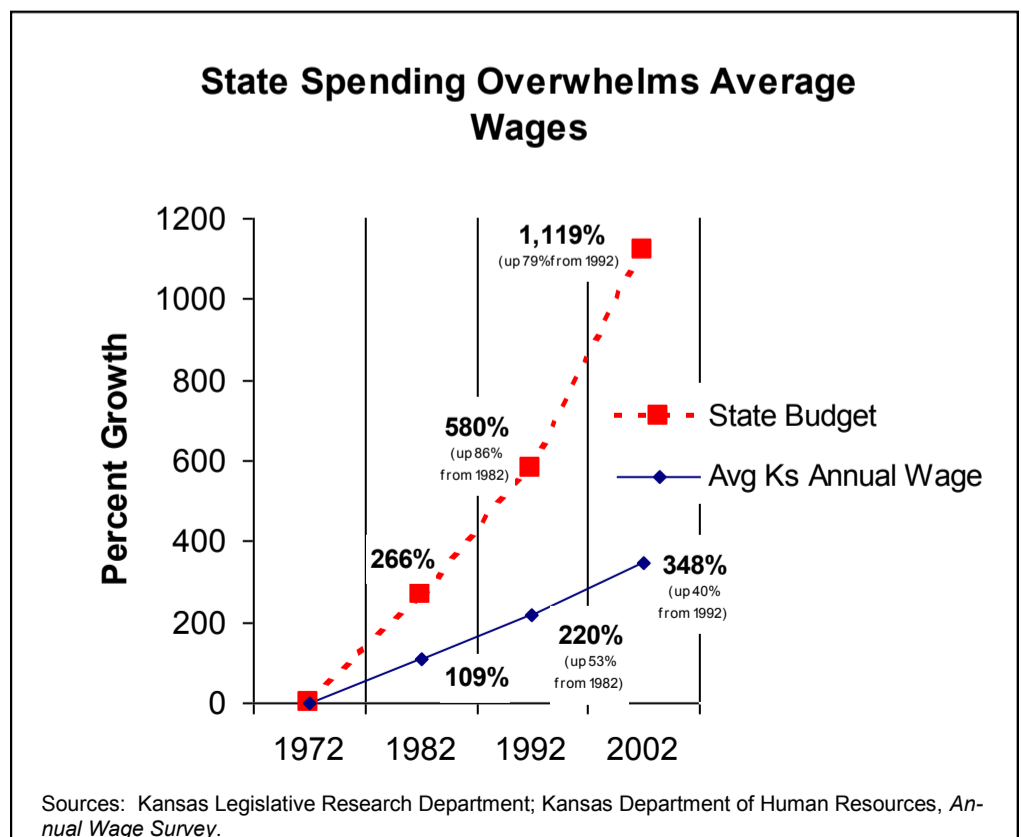
Despite what we think, Kansas is actually changing. For example: If a next-door neighbor always spends more than he can afford and each month demands that you pay a \$100 of the bills he can't pay, you would move. Since 2000, 10,000 U.S. born Kansans are doing that each year and moving out of our high tax state. We are losing

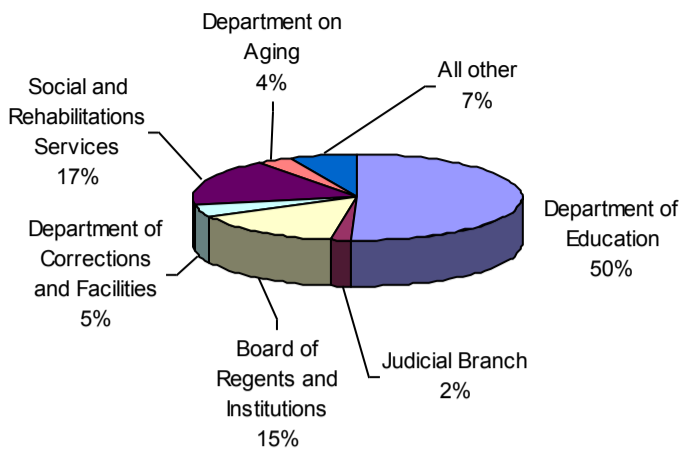
businesses like Pizza Hut, Brite Voice, Rent-A-Center and others to no income tax states.

