

**A BRIEF HISTORY  
OF THE  
KANSAS  
REPUBLICAN  
PARTY**

## **The Dominant Political Party of Kansas**

The Kansas Republican Party has dominated Kansas politics since Kansas gained statehood in 1861. Kansas has had 45 governors: 32 Republicans, 11 Democrats and 2 Populists. Kansas has had 33 US Senators: 28 Republicans, 3 Democrats, and 2 Populists. The last time a Democrat was elected to the U.S. Senate from Kansas was in 1932. Since 1960, the Republicans have won 106 of 135 Congressional elections; have won all 20 U.S. Senate elections; and have won 69 of 90 state-wide elections.

The Democrats have won control of the Kansas Senate only in the 1912 election and control of the Kansas House only three times, in the 1912, 1976, and 1990 elections.

Since the 1968 election, Kansas has consistently voted for the Republican Presidential candidate and since 1860 has voted for the Republican presidential candidate 20 times, the Democrat six times and the Populist once.

Kansas is one of the only states with all its current federal and statewide elected officials from the Republican Party.

Of the 1.74 million registered voters in Kansas, about 45% affiliate with the Republican Party, about 25% registered with the Democratic Party, and about 30% are unaffiliated with any political party.

## PART I:

### Early Party History 1854 to 1974

#### TERRITORIAL KANSAS (1854–1860)

Kansas and the Republican Party owe their mutual existence to the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Act in 1854, which repealed the Missouri Compromise that had outlawed slavery above the 36<sup>0</sup>30' latitude in the Louisiana territories. This left the question of whether Kansas would be a slave or free state up to the Kansas voters. Anti-slavery and pro-slavery settlers hurried into Kansas to influence the outcome of the first election. The conflict was violent, known to history as Bleeding Kansas. In 1855, the anti-slavery settlers organized themselves as the Free-State political party, which, in 1859, became the Kansas Republican Party.

The Kansas Republican Party was organized on May 18, 1859, at a convention held at the Jillson Hotel in Osawatomie (below), attended by Horace Greeley.



*Jillson Hotel- Where it All Began*

When the Wyandotte Constitutional Convention met in July 1859, it consisted of

35 Republicans and 17 Democrats. It produced the Wyandotte Constitution, making Kansas a free state and was ratified by the people of Kansas on October 4, 1859. Abraham Lincoln, campaigning to be the new Republican Party's presidential nominee, visited Kansas in November and December 1859, speaking in Elwood, Troy, Atchison, and Leavenworth.

Shortly after Lincoln's visit, John A. Martin, Atchison journalist and future Governor, noted *"We have formed a Republican Constitution, adopted it with Republican votes, sent a Republican delegate to bear it to the National Capital, [and] elected Republican State Officers and a Republican State Legislature."* No place, he added, was *"as thoroughly Republican" as Kansas.*"

#### EARLY STATEHOOD (1860–1890)

After statehood, Kansas remained a solidly Republican state for the next thirty years. The initial free-state movement established a core foundation of Republicans. During the Bleeding Kansas period many had died and towns had been sacked;— Kansas, Lincoln, John Brown, abolition, the Union Army and the Republican Party were woven together in a state narrative. Kansas sent a higher proportion of its eligible men to serve in the Union Army than any other state. Union veterans settling in Kansas after the Civil

War were usually Republican and their veterans' organization, the Grand Army of the Republic (GAR), was a strong supporter of Republican candidates. Farmers acquired land through the Homestead Act of 1862, passed by Republicans. Veterans' pensions came from the national Republican administration. Railroads, and the towns they helped create, were generally supportive of Republicans. Members of the Republican Party controlled not only local school boards and judgeships, but also won the vast majority of state legislative, governor and congressional positions.

Between the 1860 and 1888 elections, of the 45 Congressional races, Republican candidates won 44, of the 14 gubernatorial races, Republicans won 13, and Republicans held solid majorities in the State Senate and House every year through 1889. The Presidential election of 1860, won by Abraham Lincoln, was Kansas' first participation in a national election and 79% of its vote went to Lincoln. Kansas voted for the Republican Presidential candidate in every election between 1860 and 1888.

The first Governor was Republican Charles Robinson, the first US Senators were Republicans James Lane and Samuel Pomeroy, the first Congressman was Republican Martin F. Conway, and Republicans in the first Kansas legislature held 29 of 36 state senate seats and 63 of 74 state representative seats.

One of the major issues facing the Republican Party during this time was prohibition. While most Republicans supported temperance, prohibition – legal restrictions on alcohol – was more problematic.

In the late 1870s, the party split into two factions over the issue – those opposed to outright

prohibition led by John Martin and the prohibition supporters led by John St John. The St John faction won out, St John was twice elected Governor in 1878 and 1880, and Kansas imposed



*Gov. John St John*

prohibition by Constitutional amendment in 1880. During the 1882 election, St John tried for a third term but was defeated when many "wet" Republicans backed an acceptable Democrat.



*Gov John Martin*

In 1884, the state party convention nominated John A. Martin by acclamation and placed upon him the responsibility of rehabilitating the party and reconciling factional conflicts which had

developed over prohibition. Martin endorsed prohibition arguing that his goal was to elect

Republicans and prohibition had passed with a majority vote of the people. Martin was elected Governor in 1884 and in 1886 was re-nominated by acclamation at the state Republican Convention and re-elected as Governor.

### Social Reforms

During the 1880s Republican Kansas led the nation in social reforms, often receiving the derision and condemnation of the east coast establishment.

In 1887, Susanna Salter, Republican, became the first woman elected as a city mayor and probably the first woman elected to any executive political office in the United States. On April 4, 1887, she won the election for mayor of Argonia, Sumner County, Kansas.



*Susanna Salter*

For some time she was one of the most famous politicians in America with east coast newspapers railing against the crazy people of Kansas and “rule by petticoat.”

In 1882, Kansas elected the first African American to statewide office when Republican Edwin McCabe of Graham County was elected state auditor. In 1888, Kansas elected Republican Alfred Fairfax of Chautauqua County as the first African American in the state legislature and Republican John Waller of Leavenworth County was the first and only African American to serve as Presidential Elector.



Above: McCabe



Above Right: Fairfax



Right: Waller

### Republicans vs Populists (1890–1898)

The political movement called “populism”, represented by the People’s Party, exploded onto the Kansas political scene in the 1890s. Its primary base were farmers suffering from a combination of bad weather and poor economic conditions. It took the form of radical agrarianism hostile to banks, railroads, established interests and political parties.

Its general political agenda called for a pro-debtor money supply through the adoption of a silver standard and the abolition of national banks; a graduated income tax; political reform through the direct election of Senators and civil service reform; and regulation of monopoly pricing through Government control of all railroads, telegraphs, and telephones.

In the 1890s the Populist movement had great electoral success in Kansas, but its inability to organize for effective legislative action doomed it to failure. The Republican Party responded by characterizing the Populists as wild-eyed socialists generally not competent to hold elected office, by relying on their depth of support among leading citizens, by organizing at the grassroots level through Commercial and Republican Clubs, and by adopting an agenda that co-opted some issues raised by the Populists. The result was wide swings in political control between the Populists who prevailed in 1890, 1892 and 1896 and the Republicans who regained control in 1894 and then permanently defeated the Populists in 1898.

**1890 Elections:** In the 1890 election, the Republicans went from 121 State Representatives to 26, a loss of 95 seats, and from holding all seven Congressional seats to holding two. The Kansas legislature then elected a Populist as US Senator. The Populists probably would have elected a Governor also, but a confused effort allowed the Republican candidate to win.

**1892 Elections:** In the 1892 election, the Republicans gained 39 House seats for a total of 65 seats, a bare majority; went from 38 Senate seats to 15; held only two of eight Congressional seats, lost the Governorship, and Kansas voted for the Populist candidate for President. The makeup of the House was disputed resulting in the "Populist War."



*Armed members of the House*

In the 1893 Session, the Populist members and the Republican members held simultaneous sessions, each claiming to have the majority. The Populist Governor called out the militia, but since most of them were Republicans they refused to obey orders. The dispute was resolved by the Supreme Court, which, in a partisan vote, gave the majority to the Republicans.

**1894 Elections:** In the 1894 election, the Republicans gained 27 more House seats for a total of 92; won seven of eight Congressional seats, and regained the Governorship. The Populists, however, still held a majority in the state senate.

There were several reasons for this electoral turn-around. First, there was a public backlash to the circus-like antics of the 1893 legislative session. Second, the Populists sought to ease off on Prohibition and women's suffrage. Last, the Republicans successfully prevented a fusion ticket of Populists and Democrats. Populists were in favor of woman's suffrage while Democrats opposed it and Republican operative Cy Leland convinced the Democrats to run their own Governor candidate.

**1896 Elections:** In the 1896 election, the Populists and the Democrats merged efforts to form a Fusion Party and the Republicans lost 43 House seats winning a total of 49; won only two of eight Congressional seats; lost the Governorship; the legislature elected a Populist to the US Senate seat; and Kansas voted for William Jennings Bryan, the Democratic candidate, for President. In August 1896 William Allen White, editor of the Emporia Gazette, wrote his famous editorial “What’s the Matter with Kansas” criticizing the Populist movement.



*Cy Leland, Jr. Republican political operative*

**1898 Elections:** In the 1898 election, the Republicans regained power, gaining 43 House seats for a total of 92; won seven of eight Congressional seats; and won the Governorship when William Stanley defeated populist incumbent John Leedy. Mort Albaugh, Chairman of the Republican State Committee, and Cy Leland were responsible for organizing the Republican effort that overthrew the Populist movement in Kansas.

As a final step, the Republicans won a large majority in the 1900 State Senate election. The Populists, as a political organization, faded away after 1898 but their ideas and the issues that provoked this political uprising remained.

### **Basic party organization (1859–1908)**

**State Conventions:** At the state level the party would hold one, sometimes two, conventions every election year, usually

between May and September. The Convention was usually in Topeka. This State Convention consisted of delegates, the number determined by a formula. For instance in 1890, there were 564 State Convention Delegates – one delegate at-large from each county and one delegate for every 400 votes or fractional part of 400 cast for Republican presidential electors in 1888.

Until the advent of primary elections in August 1908, the Convention would nominate the Republican candidates for all statewide offices, such as Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Attorney General, and at-large Congressman. Every four years the Convention would selected the Republican Presidential electors and the Kansas delegates to the Republican National Convention. Until 1912, U.S. Senators were elected by the state legislature. The Convention created committees for resolutions and the party platform, which were voted on by the Convention.

Obtaining the nomination for a statewide office required the support of a majority of the state convention delegates, which, in turn, required diligent detailed effort by a network of supporters to obtain the support of the majority of precinct committeemen in enough counties to win a majority of the delegates. An example of this process occurred in January 1904 when Governor Willis Bailey was working for re-nomination. On January 26, Reno County, elected a delegation that planned to support Edward Hoch as governor, followed immediately by

Sumner County with the same result. A reform group called the Kansas Republican League had diligently recruited pro-Hoch precinct committeemen. On January 30, Governor Bailey announced he would not seek re-election as Governor.

**State Officers, Central & Executive Committees:** The state convention also elected the officers of the state party's central Committee – a chair and a secretary. The state party central committee generally consisted of one person per congressional district (7 or 8) and one person per judicial district (around 30). The state party's executive committee generally had about eleven members. The Central and Executive Committees had powers designated to them by the Party Constitution.

