

It's always interesting when someone makes a personal attack on a person they perceive as a threat instead of discussing the issues. Rochelle Chronister is not running for office; although I have done so and won 9 times in my district as both a school board member and legislator.

This election is about Marc Rhoades and the failed policies of the Brownback administration which he has supported.

1. Schools districts per pupil budget in FY 2009 was \$4400 per pupil and FY 2014 it is \$3838 per pupil, and that's counting retirement funds that weren't counted in 2009. The \$129 million that the courts required the legislature to add to school finance was mostly internal shuffling of present funding - only \$39 million of actual new dollars were added with much of that coming from programs for at-risk kids. Kansas schools are suffering from the reckless tax plan that has reduced revenue by an unexpected \$300+ million in the last two months and not enough revenue was generated to even pay back over 20,000 taxpayers who have refunds due. The state is issuing internal borrowing of \$675 million for the next fiscal year and may still go broke before year's end.

2. Property taxes and sales taxes are going up in order to support local entities that have had state support in the past. Poll after poll show that Kansans hate property taxes more than any other form of taxation, but the legislature has reduced funding for so many areas that school boards, cities and county officials have been forced to increase these taxes which also fall harder on the middle class than the wealthy. In Harvey county between 2010 and 2013 tax years county government has raised taxes by **over 30%**, school districts have raised taxes **over 10%**.

71 counties had property tax increases of 10% or more.

45 counties had property tax increases of 15% or more.

28 counties had property tax increases of 20% or more.

That covers 71 of Kansas' 105 counties. State responsibilities in the areas of corrections, public health, libraries, social services, mental health and community arts have been cut forcing county commissions and school boards to increase the only additional resource they have - property taxes or abandon these programs.

3. Kansas higher education funding is still at pre-recession levels with Kansas being one of the few states which a year ago continued making cuts. In 2013 the Kansas legislature passed and the governor signed into law cuts to universities that resulted in Kansas university taking a \$13.5 million cut which was initiated in the House Appropriations committee which Mr. Rhoades headed.

4. The "shot of adrenalin to the heart" of the Kansas economy which the tax cuts were supposed to generate has been a failure. There has been job growth, but much of the growth has been offset by job losses. The Governor's own Council of Economic Advisors reported Kansas was trailing surrounding states in our region, as well as the nation as a whole, on most economic growth. Kansas lagged in employment, gross state product, personal income, wage levels, new business establishments and population.

**This** is the record that Mr. Rhoades and Gov. Brownback must stand on.

Rochelle Chronister

Former Republican Party chair and Kansas House Appropriations chair