

## Other Viewpoints

### Proposed law holds far-reaching trouble

During his campaign for Kansas secretary of state, Kris Kobach made voters fully aware that, if elected, he would spend part of his spare time working to revise immigration laws and policies.

Perhaps some voters were turned off by his plan to moonlight, but most apparently were not. Kobach, a Republican, received 59 percent of the vote, nearly 12 percent more than incumbent Secretary of State Chris Biggs.

But apparently, legislative Democrats believe the majority of Kansans don't know what's good for them.

House Minority Leader Paul Davis, D-Lawrence, said he would introduce legislation that would bar high-ranking officials from holding outside employment "of significance."

"When you're hired to do a job by the people of Kansas, they expect you to be doing it on a full-time basis," Davis said. "I don't think there is room for people to have second jobs."

The legislation would be one thing if Kobach had been sketchy about his intention to work on immigration issues during his off-hours.

But he wasn't. Kobach, a law professor who has been at the forefront of efforts to beef up restrictions on illegal immigration, repeatedly said he would continue to provide assistance to cities and state governments on the issue. His work thus far has included helping craft a controversial Arizona law that currently is under legal challenge.

If voters weren't aware that Kobach wouldn't drop his agenda if elected, it wasn't for lack of Democrats trying to drive home that fact.

Biggs made Kobach's plans a campaign issue, even mentioning it in a campaign jingle.

"Chris will stay in Kansas and work hard for you/Chris Biggs will do the job that he's supposed to do," the song went.

Cute, but obviously the message didn't take.

Now, Democrats are trying to use the legislative process to accomplish what they failed to do at the polls - rein in Kobach.

But regardless of whether the secretary's immigration crusade is right or wrong, the action against him is inappropriate.

First, the election results would strongly suggest that the majority of voters believe Kobach can perform his duties and have time left over to work on his personal cause. Why do lawmakers feel they need to intervene?

Second, exactly what kind of moonlighting work would be "of significance"? Does that mean employment aimed at a political cause? And if that's the case, would it also prevent a lawmaker from, say, teaching a night class about a subject with political overtones? Finally, who gets to decide?

It's fine to take exception to Kobach's views, and even to express opposition at every opportunity. It would even be fine to watch him like a hawk after he takes office to make sure he's putting in a full work week and taking care of business.

But there's already at least one way for Kansans to get relief if Kobach can't juggle his official duties with his immigration crusade.

It's called voting.

-The Topeka Capital-Journal, via the Associated Press

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Steve Haynes - Publisher  
s.haynes@nwkansas.com

