



PO Box 654  
Lawrence, KS 66044  
(913) 232-2336  
[KansasInterfaithAction.org](http://KansasInterfaithAction.org)  
Rabbi Moti Rieber, Executive Director  
Rev. Sarah Oglesby-Dunegan, Board Chair

**Kansas Interfaith Action** is a statewide, multi-faith issue-advocacy organization that “puts faith into action” by educating, engaging and advocating on behalf of people of faith and the public regarding critical social, economic, and climate justice issues.

KIFA members are shaped by the values of our diverse faiths, which connect us to an age-old concern for justice, peace, and human dignity. Rooted in faith, we join hands across difference to work for moral public policy in Kansas.

We take as our starting point the “four evils” of racism / discrimination, economic injustice, violence, and climate disruption. All the items on our legislative agenda is in one of these four categories. For more detail please visit [kansasinterfaithaction.org/about](http://kansasinterfaithaction.org/about).

## 2018 Legislative Priorities

**Racism / Discrimination** – Kansas Interfaith Action believes that every individual has the right to equal protection under the law, and not to be targeted or vilified for their identity. Therefore

- **Voting Rights:** We believe the right to vote is as important and even sacred a right as we have in this country. We are part of the Kansas Coalition for Citizen Participation, and support its efforts to protect the right to vote, including the repeal of the SAFE Act and the introduction of same-day registration, expanded early voting, and pulling Kansas out of the national Crosscheck system.
- **Criminal Justice Reform:** The criminal justice system needs to be thoroughly reformed. In particular, the overuse of prison makes our communities less stable and safe, and disproportionately affects people of color. We support the **expansion of the use of sentencing diversion**, which is underutilized by prosecutors throughout the state. We support sentencing reform, including removing the “third strike” for nonviolent drug offenders. We also call for greater oversight of, and restrictions on the use of, civic asset forfeiture.
- We support the decriminalization of marijuana, taking it out of the “war on drugs” framework.
- We oppose any legislation that would target anyone in our community on the basis of their identity, particularly Muslim Kansans, immigrants, or individuals in the transgender community.

**Economic Justice** – Caring for the less fortunate is one of the most important roles of government. In particular:

- **Anti-poverty programs** such as SNAP food assistance, KanCare health insurance, and TANF cash assistance, help Kansans make ends meet and improve economic security. We call for these programs to be **fully funded, and accessible to all Kansans in need**. We also call for the rollback of limitations that Kansas has placed on access to these programs, particularly the imposition of draconian and unjustified lifetime limits on benefits in the 2015 and 2016 so-called “HOPE Acts.”
- We are part of the Alliance for a Healthy Kansas, the coalition calling for the **expansion of KanCare**, which will help about 150,000 working Kansans access affordable healthcare.

- At the same time, there are a number of significant problems with the privatized KanCare program as it currently exists. Therefore we call for the postponement of “KanCare 2.0” until the current program can be thoroughly reformed. In addition, ***we strongly oppose the imposition of work requirements for Medicaid coverage, which is already too difficult to access.***
- The best way to get people out of poverty is to ***raise the minimum wage.*** We call for it to increase to \$15 by 2020.
- The best way to deal with other workplace issues, such as wage theft, sexual harassment in the workplace, or paid sick or family leave, would be to strengthen the rights of workers to bargain collectively.

**Violence** – We recognize that Kansas is a “gun state,” yet we strongly believe that the loosening of gun laws has gone too far. The right to own and carry a firearm must be balanced with the public's interest in secure spaces and the prevention of random acts of violence. There is no need for guns to be carried in public buildings, on college campuses or, for that matter, in the state capitol. We will support any legislation that brings a measure of sanity back to our current “guns-everywhere” policy.

**Climate disruption** – Climate change is affecting Kansas more and more every year: in water availability, crop viability, and extremes of heat and rainfall/drought. With the federal government pulling back on its commitments to address climate change, it's up the states to protect their own interests, yet the Brownback Administration has done far too little to address this pressing issue.

We call on the state of Kansas to ***develop a Climate Action Plan that will***

- Innovate vigorously in the areas of energy efficiency and renewable energy so as to lower Kansas' overall carbon footprint; and
- Take steps to build resilience in Kansas to the effects of climate change, including fully funding the state water plan; and supporting the use of more Kansas farm acreage for production of food for consumption, rather than for commodities.
- In addition, we strongly oppose efforts to put punitive costs on distributed generation or electric or hybrid vehicles. Since the Kansas Corporation Commission has failed in this regard, the issue must be addressed legislatively.
- We oppose efforts to expand fracking into the Flint Hills, and in fact would like to see Kansas intensively pursue its opportunities in clean energy and wind down its commitment to fossil fuel extraction.

#### **Upcoming Events:**

Jan 10 - Kansas People's Agenda State of the State (Kansas People's Agenda)

Jan 23 - Voting Rights Lobby Day (ACLU-KS)

Mar 5 (tentative) - Muslim Lobby Day (CAIR-KS)

Mar 15 - WEALTH Day (CEP)