**County and District Committees:** Counties and Congressional Districts also had central committees with officers. Districts held conventions to nominate congressmen and counties held conventions to nominate county officials, candidates for the Kansas House, and delegates to the state convention. Until the late 1960s each of the 105 counties had one designated state representative, with the other 20 representatives distributed to counties with larger populations, resulting in several counties have two or three representatives. Senate districts consisted of one or more entire counties and held conventions to nominate the Republican Senate candidates.

As a result, district and county chairs held immense power. Before 1908, they strongly influenced who the delegates would select as the Republican candidate and after the advent of the primary system, they could give or

withhold support to anyone considering a run for office, in effect, determining if there would be a primary. Furthermore, the tradition in Kansas was that county chairs controlled who received state patronage jobs in their counties. The system was, however, susceptible to change from below, if the voters installed new precinct committeemen who elected different county or district chairs.

**National Committeemen:** The National Committeeman was elected by Kansas' National Convention delegates for a four-year term, took office immediately after the National Convention, and tended to hold office for long periods to build seniority and work up the National Party hierarchy. For instance, John A. Martin was National Committeeman from 1872 to 1884; Cy Leland, Jr., was National Committeeman from 1884 until 1900, having served on the national Republican executive committee; and was followed by David W. Mulvane who served from 1900 to 1912 and again from 1920-1932, and also served on the national Republican executive committee.

#### **STANDPATTERS VS INSURGENTS: PROGRESSIVE PERIOD (1900–1918)**

The Kansas Republican Party that emerged in 1900 from the Populist period was a changed organization. The new reality was that it could no longer rely on "waving the bloody shirt," that is, recalling the Civil War period, as most voters no longer had personal experience with the War. Moreover, the demographic and economic make-up of Kansas was changing, creating new political



issues and new constituencies. Changes that fueled the Populist movement, were still strong in Kansas and Republicans needed to address them.

The Republicans successfully met the challenge of this new environment. From the 1900 to 1910 elections, Republicans won every Governor and US Senate election, 47 of 48 Congressional elections and solid majorities in the Kansas House and Senate. The Republican Party, however, developed factions.

### **The Factions**

One Republican faction, known variously as the “Old Guard,” “Standpatters,” “Regulars,” or “the Bosses,” were the older established party leadership. Key leaders of this faction were political operatives or party bosses Cy Leland, Jr., and Mort Albaugh. Other members were Governor Willis Bailey; Congressman and U.S. Senator Chester Long, and Congressman, US Senator, and Vice-President Charles Curtis.

A second Republican faction were the “Boss-Busters,” or “Insurgents,” later called the “Progressives.” This faction started as supporters of J.R Burton’s effort to become US Senator, but soon became the faction of political and economic reform. They pushed for more direct grassroots involvement in government, favoring, for instance, primary elections over convention-nominated candidates to minimize the influence of political bosses, recall elections, lobbyist reform, campaign finance reporting, and civil service reform to reduce political patronage.

They generally favored the use of government power to restrain people’s self-destructive behaviors, favoring, for instance, strict prohibition of alcohol, banning cigarettes, and restricting dancing. They sought to use government power to limit the concentrated economic power of large business monopolies like the railroads and Standard Oil. They tried to use government power to improve public health by implementing modern scientific techniques. Last, they favored modernizing government to make it more efficient and effective. An early faction leader was David Mulvane (although by 1910 he changed factions) and members included Governors Edward Hoch, Walter Stubbs, Arthur Capper, and Henry Allen; US Senator Joseph Bristow; Congressmen Victor Murdock and James Madison; and newspaper editor William Allen White. Younger members later rising to prominence included Governor and presidential candidate Alf Landon and Governor and US Senator Clyde Reed.



*Rep Victor Murdock*

A third group of Republicans were grassroots organizations that focused on contemporary social issues like prohibition, Carrie Nation and her hatchet attacks on saloons were emblematic of this group.

Another powerful political force were those who supported woman's suffrage. In 1912, with the support of all parts of the Republican Party, the Kansas Constitution was amended



*Minnie Grinstead*

to give women the right to vote in all state elections. In 1918, Kansas elected republican Minnie Grinstead of Seward County as the first woman legislator in Kansas.

### **Elections 1900 - 1908**

Until 1908, when primary elections were first used, a party's candidates were nominated by party conventions composed of delegates. The factions fought for control of the convention delegates by electing supporters as precinct leaders who would vote for delegates to the District and State Conventions. These nominating conventions became fierce battlegrounds for influence and vote trading. Each faction formed splinter organizations with names such as the "Boss Buster League," "the Republican Club," the "Kansas Republican League," and the "Square Deal Club."

In 1900, the Insurgents controlled the state party convention and William Stanley was again elected Governor. In 1902 the Old Guard was back in control, and Willis Bailey was elected Governor. In 1904 and 1906, the Insurgents regained control of the state party convention and Edward W. Hoch was elected and re-elected Governor.



*Gov Edward Hoch*

Primary elections were adopted in a special legislative session in March 1908 and the first primary election held in August 1908. In 1908, Walter Stubbs was elected Governor and Joseph Bristow, a progressive, was



*Sen. Joseph Bristow*

elected to the US Senate after defeating incumbent establishment Republican Chester Long in the first Kansas primary.



**1910 Elections:** In August 1910, factionalism reached new intensity and there were fierce primary battles for every federal and statewide office. The 1910 Congressional general election slate went from six "Regulars" and two "Insurgents" to two "Regulars" and six "Insurgents." One commentator observed: "*Kansas fired a shot that will be heard around the country. The prairies are afire with insurgency. What does it profit a Standpat Congressman if he saves his face in Washington and loses his hide in Kansas?*" Walter Stubbs won re-election as Governor.

**1912 Elections – fractured party:** In 1912, factionalism exacerbated by the national Howard Taft – Theodore Roosevelt split, caused the two Kansas Republican factions to split the party with some members of the Insurgent faction running their own

candidates in some elections in opposition to the Kansas Republican Party's official candidate. Many Republican voters did not vote, resulting in lower voter turnout than in 1908. As a result, the Republicans lost the Governor race, by 29 votes, lost control of the State Senate and House, and lost five of eight Congressional seats. Democratic presidential candidate Woodrow Wilson won Kansas. Former Governor Walter Stubbs defeated incumbent US Senator Charles Curtis in the primary election, but then lost to the Democrat in the general election. In December, some Kansas Republicans attended a meeting in Chicago to form a separate Progressive Party.

### **1914 and 1916 Elections, party reuniting**

In 1914, most of the Progressive faction rejoined the Kansas Republican Party, although some, like Henry Allen, broke away and joined a new, separate "Progressive Party". As a result, in 1914 the Republicans regained control of the State House. In 1916, after the break-away progressives rejoined republican ranks, the Republicans regained control of the State Senate and won seven of eight Congressional seats.



*Gov. Arthur Capper*

Arthur Capper, a former newspaper editor and member of the progressive faction, was elected Governor in 1914 and again in 1916 (he had lost in 1912) and brought the two factions together. Governor Capper gained

support from the grassroots by making Kansas a "bone-dry" state (no alcoholic beverages at all). He gained support from the establishment by imposing fiscally conservative policies such as paying off all state debt in 1916. He retained support from progressives by signing, for example, legislation strengthening Bluesky securities laws and workers compensation.

Capper was the first Governor to describe government reforms using business concepts such as being in favor of "*modern scientific business methods, in the elimination of useless positions and requiring the highest efficiency on the part of every public servant*" and noted that *the burden of taxation had "increased at an alarming rate without commensurate benefit to the public."*

### **Campaign operations**

In the 1918 Governor campaign, the Republican candidate, Henry Allen, was still serving in France. His campaign manager, Harvey H. Motter of Wichita, a traveling salesman, decided, through necessity, to forego the traditional campaign of personal visits by the candidate and campaigning through surrogates – prominent local citizens – and instead relied on networks of local volunteers and numerous local contributions. The new campaign style succeeded and was copied by future candidates of both parties.



*Gov Henry Allen*

## OPTIMISM, PROSPERITY AND THE NEW CONSERVATIVES (1918–1930)

Throughout the 1920s, Kansans held an optimistic belief that the material aspects of life were steadily improving, evidenced by, for instance, higher incomes, higher crop yields, science, industry, better roads, schools, more efficient farming, electricity, and cars. They believed that thrift, self-sufficiency and wholesome living were keys to this success. Republicans positioned themselves as the party of the proud past and the architects of the current and future prosperity. They were the party of prosperity, good roads, child welfare, and public safety, with necessary periodic reforms of government to keep taxes low and programs effective.

The voters agreed with this proposition. Between 1918 and 1930, Republicans held the Governorship for all but one term, their majority in the State Senate never dropped below 30 and was as high as 37 of 40 seats, in the Kansas House the number of Republicans was never below 90 and was as high as 113 of 125 seats. Republicans held at least seven of the eight Congressional seats every election and held both US Senate seats. Among several reforms enacted in the 1920s were government funded kindergarten, creation of the Board of Regents, and, after a major political battle, a constitutional amendment in 1928 that allowed the state government to pay for a highway system. Until then, roads and other internal improvements were county and township responsibilities.

In the 1920s, the party still consisted of two factions, usually labeled “conservative” and

“progressive,” which manifested itself in gubernatorial election politics. Between 1904 and 1920, all Republican governor candidates had come from the progressive wing. But a new generation of conservatives entered Kansas politics, most World War One veterans and members of the American Legion. John D. M. Hamilton, Clifford R. Hope, and Frank "Chief" Haucke were representative members of this new group who challenged the older progressive politicians.

In the 1918 and 1920 elections, Henry Allen, a progressive, was elected Governor.

In 1922, after a 7-way primary, the Republican candidate was conservative William Y. Morgan. He lost to the Democratic candidate, a victim of a short, severe farm recession and probable desertion of some progressive Republican voters. In 1924, conservative Benjamin Paulsen beat out progressives Clyde Reed and former Governor Walter Stubbs to win the nomination. Paulsen went on win the governorship defeating both the Democrat and William Allen White, who ran as an independent attacking the Ku Klux Klan. Paulsen was re-elected easily on 1926.



*Gov Benjamin Paulsen*

In 1928, Kansas U.S. Senator Charles Curtis was elected as Herbert Hoover’s Vice President. Back in Kansas in 1928, Clyde Reed, a progressive, won out in a 6-way



*Gov and Sen Clyde Reed*

primary, with his closest opponent being John D. M. Hamilton, a young conservative war veteran and Speaker of the House.

In 1930, as the depression and drought began, Governor Reed was defeated in the primary by Frank Hauke, a young conservative war veteran and head of the American Legion, who was supported by David Mulvane, John D. M. Hamilton, John W. Breyfogle, and William Y. Morgan. Hauke lost the Governor race to the Democratic candidate by 200 votes, in a race that also included John R. Brinkley, the "goat gland doctor", running as an independent. Alf Landon, future governor and presidential candidate, started firmly in the progressive camp, helping the Allen and White campaigns, and serving as Reed's campaign manager in 1928, but by the end of the 1920s had become disenchanted with overly rigid progressive ideology.

