Governor

Open seat (Laura Kelly term-limited). An Oct. 26–28 Emerson College poll showed Masterson 50%, Holscher 46%.



Cindy Holscher

DEMOCRAT · OPEN SEAT

State senator from Overland Park since 2021 and Senate minority whip; former Sprint executive.

Ty Masterson

REPUBLICAN · OPEN SEAT

Kansas Senate president; state senator since 2009 and former homebuilder.

Where the candidates stand on the issues Pope Leo XIV has raised, in their own words and votes. Bracketed numbers link to sources. We do not rate, score, or endorse candidates.

WAR & PEACE

POPE LEO XIV *Leo invited citizens of every country involved in the war with Iran to contact their leaders and members of Congress "to work for peace and to reject war and violence."* Remarks at Castel Gandolfo, Apr. 7, 2026 (Vatican News via The Good Newsroom)

CINDY HOLSCHER

Blames President Trump's tariffs and war for driving up the cost of living; no specific foreign-policy positions stated.

[1] Kansas News Service/HPPR: Holscher highlights distinctions from GOP rival

TY MASTERSON

No public position found.

AI & THE DIGNITY OF WORK

POPE LEO XIV *"No one can be reduced to productivity, to cognitive performance, or to mere data."* Magnifica Humanitas presentation, May 25, 2026

CINDY HOLSCHER

Her platform calls for repealing Kansas's right-to-work law; credits "a good union job and public education" with lifting her family out of poverty.

[1] Ballotpedia: Cindy Holscher
[2] Kansas News Service/HPPR: Holscher highlights distinctions from GOP rival

TY MASTERSON

Calls data centers critical to winning an "AI Cold War" with China and favors local control over where they are built.

[1] OnTheIssues: 2026 Kansas governor race
[2] Kansas News Service/HPPR: Governor candidates at the State Fair debate

THE POOR & THE SAFETY NET

POPE LEO XIV *The preferential choice for the poor is "a source of extraordinary renewal both for the Church and for society."* Dilexi Te, Oct. 4, 2025

CINDY HOLSCHER

Supports Medicaid expansion, saying rural hospitals without it are "six times more likely to close"; backs raising the state minimum wage to $16.

[1] KCUR Up to Date: Cindy Holscher interview
[2] Holscher campaign: Priorities
[3] Ballotpedia: Cindy Holscher

TY MASTERSON

Opposes Medicaid expansion for "able-bodied adults," favoring provider-tax and reimbursement changes instead.

[1] Wichita Liberty: Masterson and Holscher at KIOGA forum (Aug. 2026)
[2] OnTheIssues: Ty Masterson

ELECTIONS & CIVIC LIFE

POPE LEO XIV *Authentic democracy, "far from being a mere procedure," "recognizes the dignity of every person and calls each citizen to participate responsibly in the pursuit of the common good."* Message to the Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences, Apr. 9, 2026

CINDY HOLSCHER

Backs an independent redistricting panel and a ban on mid-decade redistricting; opposed the 2026 amendment to elect Supreme Court justices and supports barring immigration enforcement near polling places.

[1] Ballotpedia: Cindy Holscher
[2] Kansas News Service/HPPR: Holscher highlights distinctions from GOP rival
[3] OnTheIssues: 2026 Kansas governor race

TY MASTERSON

At an August 2026 forum described the Democratic Party as the party of "mail-in elections and fraud"; no specific election proposals stated.

[1] Voice for Liberty: Masterson vs. Holscher at KIOGA forum

LIFE OF THE UNBORN

POPE LEO XIV *Abortion "cuts short a growing life and refuses to welcome the gift of life."* Address to the Diplomatic Corps, Jan. 9, 2026

CINDY HOLSCHER

Supports abortion rights, opposed the 2022 constitutional amendment, and warns that under her opponent "reproductive healthcare in Kansas will be eliminated."

[1] Kansas News Service/HPPR: Holscher highlights distinctions from GOP rival

TY MASTERSON

Endorsed by Kansans for Life PAC; blames the 2019 Hodes ruling for striking down abortion limits and says "it's going to take a new Supreme Court opinion" to change that.

[1] Kansas Reflector: Kansans for Life PAC endorses Masterson
[2] The Heartlander: Kansas abortion and school choice

THE DEATH PENALTY

POPE LEO XIV *Someone who opposes abortion but favors the death penalty "is not really pro-life."* AP via PBS NewsHour, Sept. 30, 2025

CINDY HOLSCHER

No public position found.

TY MASTERSON

No public position found.

IMMIGRANTS & REFUGEES

POPE LEO XIV *"Defending human life also includes welcoming, protecting and assisting immigrants."* Letter on the 250th Anniversary of the United States, June 25, 2026

CINDY HOLSCHER

No public position found.

TY MASTERSON

Led the 2024 override funding Kansas National Guard deployment to the Texas border — "Every state in the nation is a border state" — and praises Trump for "fighting for secure borders."

[1] Kansas Reflector: Legislature affirms Texas border security funding
[2] Lawrence Journal-World: Trump endorses Masterson

RELIGIOUS LIBERTY & EDUCATION

POPE LEO XIV *Religious freedom is "the right of every person to worship according to conscience."* Letter on the 250th Anniversary of the United States, June 25, 2026

CINDY HOLSCHER

Opposes private school vouchers, saying she has blocked efforts to "cut public school funding and expand private school vouchers."

[1] Holscher campaign: Priorities

TY MASTERSON

Wants Kansas to opt into the federal school-choice tax credit and to raise the state scholarship tax credit cap from $10 million to $15 million.

[1] The Heartlander: Kansas abortion and school choice

CARE FOR CREATION

POPE LEO XIV *“We cannot love God, whom we cannot see, while despising his creatures.”* AP, Oct. 1, 2025

CINDY HOLSCHER

Calls for a moratorium on new data centers until “guard rails” protect water, farmland and utility customers.

[1] Kansas News Service/HPPR: Governor candidates at the State Fair debate
[2] Holscher campaign: Priorities

TY MASTERSON

Says wind and solar should pay comparable taxes because policy “shouldn’t be picking winners and losers”; supports “American energy dominance.”

[1] Voice for Liberty: Masterson vs. Holscher at KIOGA forum
[2] Lawrence Journal-World: Trump endorses Masterson

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