

Republican Gov. Pete Ricketts faces Sen. Bob Krist of Omaha, the Democratic nominee, in this year's gubernatorial race.

Ricketts will be seeking a second term.

Krist will be term-limited out of the Legislature at the end of the year after serving 10 years as a state senator.

The governor is the chief executive officer in state government. The term is for four years and there is a two-term limit; salary is \$105,000 annually.

Bob Krist

Website: KristForNebraska.com

Krist, a state senator for almost 10 years, says he would center on education, tax reform, access to health care and prison reform.



GENERAL ELECTION QUESTIONS

How would you achieve and choose to fund local property tax relief and what level of state funding support should be provided for local schools?

You can't talk about property tax relief without talking about the proper funding of education. Not that long ago, 20 percent of income taxes paid went back into local school districts. The past year it was less than 3 percent. We need to increase state support for our schools and this will greatly reduce pressure on property taxes.

How would you choose to fund Medicaid expansion if it is approved by Nebraska voters in November? How will you vote on the initiative in November?

Yes, I will vote in support of the Medicaid expansion ballot measure. We need to be judicious in how we utilize the federal waiver process in implementing Medicaid expansion so that we are able to use as much in federal money as we can. This will reduce the amount of state support required to implement it effectively.

What do you propose in terms of prison and sentencing reform and at what pace and level of state funding?

Our prisons are at a crisis point, and dangerously overcrowded. I would declare an emergency and work toward release of nonviolent offenders before a federal court forces the state to reduce overcrowding on their terms. I would increase pay and improve working conditions for corrections officers to reduce turnover and increase safety for those hard-working men and women.

What, if anything, needs to be done to protect students in Nebraska schools from gun violence? Would you support reinstatement of a federal assault weapons ban by Congress? Why or why not?

Unlike my opponent, I would not support arming teachers. I support the Second Amendment, but we need to keep guns out of schools and work on addressing mental health issues. My running mate, Sen. Lynne Walz, had a bill to address mental and behavioral health in schools, at no cost to taxpayers. The governor vetoed it.

Do you believe there should be more, less or about the same level of state funding support for the University of Nebraska during the next four years? And why?

Gov. Ricketts has been the worst governor in Nebraska history for support of the University of Nebraska. His devastating cuts threatened to change the momentum of the university for years to come. We must do better for our kids. My administration will work with university leaders to control spending while finding funds to maintain a competitive edge.

What would be your priorities for 2019, legislative and otherwise?

I will take a collaborative approach and work directly with lawmakers on the budget. Priorities will be to increase state funding for the University of Nebraska and health care providers who serve people with developmental disabilities. We will also work to boost funding for K-12 public schools as a way to ease pressure on property taxes.

PRIMARY ELECTION QUESTIONS

What would be your priorities in terms of policy and legislation for the next four years?

- We need to repair the damage done to our K-12 schools and institutions of higher learning by our current governor.
- We need to reform our tax system, especially the property tax.
- We need to expand access to health care.
- We need to fix our prisons.
- We must restore a bipartisan approach to state government and separation of powers.

What changes, if any, would you propose or support in reshaping Nebraska's tax system?

The property tax system needs to be reformed and we ought to look at making our tax system more equitable. Tax subsidies or loopholes that no longer make sense should be revised or repealed. We should address these reforms in a sensible, bipartisan fashion.

What are the state's most urgent needs and how would you address them?

First, we need to repair the damage to our education system caused by the current administration. Next, we have to address the property tax crisis. Third, we must improve access to health care, especially in rural areas. Fourth we must address the overpopulation of our prisons. I would approach each of these issues in a bipartisan manner.

Do you support or oppose the property tax reform initiative. Why?

I definitely support the goal of this initiative, which is to reform our property tax system. However, there are inequities in the current proposal, such as for seniors on fixed income, and it does not address the revenue shortfall for education that it would create. Too many unanswered questions! So, I cannot support it in its current form.

What would be your funding priorities for the next four years?

My funding priorities include: education, infrastructure, access to health care, veterans and our transportation system (roads and bridges).

****NOTE: Gov. Pete Ricketts chose to not participate in the General Election Voter's Guide.**