### **Role of the state party chair**

In the first half of the twentieth century, the state party chair was elected every two years at the August party convention, which was held two weeks after the primary. The accepted practice was that the Republican gubernatorial candidate selected the chair, who was elected and then served as the campaign manager for the governor's campaign. The chair would raise funds, accompany the candidate, and work with county chairs to turn out the vote. Once the campaign ended, the state party chair became

a de facto assistant Governor, fending off job seekers, coordinating state and federal patronage, serving as a liaison with legislators and party officials, and gathering political intelligence to help the legislative program. At this time the legislature met every two years, in the non-election year. In January of the election year, candidates would network and announce their candidacies at the Kansas Day social events in Topeka, an event the party chair would attend. This would initiate the primary election campaigns and the cycle would start again.

### **DEPRESSION AND THE NEW DEAL** **(1930–1936)**

The stock market crash of October 1929 marked the start of the decade-long economic downturn known as the Great Depression, which took hold in Kansas between the 1930 and 1932 elections. Kansas voters concluded that the Republican agenda of rigorous austerity in government, cutting government size, and reducing taxes was not working and needed to be supplemented by other programs – programs of the type offered by the national Democrats.

Between 1930 and 1938 the Kansas Republican Party sustained a period of political decline. Republicans lost the Governorship in 1930 and 1936.

Alf Landon, elected Governor in 1932, had managed to balance the state's budget and to be re-elected in 1934, the only Republican



*Gov Alf Landon*

Governor in the nation re-elected. On that basis he became the Republican Presidential candidate for 1936, but lost

his home state in the election. His presidential campaign manager, John D.M. Hamilton, a conservative and former Speaker of the Kansas House became Chairman of the RNC.

A Democrat won a special election in 1930 and in 1932 was re-elected as US Senator. The Republicans held four of the seven Congressional seats in 1932–36. In the State House, Republicans dropped from 101 Representatives after the 1928 election to between 65 and 75 seats, a bare majority. In the Senate, they dropped from 37 seats to 26 seats in 1932 and 24 seats in 1936.

In response, Kansas Republicans changed to reflect the popular will and adopted more expansive government-backed economic agenda, while maintaining strict prohibition, even after national prohibition was removed in 1932. Landon, a self-described "pragmatic progressive", demonstrated the Kansas Republican Party's capacity to adapt to the new realities of the Depression and remain the majority party. Some of the reforms instituted by Republicans were passage of a state income tax in 1933, passage of a state sales tax in 1937, and forcing all local

government entities to use a standard accounting and auditing system.

In 1937 women were added to the statutory party structure by the addition of three provisions: (1) each precinct would now elect one precinct committeewoman in addition to the committeeman, (2) county, district and state committees would now elected a vice-chair, in addition to the chair, secretary and treasurer with the requirement that the chair and vice-chair be of opposite gender, and (3) the National Committeewoman was added to the party council. This was codified in KS Statute 25-221, with the opposite gender requirement at 25-221a.

#### **LANDON'S REPUBLICAN ESTABLISHMENT** **(1938–1955)**

After the loss of the Governor's race in 1936 and wanting a solid anti-New Deal front, the Republican gathering for the 1937 Kansas Day became a major planning session to regroup and reorganize the party. The leaders of this effort turned the tide and then ran the party for the next 15 years.

Prominent behind-the-scenes players included Dane G. Hansen of Logan, Harry Darby (future national committeeman) and Lacy Haynes of Kansas City, Harm Voss of Downs, Walter Fees of Iola, Dick Robbins of Pratt, Lester McCoy of Garden City, and Jess Harper of Sitka. Other leaders of the rejuvenation were Blake Williamson, Ed Boddington, and Art Stanley from Kansas City; Dolph Simons, Sr., and Charles Stowe of Lawrence; Drew McLaughlin of Paola; Senator Harris from Ottawa; Watson Marple

of Fort Scott; W.R. Hagman of Pittsburg; Mrs. Effie Semple of Columbus; Rolla Clymer, Dick Woodward, and Gale Moss of Eldorado; Ernie Shawver, Edward Arn (future governor), Pat Patterson, George A. Brown, and Wash Loston of Wichita; Stewart Newlin of Sumner County; Kirke E. Dale and George Templar of Arkansas City; Wes Roberts (future party chair) of Oskaloosa; Paul Wunsch (future state senate president pro tem) of Kingman; Wayne Rogler of Chase County; Hugh Edwards of Eureka; Jess Denious of Dodge City; Lester McCoy and Cap Burtis of Garden City; Ernie Briles of Stafford; Andy Schoepel (future governor and US Senator) of Ness City; Congressman Frank Carlson (future governor and US Senator) and Edward Burge of Concordia; McDill "Huck" Boyd (future national committeeman) of Phillipsburg; Wint Smith (future Congressman) of Mankato; Henry Buzik of Sylvan Grove; Ben Bernie of Hill City; Tuffy Lutz of Sharon Springs; Frank "Chief" Haucke of Council Grove; Warren Shaw, Mark Bennett and Harry Crane (future party chair) of Topeka; Casey Jones of Olathe; Jay Parker of Hill City; Ross Beach, Murray Eddy and Ed Flood of Hays; Charles Cushing of Downs; Albert Cole of Jackson County (later 1st District Congressman); William Beck of Holton; Dick Becker of Coffeyville; John Wall of Sedan; Charles Arbuthnot of Lebanon; C.I. Moyer (future party chair) of Doniphan County; Lloyd Ruppenthal (future party chair) and Adrian Smith of McPherson; Lee Larabee of Liberal; Roy Smith of Edmund, O.O. Osborne of Stockton; and August Lauterbach of Colby.

By November 1938, Kansas voters were disenchanted with the aggregation of power in Washington and the marked tendency of urban dwellers on the east coast to belittle Kansas, as "backward," "unprogressive," "unsophisticated," and "antediluvian." While some parts of the country continued to support the New Deal, the common opinion in Kansas was to view it as a wasteful intrusion of government bureaucracy by arrogant and ignorant easterners. An October 1938 poll indicated that 59% of Kansans disapproved of Roosevelt.

This feeling burst out in the 1938 elections where Republicans regained the US Senate seat, when former Governor Clyde Reed defeated the Democratic incumbent, won six of seven Congressional seats, and went from 74 seats to 107 of the 125 seats in the Kansas House. In the 1940 election Republicans went from 24 to 35 of the 40 seats in the Kansas Senate.

Throughout the 1940s and early 1950s Republicans firmly controlled Kansas Government. Every Governor was Republican and won re-election: Payne Ratner (1938 and 1940 elections), Andrew Schoepel (1942 and 1944 elections); Frank Carlson (1946 and 1948 elections), and Edward Arn (1950 and 1952 elections).



Gov Payne Ratner



Gov Andy Schoeppel



Gov Frank Carlson



Gov Ed Arn

After US Senator Clyde Reed died in office on 1949, Henry Darby was appointed to finish the term and former Governor Frank Carlson was elected in 1950 as US Senator and went on to serve three complete terms, before retiring. US Senator Arthur Capper, having served five full terms was succeeded by former Governor Andrew Schoeppel who won the 1948 election and served two complete terms before dying in office during his third term. In the State House, of the 125 seats Republicans always held between 90 and 107 seats; in the State Senate, of the 40 seats, Republicans held between 34 and 39 seats.

This smooth continuity was the result of intense behind-the-scenes efforts by party leaders to achieve consensus. Landon, as Governor from 1932 to 1935, and Presidential candidate in 1936, was a national

republican leader and, until 1948, generally controlled the Kansas Republican Party. He backed Payne Ratner, Andy Schoeppel and his former campaign manager, Frank Carlson for governor, as well as Clyde Reed for US Senator in 1938 and 1944. He was the Kansas Republican national convention delegation leader in 1940 and 1944 and selected the delegation's members.

**Landon's Fall from Power:** In 1948, Landon was challenged by Andrew Schoeppel who announced that he would run for US Senate against Landon's choice, the aging Arthur Capper. This dispute resulted in a fracture in the state party, with many of Landon's former supporters refusing to back the aging Capper.

In January 1948, the state party central committee changed the rules for selecting national delegates in a way that diminished Landon's influence, resulting in only six of the 18 delegates being Landon supporters. Harry Darby, a Schoeppel supporter, was re-elected national committeeman and elected chair of the delegation. Senator Capper, aged 83, then decided not to file for re-election and Landon was left without direct political power, but remained an elder statesman for years.



## "YOUNG TURK" INSURGENTS (1952–1960)

### **Emergence of the Young Turks**

The 1952 election saw the emergence of a new Republican faction – the “Young Turks” – which included state senator and future Governor John Anderson; Lieutenant Governor and future Governor Fred Hall; Senator John Woelk; Senator William Weygand; Senator John Crutcher (Hutchinson), future State Party Chair and US Senator James Pearson; Representative John Glades; and future state party chair Donald Schnacke. They took on the "Old Guard" establishment, which included Governor Edward Arn, US Senator Frank Carlson, US Senator Andrew Schoeppel, Congressman Ed Reese, Wesley Roberts, State Senators Steadman Ball and Paul Wunsch (who was President Pro Tem of the Senate from 1949 to 1964), McDill "Huck" Boyd, and Harry Darby (National Committeeman from 1940 to 1964), and who controlled the patronage system and party structure. The Young Turks resented the perceived abuses of patronage, political deal-making, and cronyism as well as the power county party chairs had to control patronage and influence elections. A common motivation was to "clean-up the mess in Topeka."



*Gov Fred Hall*

Fred Hall was elected Lieutenant Governor in 1950 and again in 1952, defeating Wayne Ryan a veteran senator and friend of Governor Arn. In 1954, Hall was elected Governor, beating Old Guard

candidate George Templar. He did not owe his election success to the party establishment, clashed with, and refused to work with party leaders. Exacerbating this new factional fighting, was President Eisenhower's January 1953 appointment of C. Wesley Roberts as Chair of the Republican National committee. Roberts was a Kansas newspaperman, former Kansas state party chair, US Senator Frank Carlson's 1950 campaign manager, and an old-fashioned party loyalist who could work the patronage system. A KC Star article, however, exposed that Roberts possibly improperly took money to transfer property to the state and he resigned, giving the Young Turks more ammunition in their fight with the establishment.

The effects of these disputes were felt in the 1954 election where the Republican hold on the Kansas House dropped from 105 to 89 seats. The 1954 election was also the first to make use of political advertising on television.

**1956 Elections:** As resistance to Governor Hall grew, he sought to control the party structure. The state chair, Lloyd Ruppenthal, had been his campaign manager and a supporter, but fought Hall's attempts to take control of state patronage away from county chairs, supporting the traditional power of county chairs to control patronage. Hall sought to oust National Committeeman Harry Darby and control the delegates going to the

1956 National Convention. The State Convention, however, re-elected Darby as National Committeeman and Mrs. Semple as National Committeewoman – breaking tradition by doing it before the convention. They also elected Chair Ruppenthal as a delegate and he refused Governor Hall's demand that he resign as state chair.



*Harry Darby*

In the 1956 legislative session, the Republican legislature passed Right-to-Work legislation only to have Governor Hall veto it. The Republican State Committee passed a resolution supporting "Right to Work", condemning the Governor for his veto. Hall was soundly defeated in the 1956 primary, which was particularly vitriolic in tone, but this helped Democrat George Docking win the Governorship in the 1956 election. In January 1957, with two weeks left in his Governor's term, Hall resigned and his former Lt. Governor, now Governor, John McCuish, appointed Hall to a recent Kansas Supreme Court vacancy. This insider deal became known as the "Triple Play" and brought more embarrassment to the Republican Party.