We have treated the symptoms but not the problem. We must address spending or we will continue to raise taxes and never attract new jobs to our state. We must control the growth of government so that we can better manage our economic future for generations to come.

Kansas TABOR would work better because we would erect it on a clean foundation, and we have the benefit of learning from the past successes and mistakes of 26 other states with tax and spending limits.

Another 30 years of





Sources: Kansas Legislative Research Department

the same failed approach would be catastrophic. Education, transportation, welfare, etc. all depend on us not bankrupting the state by spending above our means. If we fail to act, the poor, the disabled, children's education, and all other government services will be radically impacted as the state goes into bankruptcy. As we tell our

children: **"Actions have consequences and...Inaction has consequences."**

I urge you to make the only honorable choice and support TABOR. I want your opinion, please refer to my website [www.brendalandwehr.org](http://www.brendalandwehr.org) or call me at 1-316-821-9800. New information will be posted on the website as it is available.

## OTHER LEGISLATIVE ISSUES OF INTEREST

### Concealed Carry

- House approved the Personal and Family Protection Act (PFPA). If put into law, the PFPA would allow qualified applicants to receive a concealed weapons licenses from the Kansas Bureau of Investigation starting January 1, 2005.
- To receive a license applicants must: be 21 years of age, physically able to handle a weapon.
- To be approved for a license, applicants: cannot owe child support, have a felony conviction or been placed on felony diversion, and must complete a weapons safety and training course.
- Concealed Carry is prohibited: where alcohol is dispersed, police stations, jails, courtrooms, schools, universities, the Kansas State Fair, and business owners have the right to prohibit customers and employees from carrying concealed weapons.
- U.S. Department of Justice estimated that 2.5 million people have been able to prevent being the victim of violent crime because of concealed carry.
- **Kansas is one of only four states that does not have a concealed carry law.**

### Defense of Marriage Act

- Designed to create an amendment to the Kansas Constitution defining marriage as a civil contract between one man and one woman.
- Any other marriages, including gay marriage from another state, would be considered void under Kansas law and not recognized by the State of Kansas.
- Would not preclude us from passing a law that recognizes gay civil unions.
- Kansas would not recognize a homosexual civil union from another state unless it was in accordance with KS law.
- We already have a law that defines marriage as a union between one man and one woman.
- By amending our state constitution, the Kansas Supreme Court would not be able to rule it unconstitutional.

### Medicare-Approved Drug Discount Cards

- Medicare-Approved Drug Discount Cards will be available in 2004 to help you save on prescription drugs.
- Medicare will contract with private companies to offer new drug discount cards until a Medicare prescription drug benefit starts in 2006.
- The approved drug discount card will help you save 10-25% on prescription drugs
- When prescription drug benefits are added to Medicare in 2006, Medicare people will enroll in plans that cover prescription drugs:
  - ▶ Pay premiums of about \$35
  - ▶ Pay first \$250 ("deductible")
  - ▶ Medicare will pay 75% of cost between \$250 and \$2,250, you pay %25.
  - ▶ You pay 100% above \$2,250 until you reach \$3,600 in out-of-pocket spending
  - ▶ Medicare will pay 95% after you have spent \$3,600.

### **Representative Brenda Landwehr, wants you to know about a Medicare Card SCAM.**

- Please be aware you may be approached by what seems to be a reputable company representing Medicare to purchase a prescription plan or card.
- Please watch carefully that any card you accept or purchase has the Medicare seal of approval printed on it.

**FEEL FREE TO CONTACT ME ANYTIME WITH YOUR QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS :**

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