Republican dominance continued to decline with the 1958 election. George Docking became the first two-term Democratic Governor in Kansas history. There were several reasons for this –serious intra-Republican factional fighting distracted the

party, the right-to-work Constitutional amendment was on the ballot in 1958 which galvanized Democratic union turnout, demographic changes undercutting the Republican base resulting in fewer farms and a decline in rural population, growth of larger towns and cities; an economic shift towards non-agricultural trade and industry.

Additionally, George Docking successfully positioned himself as more fiscally conservative than his Republican opponents, defining himself as a stringent fiscal conservative, seeking fiscal sanity, supporter of law and order, but a social moderate. In 1958, Docking campaigned on repealing the 0.5% increase in the state sales tax enacted by the Republican legislature.

**1958 Elections:** In the 1958 election, voter support for Republicans continued to diminish. Republicans won only three of six Congressional seats and lost 14 seats in the Kansas House, leaving them with just 69 out of 125 seats. The voters of Kansas, however, remained conservative in outlook. In 1958, despite opposition from Democrats, unions, some clergy and university professors, and Governor Docking, Kansas voters approved a constitutional Right-To-Work Amendment, a proposition rejected by many other states.

**1960 Elections:** In 1960, John Anderson, one of the Young Turks, was elected Governor defeating McDill "Huck" Boyd, the party establishment's candidate, in the primary and Democrat George Docking, trying for a



third term, in the general. This victory restored Republican control and consolidated a generational shift to new Republican leadership. The Republicans continued to hold both US Senate seats, five of six Congressional seats, a gain of two, 32 State Senate seats, and gained 13 seats in the House. Anderson's campaign manager, James Pearson, became the State Party chair. The 1960 election was when Bob Dole was first elected to Congress with the support of establishment Republicans including his mentor McDill "Huck" Boyd and Dane Hansen, in the Sixth District – northwest Kansas.

#### **SOCIAL CHANGES AND AN EXPANDING FEDERAL GOVERNMENT (1960–1974)**

In the 1960s, new issues came to the forefront – the Vietnam War, international communism, government's expanded role in social welfare, changing sexual morality and gender relations, and civil rights for minorities. Throughout the 1960s, the Republican Party maintained a working majority in state government. They held both US Senate seats, almost always held all five Congressional seats, held majorities in both legislative chambers, with around 85 seats in the House and 30 seats in the Senate. Republicans won the Governorship in the 1960, 1962, and 1964 elections, but lost it in 1966, 1968, and 1970 to Democrat Bob Docking.

One of the contributing factors to the loss in 1966 was the magnitude of change achieved by the Republican administrations in the first

half of the decade. The state school system was completely re-engineered with thousands of school districts consolidated, a new State School Board created, and a new educational finance system implemented. Redistricting, based on one-man, one-vote, became a major topic in the legislature. To pay for the education reforms, state income tax withholding was imposed and the state sales tax was increased. There were also a plethora of social issues before the legislature including birth control, civil rights, and fair housing.

#### **FIRST CONSERVATIVE INSURGENCY, THE 1964 ELECTIONS**

In the Kansas Republican party, a new Conservative faction emerged that was inspired by Arizona Senator Barry Goldwater. This faction, taking the approach of other insurgent factions, recruited new precinct leaders and managed to gain working control of the state party by 1964.

The part of Goldwater's message that resonated with many Kansans Republicans was ineffective and wasteful big government programs and interference in the marketplace. It was similar to the message articulated by Arthur Capper and Alf Landon in the 1930s. The arguments, however, were now stronger, with much higher taxes and much large social welfare programs. Goldwater's national supporters included Ronald Reagan and Phyllis Schlafly.



*1964: Bob Dole and Barry Goldwater*

Republican leadership in Kansas was split on the Presidential choice for 1964. At the April 1964 party convention in Topeka, Governor John Anderson and Senator James Pearson supported Nelson Rockefeller, Congressman Clifford Hope favored Henry Cabot Lodge, Jr., Congressman Bob Dole and conservative business leader Gorden Greb supported Goldwater.

The Kansas Republican Party delegates threw their support to Goldwater. In an unprecedented move, the party denied its own Governor, John Anderson, a position as a voting delegate to the 1964 Republican National Convention held in San Francisco, and described as the ugliest since 1912, as entrenched moderates faced off against conservative insurgents. In an era in which a national consensus seemed to have coalesced around advancing civil rights, containing Communism and expanding government, the moderates believed they had to win to preserve the Republican Party. The conservatives wanted to contain the role of the federal government and roll back Communism.

Barry Goldwater did not win the Kansas Presidential vote in 1964, but he won a substantial minority (45%). His loss motivated his core supporters to create a distinctively conservative voice in Kansas, but after 1964, the conservative faction lost support. The average Kansas voter had contradictory feelings on federal programs. While they voiced support for individual self-sufficiency and attacked government interference and high taxes, they took full advantage of social security and medicare for the elderly, farm subsidies, small business loans, and road and community development funding.

The 1964 Kansas Republican Governor's primary, which chose Governor Anderson's successor, was probably the most "power-packed" in state history. There were eight candidates with six being political powers: William Avery, Congressman, who won the primary and the general elections; Paul Wunsch, state senator, former Speaker, and 28-year legislative veteran; Harold Chase, the Lieutenant Governor; McDill "Huck" Boyd, newspaper publisher, activist, and ally of Congressman Bob Dole; William Ferguson, the Attorney General; and Grant Dohm, three-term legislator.

**1966 Elections:** In the 1966 elections, Congressman Bob Dole and US Senator James Pearson, both prevailed in their primaries. Pearson suspected that the conservative faction encouraged Congressman Ellsworth, from the party's liberal wing, to run against him in the primary.

In the same election, Republican Governor William Avery lost his re-election bid to

Democrat Robert Docking (son of Governor George Docking). Docking campaigned on an agenda of lower taxes, austere government, and law and order.

Avery, the Republican, campaigned on the major expansion of education funding under his



*Gov William Avery*

administration but was left

defending the increase in sales taxes, the imposition of income tax withholding, and higher liquor and cigarette taxes.

**1968 Elections:** In 1968, at the urging of retiring Senator Frank Carlson, Congressman Bob Dole defeated former governor William Avery in the primary and went on to be elected U.S. Senator. In 1968, Kansas voted for Nixon in the presidential race. Republicans won all five Congressional seats, gained five seats in the State Senate, gained 11 seats in the State House, but lost the Governor's race to Robert Docking who ran on an agenda of fiscal responsibility, tax reform, and executive branch reorganization.

### **Party as a campaign organization (late 1960s and early 1970s)**

After the election losses to Robert Docking, the state party was viewed as an ineffective campaign organization, having lost focus on its primary role of electing Republicans and instead serving as a battleground where each faction fought to get supporters elected as precinct leaders, county officers, and

delegates. In contrast, the Democrat Docking, with total control of the Kansas democratic party structure, had run a thoroughly modern and focused campaign with polling, mass media advertising, and effective use of TV.

The conclusion drawn by most Kansas candidates was that mass media was better at voter mobilization than party precinct organizations and that the party organization was being replaced by individual political entrepreneurs and consultants running candidate-centered campaigns.

### **1970 Elections**

◆U.S. Senate: There was no U.S. Senate Election.

◆U.S. Congress: Republican incumbent Keith Sebelius won re-election in the 1st District; Democrat Bill Roy upset Republican incumbent Chester Mize in the 2nd District, Republican incumbent Larry Winn won re-election in the 3rd District; Republican incumbent Garner Shriver won the 4th District, and Republican incumbent Joe Skubitz won re-election in the 5th District.

◆Kansas Statewides: Democrat Robert Docking won re-election as governor for an unprecedented third term, defeating Kent Fizzell; Republicans Reynolds Schultz was elected Lt Governor; Elwill Shanahan was re-elected as Secretary of State; William Fletcher was re-elected as Insurance Commissioner; and Walter Peery was re-elected as Treasurer.

◆Kansas Senate: There were no State Senate elections.

◆Kansas House: The Republicans won 84 seats, a loss of three. Calvin Strowig was elected Speaker.

◆State Party: In August 1970, the State Committee elected William Falstad as Chair. Huck Boyd was re-elected as National Committeeman.

### **1972 Elections**

◆President: Republican candidate Richard Nixon carried Kansas and won the election, defeating George McGovern. The national Republican convention was held in Miami Beach, FL.

◆U.S. Senate: Republican James Pearson was re-elected to the US Senate.

◆U.S. Congress: Republican incumbent Keith Sebelius won re-election in the 1st District; Democrat Bill Roy was re-elected in the 2nd District, Republican incumbent Larry Winn was re-elected in the 3rd District; Republican incumbent Garner Shriver was re-elected in the 4th District, and Republican incumbent Joe Skubitz was re-elected in the 5th District.

◆Kansas Statewides: Democrat Robert Docking won re-election as governor for unprecedented fourth term, defeating Morris Kay, who had prevailed in the Republican primary over former Governor John Anderson, Ray Frisbie, and Lt Governor Reynolds Schultz; Republican David C. Owen, a close associate of Bob Dole, was elected Lt Governor; Republicans Elwill Shanahan was re-elected as Secretary of State; William Fletcher was re-elected as

Insurance Commissioner; and Tom Van Sickle was elected as Treasurer.

◆Kansas Senate: Republicans won 27 seats, a net loss of 5 seats since the 1968 election. Robert Bennett was elected Senate President.

◆Kansas House: Republicans won 80 seats, a loss of four seats. Pete McGill was elected Speaker.

◆State Party: William Falstad continued as state party Chair until January 1973 when the state committee elected Jack Ranson Chair. The change in dates reflected the changeover from 2-year to 4-year terms for the Governor and other statewide elections. R. Doug Lewis was the Executive Director.

### **Statutory party organization (1972-1992)**

In 1972, the legislature further regulated the structure and operations of political parties. The changes added additional detailed guidance on filling precinct vacancies, requiring county committees to reorganize within two weeks of the primary, that district committees would reorganize within 90 days of the primary, that the state committee would consist of 22 delegates from each district (eliminating the old provision that each county chair was a delegate), that the executive committee would include the state officers, district chairs and vice-chairs, and the primary federal and state elected officials or their designees, and it re-designated the party council as the platform committee. This statute was amended somewhat in 1977, 1980, 1988, and 1989 adding the chairs of affiliated groups to the executive committee.

## **PART II:** **Modern Party History: 1974 to today**

The modern political history of Kansas begins in the early 1970s as a result of two major structural changes. First, in the late 1960s, one-man one-vote became the legal standard governing redistricting. Before this, each of Kansas' 105 counties had one state representative, regardless of population, with the remaining 20 representatives allocated to a county based on population. The House reapportioned the 20 extra legislators in 1909 and 1959. State Senate districts had no requirement to be of roughly equivalent population and consisted of groups of entire counties. The old system heavily weighted the legislature in favor of rural areas and diluted the political power of the new population centers in Wichita, Topeka, and Johnson County.

The new redistricting paradigm for legislative districts caused substantial changes to state legislative districts and the composition of the legislature, increasing the political power of cities and suburbs at the expense of the rural areas.

Second, the Kansas Constitution was amended in 1972 to make the term for statewide office, such as governor, starting with the 1974 election, four years instead of two years. Additionally, the Governor and Lieutenant Governor would henceforth run as a single ticket, not as separate campaigns.

### **POST-WATERGATE DECLINE** **(1974–1978)**

#### **1974 Elections**

◆U.S. Senate: Bob Dole experienced an extremely close race from challenger two-term Democrat Congressman Bill Roy. Senator Dole, for the first time in Kansas politics, made abortion a central campaign issue, using it to win over Wichita. Bill Roy campaigned intensely around Kansas City linking Dole to Nixon, Watergate, and Ford's pardon of Nixon.

◆U.S. Congress: Republican incumbent Keith Sebelius won re-election in the 1st District; Democratic incumbent Martha Keys was elected in the 2nd District, beating John C. Petersen; incumbent Larry Winn won re-election in the 3rd District; Republican incumbent Garner Shriver was re-elected in the 4th District, and incumbent Joe Skubitz was re-elected in the 5th District.

◆Kansas Statewides: The 1974 statewide office elections were

the first for the new 4-year terms.

Republican Bob Bennett won the Governorship, after winning a close 3-way primary he defeated Democrat and former Attorney

general, Vern Miller. Republican Shelby



Smith was elected Lt Governor; Elwill Shanahan was re-elected as Secretary of State; and William Fletcher was re-elected as Insurance Commissioner.

◆Kansas Senate: No election. After Robert Bennett resigned from the Senate to become Governor, Richard Rodgers served as Senate President for the 1975 session, and Ross Doyen for the 1976 session.

◆Kansas House: Republicans won 72 seats, a net lose of eight seats. Pete McGill was re-elected Speaker

◆State Party: In 1975, the State Committee elected Jack Ranson as Chair. Huck Boyd was re-elected as National Committeeman. Irene Whitlock was the Executive Director.

### **1976 Elections**

One of the worst election cycles for Kansas Republicans since the depression, often called “the debacle” due to the fallout from Watergate and a general anti-incumbent mood with the voters. The Republicans lost control of the Kansas House and a Congressional seat.

◆President: Republican candidate Gerald Ford, with Kansas Bob Dole as his vice-presidential running mate, carried Kansas, but lost nationally to Democrat Jimmy Carter. The Republican Vice-Presidential candidate was Kansas Senator Bob Dole. The national Republican convention was held in Kansas City, MO.

◆U.S. Senate: There was no U.S. Senate Election.

◆U.S. Congress: Republican incumbent Keith Sebelius was re-elected in the 1st District; incumbent Larry Winn won re-election in the 3rd District; and incumbent Joe Skubitz was re-elected for the eighth time in the 5th District. Democratic incumbent Martha Keys was re-elected in the 2nd District, beating Ross Freeman. Democrat Dan Glickman defeated 8-term incumbent Republican Garner Shriver in the 4th District.

◆Kansas Senate: Republicans won 21 seats, a net loss of 6 seats since the 1974 election. The Senate elected Ross Doyen as Senate President and Norman Gaar as Majority Leader.

◆Kansas House: Republicans lost the majority in the House to the Democrats for only the second time in Kansas history, winning only 60 seats, a net loss of 12.

◆State Party: In January 1977, the State Committee re-elected Jack Ranson as Chair. Huck Boyd was re-elected as National Committeeman. George Van Riper was Executive Director.

### **Major reduction in party patronage (1975–1980s)**

A profound change for party power and influence in Kansas was the substantial reduction in the extent of political patronage, that is, the practice of elected officials filling government positions with political allies of his or her own choosing. From the party's perspective, the reduction in party patronage, materially reduced the power and influence of the county chair position, which, in-turn, weakened the entire party organization.



In Kansas, since the 1860s, newly elected officials had always had broad discretion in the hiring of state and local employees and used this power to reward political allies. Elected officials would work with and on the recommendation of local county party chairs. The patronage system not only rewarded political supporters for past support, it also encouraged future support, because persons who have a patronage job try to retain it by campaigning for the party at the next election. Patronage maintained strong political organizations by offering campaign workers rewards. More importantly, patronage put people into government who agreed with the political agenda of the victor. Cooperation, loyalty, and trust flowed from this arrangement. The issue surrounding patronage was not whether elected officials should have the discretion to hire certain government employees, but how far down the organizational chain that power should extend. Too far down the chain could result in inefficiency and too little creates a class of state bureaucrats unresponsive to the officials elected by the people.

Over time in Kansas civil service reforms had reduced the extent of patronage, up to the early 1970s it was still common, politically astute, and a generally accepted practice. The substantial reduction in patronage from the mid-1970s to the early 1980s was a result of post-Watergate reforms. Governor Bennett remarked that "[In 1974] we campaigned on the promise that we were going to operate the government on a very efficient and economical basis - that we were not going to rely on patronage. So that sort of foreclosed the party from a very active role in appointments. They had a passive role.

Sometimes they tried to play it and sometimes they didn't even do that." Democratic Governor Carlin (1979–86) had similar observations on the change "county chairs across the state were very, very unhappy . . . They didn't follow issues, they followed patronage. They followed what they had run on to become county chair. And, you know, people were asking, what's going on here?".

### **BOB DOLE'S REPUBLICAN ESTABLISHMENT** **(1978–1992)**

The next 14 years lacked continual or substantial Republican control. After Bob Bennett failed to win re-election as Governor, Democrat John Carlin held it for two terms (1979–1986), Republican Mike Hayden then held it for one term (1987–1990), but failed to be re-elected, Democrat Joan Finney held the Governorship for one term (1991–1994) and did not run again, then Republican Bill Graves held it for two terms (1995–2002). The Democrats always held one or two Congressional seats. The Republicans lost the House majority in the 1990 election and their numbers in the House ranging from 62 to 76 of the 125 seats. The Republican majority in the Senate ranged from 22 to 24 of the 40 seats.

During this period, U.S. Senator Bob Dole was the most influential leader of the Kansas Republican Party. He effectively ensured that his supporters and former staff were in influential positions throughout Kansas.

### **Party campaign operations (1974–1990)**

Two developments merged in the mid-1970s to redirect the state party's campaign focus and techniques. First, before 1974 the state party had been a temporary organization focused primarily on electing Governors. Once the Governor's term was extended to four years, the party was able to spread its focus to supporting other races.

Second, as part of the post-Watergate reforms, the Republican National Committee funded efforts to professionalize state party operations and to develop statewide voter, volunteer, and contributor lists. By the late 1970s, the party was actively helping state legislative, congressional, and other statewide races by swapping volunteer and contributor lists.

The state party also had the resources to conduct direct mail fund raising. By the early 1980s, the state party was able to provide some financial support to candidates. By 1990, for the first time, the party ran training seminars for vulnerable incumbent candidates, trained all candidates on campaign finance laws, and conducted some polling. The party also started doing telemarketing fund raising.

### **1978 Elections**

◆U.S. Senate: After incumbent Republican Senator James Pearson retired, Nancy Kassebaum was elected to the U.S. Senate after defeating Democrat Bill Roy and winning an 8-way primary that included future Congresswoman Jan Meyers. Kassebaum was the first woman to win a

Senate seat in her own right (not as a widow of a Senator)



*Sen Nancy Kassebaum*

◆U.S. Congress: Keith Sebelius was re-elected to the 1st District; James Jeffries was elected to the

2nd District after the Democratic incumbent did not run; Larry Winn was re-elected to the 3rd district and Bob Whittaker was re-elected to the 5th district. Democrat Dan Glickman was re-elected to the 4th District.

◆Kansas Statewides: Democrat John W. Carlin was elected governor after defeating incumbent Republican Bob Bennett; Democrat Paul Dugan was elected Lt Governor; Bob Stephan was elected Attorney General; Jack Brier was elected Secretary of State; Fletcher Bell was re-elected as Insurance Commissioner; and Democrat Joan Finney was re-elected as Treasurer.

◆Kansas House: Republicans won 69 seats, a net gain of 9 seats, and recovered the majority in the Kansas House. The House elected Wendall Lady as Speaker and Robert Frey as Majority Leader.

◆State Party: In January 1979, the State Committee elected Morris Kay as Chair. Meryln Brown was Executive Director.

### **1980 Elections**

◆President: Republican Presidential candidate Ronald Reagan easily won Kansas and the Presidency. Kansas held its first presidential preference primary, won by

Ronald Reagan. The national Republican convention was held in Detroit, Michigan.

◆U.S. Senate: Bob Dole was re-elected to the U.S. Senate with 64% of the vote.

◆U.S. Congress: Keith Sebelius was re-elected for the sixth time to the 1st District; James Edmund Jeffries was re-elected in the 2nd District, Larry Winn was re-elected to the 3rd district and Bob Whittaker was re-elected to the 5th district. Incumbent Democrat Dan Glickman held the 4th District, defeating Clay Hunter.

◆Kansas Senate: Republicans won 24 seats, a net gain of 3 seats. The Senate elected Ross Doyen as Senate President and Robert Talkington as Majority Leader.

◆Kansas House: Republicans won 72 seats, a net gain of 3 seats. The House elected Wendall Lady as Speaker and Robert Frey as Majority Leader.

◆State Party: In January 1981, the State Committee re-elected Morris Kay as Chair. The Executive Director was Merlyn Brown for a second 2-year term.

### **1982 Elections**

◆U.S. Senate: There was no U.S. Senate race.

◆U.S. Congress: Pat Roberts won the 1st District after Keith Sebelius retired; Larry Winn was re-elected to the 3rd district and Bob Whittaker was re-elected to the 5th district. Democrat Jim Slattery won the 2nd District by defeating Morris Kay after incumbent Republican James Edmund Jeffries did not run. Democrat Dan Glickman

was re-elected to the 4th District, defeating Jerry Caywood.

◆Kansas Statewides: Democrat John W. Carlin won re-election as governor; Democrat Thomas Docking was elected Lt Governor; Bob Stephan won re-election as Attorney General; Jack Brier was re-elected as Secretary of State; Fletcher Bell was re-elected as Insurance Commissioner; and Democrat Joan Finney was re-elected as Treasurer.

◆Kansas House: Republicans held steady winning 72 seats. The House elected Mike Hayden as Speaker and Joseph Hoagland as Majority Leader.

◆State Party: In January 1983, the State Committee elected Mary Alice Lair as Chair, but she gave it up in favor of Robert Bennett. The Executive Director was Vern Chesbro.

### **1984 Elections**

◆President: Republican presidential candidate Ronald Reagan swept Kansas and won the presidency. The national Republican convention was held in Dallas.

◆U.S. Senate: Nancy Kassebaum was re-elected as U.S. Senator.

◆U.S. Congress: Pat Roberts held the 1st District; Jan Meyers was elected to the 3rd district, defeating Democrat John Reardon, after a five way primary, and Bob Whittaker was re-elected to the 5th district. Incumbent Democrat Jim Slattery won the 2nd District defeating Jim Van Slyke. Incumbent Democrat Dan Glickman won the 4th District defeating William Krause.

◆Kansas Senate: Republicans won 24 seats, holding even. The Senate elected Robert Talkington as Senate President and Paul "Bud" Burke as Majority Leader.

◆Kansas House: Republicans won 76 seats, a net gain of 4 seats. The House elected Mike Hayden as Speaker and James Braden as Majority Leader.

◆State Party: In January 1985, the State Committee elected Vern Chesbro as Chair. The Executive Director was Eric Rucker.

### 1986 Elections

◆U.S. Senate: Bob Dole won re-election to the U.S. Senate with 70% of the vote.

◆U.S. Congress: Pat Roberts held the 1st District; Jan Meyers held the 3rd district, and Bob Whittaker held the 5th district. Incumbent Democrat Jim Slattery won the 2nd District beating Phill Kline. Incumbent Democrat Dan Glickman won the 4th District beating Bob Knight.

◆Kansas Statewides: Mike Hayden, defeated Democrat Tom Docking, to be elected Governor, after

winning a 7-way primary that included Jack Brier, Larry Jones, and Gene Bicknell. Jack Walker was elected Lt Governor. Bob Stephan was re-elected as Attorney General.



*Gov Mike Hayden*

Bill Graves was elected Secretary of State.

Fletcher Bell was re-elected Commissioner of Insurance. Democrat Joan Finney was re-elected as State Treasurer.

◆Kansas House: Republicans won 74 seats for a net loss of 2 seats. The House elected James Braden as Speaker and Joe Knopp as Majority Leader. In 1987 a fiscal conservative group, the Republican Reform Caucus, formed consisting of 12 Republican lawmakers who banded together in Topeka to challenge the establishment moderate leadership. Its leaders were Kerry Patrick, Bob Vancrum, David Miller, J.C. Long, and Gayle Mollenkamp

◆State Party: In January 1987, the State Committee elected Fred Logan as Chair. The Executive Director was Catherine Whitaker.

### 1988 Elections

◆President: Republican candidate George H.W. Bush won Kansas and the presidency. Kansas held a presidential caucus. The national Republican convention was held in New Orleans.

◆U.S. Senate: There was no election for the U.S. Senate.

◆U.S. Congress: Pat Roberts held the 1st District; Jan Meyers held the 3rd district, and Bob Whittaker won the 5th district. Incumbent Democrat Jim Slattery won the 2nd District, defeating Phil Meinhardt. Incumbent Democrat Dan Glickman won the 4th District, defeating Lee Thompson.

◆Kansas Senate: The Republicans won 22 seats, for a net loss of 2 seats. The Senate elected Bud Burke as Senate President; Eric Yost as Senate Vice-President; Fred Kerr as

Majority Leader; and Ben Vidricksen as Assistant majority Leader.

◆Kansas House: The Republicans won 68 seats, for a net loss of 6 seats. The House elected James Braden as Speaker; Dale Sprague as Speaker Pro Tem; Bob Miller as Majority Leader, and Max Moomaw as Assistant Majority Leader.

◆State Party: In January 1989, the State Committee elected Rochelle Chronister as Chair. The Executive Director was Catherine Whitaker.

### **1990 Elections**

◆ U.S. Senate: Nancy Kassebaum easily won re-election to the U.S. Senate.

◆ U.S. Congress: Pat Roberts held the 1st District; Jan Meyers held the 3rd district, and Dick Nichols won the 5th district. Incumbent Democrat Jim Slattery won the 2nd District defeating Scott Morgan. Incumbent Democrat Dan Glickman won the 4th Congressional District, defeating Roger Grund.

◆ Kansas Statewides: Democrat Joan Finney won the Governor's office, defeating incumbent Republican governor Mike Hayden, who had defeated Nestor Weigand in the primary. Governor Hayden was handicapped by substantial changes to the property tax system resulting from Constitutional changes made before his term began, including the first property value assessment in 20 years and the implementation of classification, i.e., assigning different tax rates based on the "class" of property as opposed to the traditional system of taxing all property at an

"equal and uniform" rate". The result was substantially higher commercial property rates. Governor Hayden, therefore, suffered a similar fate as Governor Avery did in 1966 – being held accountable for the tax implications of decisions made by the previous administration. Robert Stephan was re-elected as Attorney General. Bill Graves was re-elected as the Secretary of State. Ronald Todd was elected Insurance Commissioner. Democrat Sally Thompson won the State Treasurer race.

◆ Kansas House: For only the third time in Kansas history, the Republicans lost their majority in the Kansas House. They held 62 seats, a net loss of 7 seats, giving the Democrats a majority by one vote. The Republican Caucus elected Bob Miller as Minority Leader, and Wanda Fuller as Assistant Majority Leader.

◆State Party: In January 1991, the State Committee elected Kim Wells as Chair; Janet Boisseau as Vice-Chair; Sara Ullman as Secretary, and Duane Nightingale as Treasurer. The Executive Director was Steve Brown.

### **1992 Changes to party organization**

In 1992, the U.S. Supreme Court struck down a California statutory scheme, similar to Kansas', which regulated party structure and operations. After 1992, state parties were free to organize and operate free of government regulation, other than a bare minimum regarding election of precinct committeemen and women and filling vacancies in elected office.

The major changes enacted by the party since 1992 were to increase the state committee to 37 delegates from each Congressional district and specifying that the platform committee would be composed of two to four individuals from each district selected by the state committee chair.

### **THE SECOND CONSERVATIVE INSURGENCY** **(1992–1998)**

The new conservative wave was a result of two distinct political agendas that merged into one force. The first force was fiscal conservatism, which opposed what was seen as a state government grown too large, that taxed, spent, and borrowed too much. It first appeared in 1987 in the form of the "Republican Reform Caucus" a group of 12 legislators pushing for fiscal restraint.

The second force, was the pro-life movement. In 1991, the pro-life movement showed its political power in Kansas during the "Summer of Mercy" when daily blockades of abortion clinics and a large rally took place in Wichita. In 1992, the conservative movement began a systematic effort to take over the party, recruiting precinct leaders with a goal of gaining control of the State Committee.

In 1994, the conservative movement achieved several successes. It elected David Miller as State Party Chair and conservatives Todd Tiahrt and Sam Brownback to Congress. Conservative Tim Shallenburger became Speaker of the House.

In 1996, David Miller was re-elected as State party chair. Sam Brownback, ignoring the

requests of Bob Dole and Governor Bill Graves, ran for and won the US Senate seat vacated by Dole, defeating Shelia Frahm, the choice of Dole and Graves. Conservatives Jerry Moran, Vince Snowbarger and Jim Ryun were elected, and Todd Tiahrt was re-elected, to Congress. In 1998, the conservative tide ebbed and the moderate faction regained control of the State Committee.

### **1992 Elections**

◆ President: Republican George H. W. Bush won Kansas, but lost the national election to Bill Clinton. Kansas held its second and last a presidential preference primary won by George H.W. Bush with Pat Buchanan second. The national convention was held in Houston, Texas. The Presidential Electors were: Shari Caywood, James Bolden, Bruce Mayfield, Carlos Mayans, Charles Rayl, and Adolph Howard.

◆ U.S. Senate: Bob Dole easily won re-election to the US Senate with 62% of the vote.

◆ U.S. Congress: Pat Roberts and Jan Meyers held the 1st and 3rd Congressional seats. Democratic incumbent Jim Slattery won the 2nd District, defeating Jim Van Slyke. Democratic incumbent Dan Glickman won the 4th Congressional district, defeating Eric Yost. Kansas lost its fifth Congressional district to reapportionment.

◆ Kansas Senate: Running in newly redistricted districts, the Republicans held 27 seats, a gain of 5. The Senate elected Paul "Bud" Burke as Senate President; Jerry Moran as Senate Vice President; Sheila

Frahm as Majority Leader, and Ben Vidrickisen as Assistant Majority Leader.

◆ Kansas House: Running in newly redistricted districts, the Republicans regained the majority, with 66 seats, a net gain of 4 seats. The House elected Bob Miller as Speaker; Tim Shallenburger as Speaker Pro Tem; Vince Snowbarger as Majority Leader; and Robin Jennison as Assistant Majority Leader.

◆ State Party: In January 1993, the State Committee re-elected Kim Wells as Chair; Janet Boisseau as Vice-Chair; Sara Ullman as Secretary, and Duane Nightingale as Treasurer. Mike Harris was elected National Committeeman and Mary Alice Lair was re-elected National Committeewoman. The Executive Director was Steve Brown.

### **1994 Elections**

◆ U.S. Senate: There was no U.S. Senate race.

◆ U.S. Congress: All four Congressional seats were won by Republicans, a net gain of two seats. Pat Roberts was re-elected in the First District and Jan Meyers was re-elected in the Third District. The Second District was won by Sam Brownback, defeating former Democratic Governor John W. Carlin, after the incumbent Democratic Congressman, Jim Slattery, ran unsuccessfully for Governor. Todd Tiahrt won the Fourth District defeating 9-term incumbent Democrat Dan Glickman.

◆ Kansas Statewides: Bill Graves won the governor's office defeating Jim Slattery. Sheila Frahm won Lt Governor. After she resigned in 1996 to run for the US Senate, she was replaced by Gary Sherrer.



*Gov Bill Graves*

Carla Stovall won the Attorney General's office. Ron Thornburgh won the Secretary of State's office. The Republicans lost the Treasurer race to Sally Thompson and the Insurance Commissioner race to Kathleen Sebelius. When Sally Thompson resigned as State Treasurer in 1998, Clyde Graber (R) was appointed State Treasurer.

◆ Kansas Senate: There were no senate elections, but when Sheila Frahm resigned to become Lt Governor, Jerry Moran became Majority Leader and Alicia Salisbury became Senate Vice President.

◆ Kansas House: The Republicans held 81 seats, a net gain of 15 seats. The House elected Tim Shallenburger as Speaker; Susan Wagle as Speaker Pro Tem; Robin Jennison as Majority Leader, and Doug Mays as Assistant Majority Leader. This constituted a conservative leadership slate.

◆ State Party: In January 1995, the State Committee elected David Miller as Chair; Barbara Lissendem as Vice-Chair; Mary Jane Bradley as Secretary; and Paul Rosell as Treasurer. This state party election was a victory of the 'pro-life,' conservative faction. The Executive Director was Kris Van Meteren then Karen Casto.

## **1996 Elections**

◆ President: Republican Presidential candidate Bob Dole easily won Kansas, but lost the national election to Bill Clinton. There was no presidential caucus or primary, all delegates were directed by the state committee to vote for Bob Dole. The national Republican convention was held in San Diego, California. The Presidential Electors were: Timothy Golba, Michael Harris, Betty Hanicke, Marynell Reece, Marjorie Robards, and John Watkins.

◆ U.S. Senate: When Bob Dole resigned his Senate seat in June 1996 to run for President and Nancy Kassebaum decided not to run for re-election as a U.S. Senator, there were open elections for both Kansas US Senate seats. Pat Roberts easily won the seat previously held by Kassenbaum, defeating Democrat Sally Thompson, the State Treasurer. Sam Brownback first won a primary against Sheila Frahm, who had been appointed to the seat by Governor Bill Graves. Then, in a special election, Sam Brownback defeated Jill Docking to win the seat previously held by Senator Bob Dole.

◆ U.S. Congress: Republicans continued to hold all four Congressional seats: Jerry Moran won the 1st district after Pat Roberts vacated the seat to run for the U.S. Senate, Jim Ryun won the 2nd district, Vince Snowbarger won the 3rd district after Jan Meyers decided not to run for re-election, and Todd Tiahrt was re-elected in the 4th District.

◆ Kansas Senate: The Republicans held even with 27 seats. The Senate elected Dick Bond as Senate President; Tim Emert as Senate Vice-President; Alicia Salisbury as Majority

Leader, and Ben Vidricksen as Assistant Majority Leader.

◆ Kansas House: The Republicans held 77 seats, a net loss of 4 seats. The House elected Tim Shallenburger as Speaker; Susan Wagle as Speaker Pro Tem; Robin Jennison as Majority Leader; and Doug Mays as Assistant Majority Leader.

◆ State Party: In January 1997, the State Committee re-elected David Miller as Chair; Kate Carty as Vice-Chair; Mary Jane Bradley as Secretary; and Bill Adams as Treasurer. Dwight Sutherland was elected National Committeeman and Mary Alice Lair was re-elected as National Committeewoman. David Miller resigned in 1998 to run against Gov Graves in the primary and was replaced by Steve Abrams. The Executive Director was John Potter.

## **MODERATE FACTION REGAINS CONTROL** **(1998–2006)**

### **1998 Elections**

◆ U.S. Senate: Sam Brownback won re-election to his US Senate seat in the regular election.

◆ U.S. Congress: Jerry Moran in the 1st District, Jim Ryun in the 2nd District, and Todd Tiahrt in the 4th District won re-election. The Republicans lost the 3rd Congressional district when incumbent Vince Snowbarger lost to Democrat Dennis Moore.

◆ Kansas Statewides: Bill Graves, after defeating David Miller in the primary, won



re-election as governor in a landslide. Gary Sherrer won Lt Governor. Carla Stovall won re-election as Attorney General. Ron Thornburgh won re-election as Secretary of State. Tim Schallenberger won the election for State Treasurer. Democrat Kathleen Sebelius won the election for Insurance Commissioner.

◆ Kansas House: The Republicans held 77 seats, a net loss of 4 seats. The House elected Robin Jennison as Speaker; Doug Mays as Speaker Pro Tem; Kent Glasscock as Majority Leader; and Shari Weber as Assistant Majority Leader.

◆ State Party: In January 1999, the State Committee elected Mark Parkinson as Chair; Margie Canfield as Vice-Chair; Wanda Morrison as Secretary; and Steve Martens as Treasurer. This election was a victory of the moderate faction. Starting in 1997 the moderate faction financed by the Graves family and led by Steve Cloud, among others, had recruited hundreds of precinct leaders and elected a sufficient number in August 1998 to gain control of the party's state committee. The Executive Director was Kari Austen.

## **2000 Elections**

◆ President: Republican Presidential candidate George W. Bush easily swept Kansas. There was no presidential caucus or primary, all delegates attended the convention uncommitted. The national Republican convention was held in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The Presidential Electors were: Shari Caywood, Richard Eckert, Mark Heitz, Gene Eastin, Susan Estes, and Charles Hostetler.

◆ U.S. Senate: There was no United States Senate race.

◆ U.S. Congress: The Republicans held three Congressional seats with Jerry Moran in the 1st, Jim Ryun in the 2nd, and Todd Tiahrt in the 4th winning re-election. Phill Kline lost to incumbent Democrat Dennis Moore in the 3rd District, after beating Greg Musil in the primary.

◆ Kansas Senate: The Republicans held 30 seats, a net gain of 3 seats, of whom 15 were freshman. The Senate elected David Kerr as Senate President; Sandy Praeger as Senate Vice President; Lana Oleen as Majority Leader; and Les Donovan as Assistant Majority Leader.

◆ Kansas House: The Republicans won 79 seats, a net gain of 2 seats. The House elected Kent Glasscock as Speaker; Clay Aurand as Speaker Pro Tem; Sheri Webber as Majority Leader; and John Ballou as Assistant Majority Leader.

◆ State Party: In January 2001, the State Committee re-elected Mark Parkinson as Chair; Margie Canfield as Vice-Chair; Wanda Morrison as Secretary; and Brad Stout as Treasurer. Calvin James and June Cooper were elected National Committeeman and woman. The Executive Director was Kari Austen.

## **2002 Elections**

◆ U.S. Senate: Pat Roberts won re-election to the US Senate without opposition.

◆ U.S. Congress: The Republicans held three Congressional seats with Jerry Moran in the 1st, Jim Ryun in the 2nd, and Todd Tiahrt in

the 4th winning re-election. Adam Taff lost to incumbent Democrat Dennis Moore in the 3rd District.

◆ Kansas Statewides: Republican Tim Shallenberger and David Lindstrom lost the race for Governor against Kathleen Sebelius. Phill Kline won the Attorney General's office defeating Chris Biggs. Ron Thornburgh won re-election as Secretary of State. Sandy Praeger won election as the Insurance Commissioner. Lynn Jenkins won election as State Treasurer.

◆ Kansas Senate: There were no senate elections, but John Vratil became Senate Vice President after Sandy Praeger resigned to become Insurance Commissioner.

◆ Kansas House: House candidates ran in new districts after redistricting. The Republicans held 80 seats, a gain of one. The House elected Doug Mays as Speaker; John Ballou as Speaker Pro Tem; Clay Aurand as Majority Leader; and Ray Merrick as Assistant Majority Leader.

◆ State Party: In January 2003, the State Committee elected Dennis Jones Chair; Pat Ranson Vice-Chair; Pat Smith as Secretary; and Morey Sullivan as Treasurer. This was the third election where the moderate faction controlled the party. The Executive Director was Scott Poor. In 2002, the Chair tried to make the party's primary an "open" primary, allowing unaffiliated voters to vote in the Republican primary. After a lawsuit brought by Susan Estes and others, the Court ruled that unless the state committee amended its Constitution, the primary would remain closed.

## **McCain-Feingold campaign finance reforms**

In the 1980s and 1990s the state party often had a paid staff of six to ten, each with specific responsibilities. The Campaign Finance changes severely limited the amount of funds ultimately available to the state party and marked a major change in resources available to the party to use to support candidates.

## **2004 Elections**

◆ President: Republican Presidential candidate George W. Bush carried Kansas by a wide margin. There was no presidential caucus or primary, all delegates were to vote for George Bush. The national Republican convention was held in New York, New York. The Presidential electors were: Ruth Garvey Fink, Bernard "Bud" Hentzen, Dennis Jones, Wanda Konold Jack Ranson, and Patricia P. Smith.

◆ U.S. Senate: Sam Brownback easily won re-election as US Senator.

◆ U.S. Congress: The Republicans held three Congressional seats with Jerry Moran in the 1st, Jim Ryun in the 2nd, and Todd Tiaht in the 4th all winning re-election. Kris Kobach lost to incumbent Democrat Dennis Moore in the 3rd District after defeating Adam Taff in the primary.

◆ Kansas Senate: Senate candidates ran in new districts established by the 2002 redistricting. The Republicans held steady with 30 seats. Steve Morris was elected Senate President; John Vratil as Senate Vice President; Derek Schmidt as Majority leader;

and Karin Brownlee as Assistant Majority Leader.

◆ Kansas House: The Republicans held 83 seats, a net gain of 3 seats. Doug Mays was re-elected as Speaker; Ray Merrick as Speaker Pro Tem; Clay Aurand as Majority Leader; and Joe McLeland as Assistant Majority Leader.

◆ State Party: In January 2005, the State Committee elected Tim Shallenburger as Chair; Susan Estes as Vice-Chair; Beverly Caley as Secretary; and Emmitt Mitchell as Treasurer. Steve Cloud and Alicia Salisbury were elected National Committeeman and woman. The Executive Director was Dereck Sontag in 2005 and Ron Freeman in 2006.

#### **REPUBLICAN LOW POINT AND RECOVERY** **(2006–2008)**

The Republicans hit a low point in the 2006 election when Kathleen Sebelius won re-election as Governor, Phill Kline lost his re-election bid as Attorney General, and Jim Ryan lost his re-election bid for the Second Congressional District. Moreover, Mark Parkinson, former state party chair, became a Democrat and ran as Sebelius' Lt Governor. This left the Republicans holding only three of the six statewide offices and only two of four Congressional seats. Intra-party factional feuding between moderates and conservatives reached new intensity with some moderate leaders openly endorsing Democrat candidates.

In 2008, however, the Republicans regained the initiative. The Kansas Democrats, in the year of Obama, poured money and effort into

Kansas, but came up short, losing the Second Congressional District to Lynn Jenkins and showing no consequential gains in state legislative races. Republican success in 2008 was due to an energetic slate of candidates and to the state-wide campaign organization of US Senator Pat Roberts. The Roberts organization, under campaign manager David Kensinger, invested in and developed a statewide structure to conduct an effective grassroots campaign, registering and identifying Republican voters and then effectively getting them out the vote.

#### **2006 Elections**

◆ U.S. Senate: There was no United States Senate election.

◆ U.S. Congress: The Republicans lost one US Congressional seat. Jerry Moran in the 1st District and Todd Tiahrt in the 4th District held their seats. Incumbent Jim Ryun in the 2nd District lost to Democrat Nancy Boyda. Chuck Ahner lost to incumbent Democrat Dennis Moore in the 3rd District.

◆ Kansas Statewides: After a seven-way primary, Jim Barnett and Susan Wagle lost the gubernatorial election to incumbent Democrat Kathleen Sebelius. Phill Kline lost his re-election bid for Attorney General to Democrat Paul Morrison, who later resigned in a scandal and was replaced by Steve Six. Ron Thornburgh won re-election as Secretary of State and after he resigned in 2010 was replaced by Democrat Chris Biggs. Sandy Praeger won re-election as the Insurance Commissioner. Lynn Jenkins won re-election as Treasurer. She resigned as State Treasurer after winning the 2nd Congressional District

in 2008 and was replaced by Democrat Dennis McKinney.

◆ Kansas House: After the election and some defections to the Democrats, the Republicans held 78 House seats, a net loss of 5 seats. The House elected Melvin Neufeld as Speaker; Don Dahl as Speaker Pro Tem; Ray Merrick as Majority Leader, and Jene Vickrey as Assistant Majority Leader.

◆ State Party: In January 2007, the State Committee elected Kris Kobach as Chair; Sharon Meissner as Vice-Chair; Beverly Caley as Secretary; and David Thorne as Treasurer. The conservative faction continued to control the party. The Executive Director for 2007–2008 was Christian Morgan.

## **2008 Elections**

◆ President: In the year Democrat Barack Obama was elected president, Republican candidate John McCain carried Kansas by a wide margin. In the Kansas Presidential Caucus, Mike Huckabee prevailed. The national Republican convention was in St Paul, Minnesota. The Presidential electors were: Tom Arpke, David Kensinger, Mike Pompeo, Jeff Colyer, Kris Kobach, and Helen Van Etten.

◆ U.S. Senate: Pat Roberts won re-election to the Senate by a large margin defeating former Democratic Congressman Jim Slattery.

◆ U.S. Congress: Jerry Moran, in the 1st District, and Todd Tiahrt, in the 4th District, won re-election to Congress. In a close race, Lynn Jenkins defeated incumbent Democrat Nancy Boyda to win the 2nd District, after defeating Jim Ryun in the primary. She was

the only Republican to defeat an incumbent democrat in 2008. Nick Jordan lost to incumbent Democrat Dennis Moore in the 3rd District.

◆ Kansas Senate: The Republicans gained a seat in the Kansas Senate winning 31 seats. The Senate re-elected Steve Morris as Senate President; John Vratil as Senate Vice President; Derek Schmidt as Majority Leader, and Vicki Schmidt as Assistant Majority Leader.

◆ Kansas House: The Republicans held their ground but lost a seat to a subsequent defection, leaving them with 77 seats. The House elected, in a surprise upset, Michael O'Neal as Speaker over the previous Speaker Melvin Neufeld; Arlen Siegfried as Speaker Pro Tem; Ray Merrick as Majority Leader; and Peggy Mast as Assistant Majority Leader.

◆ State Party: In January 2009, the State Committee elected Amanda Adkins as Chair; Ron Estes as Vice-Chair; Susan Concannon as Secretary; and Steve Fitzgerald as Treasurer. Helen van Etten and Mike Pompeo were elected National Committeeman and woman. The Executive Director was CiCi Rojas in 2009 and Ashley McMillan in 2010.

## **"THE CLEAN SWEEP": CONSERVATIVE FACTION TAKES CONTROL (2010–2016)**

The 2010, 2012, and 2014 elections were watershed elections for the political history of Kansas. The Conservative faction swept to and then held power in all federal, statewide

and legislative elections. They proceeded to implement an aggressive reform agenda.

### 2010 Elections - Watershed

The 2010 election was a decisive victory for the Republican Party in the year of the "Tea Party", a grass roots, fiscally conservative movement that formed in early 2009. Led by the Brownback Campaign under campaign manager David Kensinger, the Republicans



*David Kensinger*

developed and implemented the "Clean Sweep" program focusing on early, detailed voter identification and a systematic data driven get-out-the-vote effort. The Republicans won all six statewide offices for the first time since the 1966 election, all four Congressional seats for the first time since the 1996 election, and gained 16 seats in the House, for 92 total seats, a number last equaled in the 1954 election.

As a result, the conservative faction firmly held the executive branch and the House. In the Senate, the moderate and conservative Republican factions were of roughly equal number, allowing the Democrats, who usually aligned with the moderate faction, to control the outcome on divisive issues.

#### ◆ U.S. Senate:

Jerry Moran became the new U.S. Senator, replacing Sam Brownback, after a tough primary victory over Todd Tiahrt.



*Sen Jerry Moran*

◆ U.S. Congress: Republicans won all four Congressional districts for the first time since the 1996 election with Tim Huelskamp winning the first, after a seven-way primary; incumbent Lynn Jenkins winning re-election in the second; Kevin Yoder winning the third, after a 13-way primary; and Mike Pompeo winning in the fourth, after a four-way primary.



◆ Kansas Statewides: The party swept all six statewide elections for the first time since the 1964 election. Sam Brownback became Governor, Jeff Colyer Lieutenant Governor, Kris Kobach Secretary of State, Derek



Schmidt Attorney General, Sandy Praeger

was re-elected as Insurance Commissioner, and Ron Estes State Treasurer.

◆ Kansas Senate: There were two special senate elections both won by Republicans, and Jay Emler was elected Majority Leader after Derek Schmidt resigned to become state attorney general.

◆ Kansas House: Republicans picked up 16 seats in the Kansas House of Representatives, resulting in 92 Republican representatives, the highest number since 1953–54. Of the 92, 33 were freshman of whom 9 were elected by precinct leaders to fill post-election vacancies. The House re-elected Michael O'Neal as Speaker; Jene Vickrey as Speaker Pro Tem; Arlen Siegfried as Majority Leader; and Peggy Mast as Assistant Majority Leader.

◆ State Party: In January 2011, the State Committee re-elected Amanda Adkins as Party Chair and elected Kelly Arnold as Vice Chair, Michelle Martin as Secretary and T.C. Anderson as Treasurer. In a special election, Todd Tiaht was elected National Committeeman, after Mike Pompeo resigned after winning a seat in Congress. The Executive Director in 2011-2012 was Clay Barker.

## **2012 Elections**

The 2012 election did not change the overall number of Republicans in the legislature, but it radically changed the composition of the Senate. After bitter primaries, the conservative Republican candidates prevailed in most races and then went on to win in the general election. Some moderate senate incumbents, who lost in the primary

election, endorsed Democrats. A completely new leadership took over the Kansas Senate.

2012 began with a state party Convention. Speakers included Governor Rick Perry of Texas, Governor Bobby Jindal of Louisiana, Governor Bob McDonnell of Virginia, and publisher Steve Forbes. On March 10, the state party held its presidential preference caucus at 96 locations in 90 different counties. Over 32,000 people showed up to vote. Rick Santorum won 33 delegates and Mitt Romney won 7 delegates.

The 2012 general election was the first time in Kansas history when three factors aligned on the same election (1) there was no US Senator on the ballot, (2) there were no statewide offices on the ballot, and (3) both state Senate and House candidates ran in newly redistricted districts.

◆ Primary Election: The primary, held on August 7, 2012, was a decisive battle between the moderate faction, particularly those in the State Senate aligned with the Senate leadership, and the conservative faction, primarily challengers to Senate incumbents aligned with Governor Brownback. Of the 32 Republican senate seats, 29 had primaries.

The primary election had several unique features. First, there was no US Senate or statewide office race on the ballot, and, as it turned out, no Republican congressional primaries. This lack of marquee races resulted in an emphasis on legislative races. Second, when the legislature was unable to pass redistricting maps, the matter ended up before the federal court.

A 3-judge panel issued new district lines for the congressional, state senate, state house, and state school board districts. The court was required to make the state legislative districts with a 1% population deviation from the perfect district and did not include incumbent locations as a criteria in its determination. The result were radically new maps, issued Friday, June 8, 2012.

Candidates had to file by Monday, June 11 at noon. Consequentially, over that weekend there was a rush to recruit candidates to fill districts without an incumbent.

Last, this election brought independent expenditures by non-party political groups to levels not before seen in Kansas. When the last county reported its results early on Wednesday, August 8, the conservative candidates had won a substantial majority of the Republican senate primary races.

The general consensus is that the moderate candidates and PACs outspent their conservative counterparts, but the conservatives had a superior ground operation, with better data indicating which republican voters they had to turn out to vote.

◆ President: The National Convention was held in Tampa, Florida. Mitt Romney easily won Kansas with 62% of the statewide vote. Obama only managed 37%. The Kansas members of the Electoral College were Amanda Adkins, Todd Tiahart, Helen Van Ettan, Randy Duncan, Kelly Arnold, and Lt Governor Jeff Colyer.

◆ U.S. Senate: There were no U.S. Senate races. After the election, Jerry Moran was

elected Chair of the National Republican Senatorial Committee.

◆ U.S. Congress: For the first time in over 40 years, the Kansas Democrats failed to mount a serious challenge to any of the Republican candidates. As a result, Tim Huelskamp won the 1st District with no opposition, Lynn Jenkins won the 2nd District with minimal opposition, Kevin Yoder won the 3rd District with only a Libertarian as an opponent, and Mike Pompeo won the 4th District. Lynn Jenkins was elected Vice Chair of the Republican House Conference.

◆ State Senate: The Republicans won a record 32 seats. Of the 11 open seats, Republicans won 10. The Republican Caucus elected Susan Wagle as Senate President, Jeff King as Senate Vice President, Terry Bruce as Majority Leader, Julia Lynn as Assistant Majority leader, and Garrett Love as Whip. This was a complete break with past leadership, none of the leaders for the 2013 Session had previously been in Senate leadership.

◆ State House: In an unprecedented accomplishment, after gaining 16 seats in 2010 for a total of 92, the Republicans won 92 seats again in 2012, defying the general rule that after large gains, losing some seats was normal (the “dead cat bounce” effect). Of the 35 open seats, Republicans won 26. Republicans won 34 seats with no Democratic challenger. The House Republican Caucus elected Ray Merrick as Speaker, Peggy Mast as Speaker Pro Tem, Jene Vickrey as Majority Leader, David Crum as Assistant Majority Leader, and Brian Weber as Whip.

◆ State School Board: Republicans won four of the five races.

◆ State Party: In February 2012, the State Committee meeting in Johnson County, re-elected Todd Tiahrt as national committeeman and Helen van Etten as national committeewoman. In January 2013 at the State Convention in Hutchinson, Kelly Arnold was elected Chair, Michelle Martin Vice-Chair, Derek Kreifels Secretary, and T.C. Anderson re-elected treasurer.

### 2014 Election

The 2014 election saw a concentrated, but ultimately unsuccessful, effort by Democrats to win the Governor's race. Many leaders of the older moderate faction, including those who lost positions in 2010 and 2012, formed groups to support liberals like democratic governor candidate Paul Davis or independent U.S. Senate candidate Greg Orman. These groups were unsuccessful in bringing the Kansas electorate along with them and only succeeded in further diminishing their influence in state politics. Bob Dole, aged 91, visited all 105 Kansas Counties in a thank you tour and campaigned constantly for Governor Brownback and Senator Roberts.

◆ Primary Election: The primary, held on August 5, 2014, featured several major contests. U.S. Senator Pat Roberts faced a strong challenge from Dr. Milton Wolf, and two other candidates. Roberts prevailed with 48% of the vote. Congressman Mike Pompeo was unsuccessfully challenged by National Committeeman Todd Tiahrt. Congressman

Tim Huelskamp prevailed over Alan LaPolice. There were 30 primaries for Kansas House seats, of which 15 were strongly contested. After substantial funds were expended in these races there was little or no net change in the ideological - conservative / moderate - make-up of the Republican slate of general election candidates.

◆ U.S. Senate: Senator Pat Roberts was initially challenged by Democrat Chad Taylor and Independent Greg Orman. In a bizarre twist, Chad Taylor dropped out after



*Senator Pat Roberts*

winning the Democrat primary, leaving the field to Orman.

After Orman gained an early lead in the polls, the Roberts team launched an effective persuasion and voter turnout effort that saw numerous national republican leaders coming to Kansas. Roberts won the election with 53% to Orman's 43%.

◆ U.S. Congress: The four Republican incumbents swept to victory with double digit wins over their weak democratic opponents. Tim Huelskamp won the 1st District, Lynn Jenkins won the 2nd District, Kevin Yoder won the 3rd District, and Mike Pompeo won the 4th District.

◆ Kansas Statewides: After a very tough and contentious race, Sam Brownback was re-elected as Governor with Jeff Colyer as his Lt Governor with 50% of the vote to 46% for Democrat Paul Davis. The other four



statewide races were less contested with Kris Kobach re-elected as Secretary of State, Derek Schmidt re-elected as Attorney General, Ron Estes re-elected as State Treasurer, and Ken Selzer elected as the new Insurance Commissioner.

◆ State House: Republicans took five democrat-held seats for a total of 97 of 125. No Republican incumbents lost and no open seats previously held by a Republican were won by Democrats.

◆ State School Board: Republicans won four of the five races.

◆ State Party: In January 2015, the state party committee re-elected Kelly Arnold as chairman, Ashley McMillan as Vice Chair, Derek Kreifels as Secretary, and TC Anderson as Treasurer. Clay Barker stayed on as Executive Director.