#### NEWS

Kevin Bottrell - News Editor  
kbottrell@nwkansas.com

Andy Heintz - Sports Reporter  
aheintz@nwkansas.com

Marian Ballard - Copy Editor  
mballard@nwkansas.com

Vera Sloan - Society Editor

Shelby Pulkrabek - Society Reporter  
colby.society@nwkansas.com

#### ADVERTISING

Andrea Bowers, Kathryn Ballard, Tammy Withers

Advertising Representatives

abowers@nwkansas.com kballard@nwkansas.com twithers@nwkansas.com

Kylee Hunter - Graphic Design  
khunter@nwkansas.com

#### BUSINESS OFFICE

Robin Tubbs - Office Manager  
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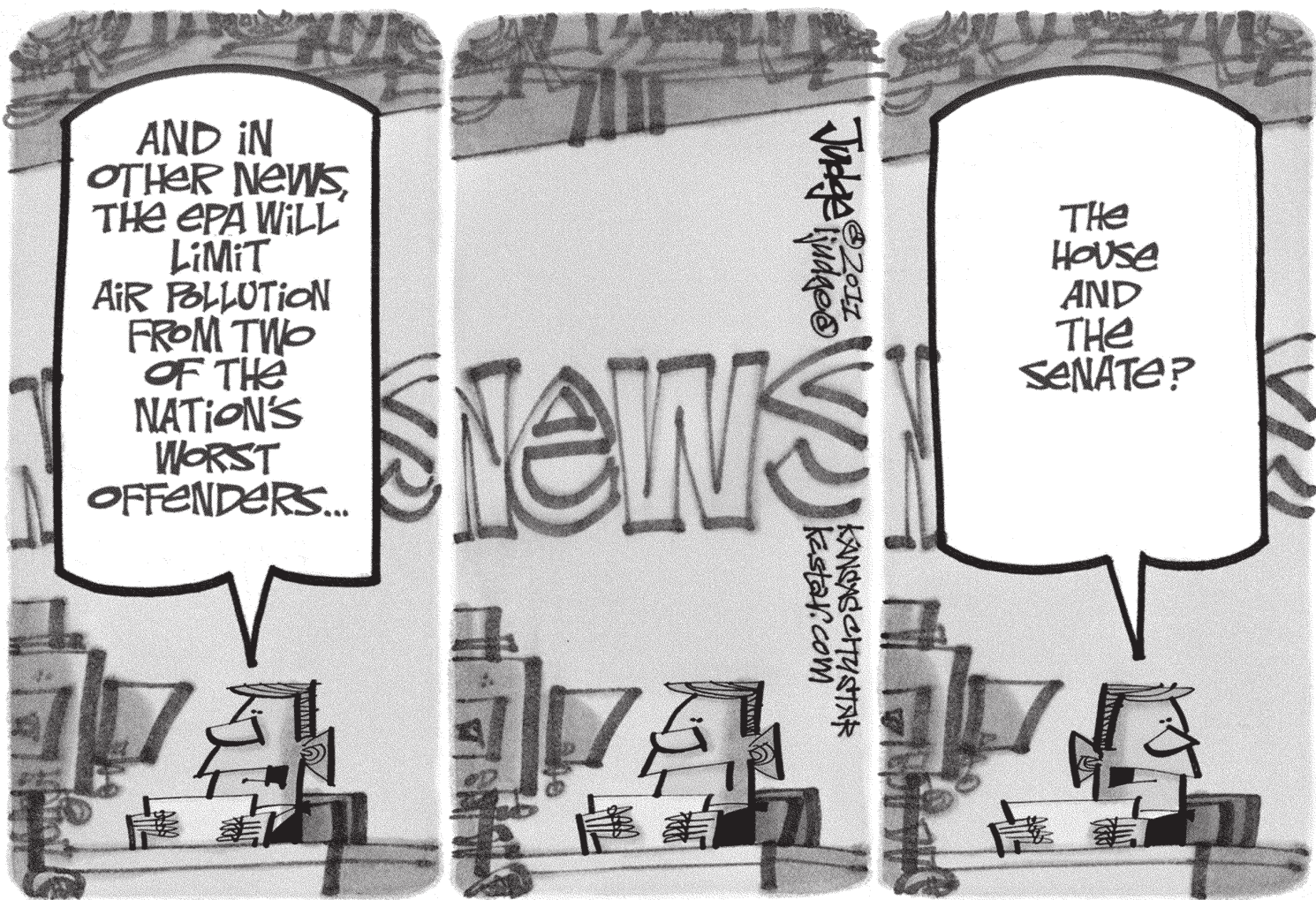
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### Resolved: change self, not others

If I could make one New Year's resolution for the world, it would be this:

That everyone of us would spend the year, not trying to improve others, but to improve ourselves.

OK, I know that's not very realistic. Critiquing someone else's life is so much easier than changing our own. The whole world is pretty much busy trying to figure out how to make the other guy live right.

I know I'm not very good at living my life. I'm overweight, I waste way too much time, some days I'm thoughtless, I drive too much, talk too much on my cell phone and I stay up too late. And I'm sure my wife could add a few things to that list.

It's not that I don't try to be a better person. I've downsized my cars over the years. When I was 28, I lost all my extra weight. Couple of years later, I decided to quit smoking.

You can guess what happened to my waistline after that, but I haven't had a cigarette in more than 30 years. And for more than 25 years, Cynthia and I have made an effort to get out and walk every day. Don't always make it, but we try. We shoot for 25 miles a week and feel pretty good about 20.

I'm not svelte, but I have lost about 12 pounds in the last year. And after "the holidays," I hope to lose another 12 this year. Maybe it will stick, but all that holiday food and cookies and candy, it's tough to get through this time of year without gaining anything.

None of that even begins to make me a saint, I know. I'm perfectly aware of my failings,



Steve Haynes

#### • Along the Sappa

and if I should forget, there's always someone around to remind me.

It's hard to change yourself. Really hard. Which, I suspect, is one reason why so many people - all of us, perhaps - put so much effort into schemes to change everyone else.

As a nation, we want to change other nations. We don't approve of their leaders, their lifestyles, their politics. Most are not as well off as we are, but our attempts to "improve" their state often come off as clumsy and self-centered.

Americans are not alone in this, by the way. It's a fine old tradition, going back to the British, the Spanish, the Romans, I could name a few more. We pay little heed to the damage we do, whether it is in destroying huge parts of Iraq (and killing thousands) to change that country, or in destroying much of Mexico and Colombia to stop their gangs from sending drugs to our country.

In trying to improve our own land, we often do no better. Take the current movement to "improve" American schools. Time was when teachers, parents, principals and school boards got to decide their own priorities. The system

worked well enough to produce the strongest economy in the world, and more Nobel prizes than any other country has won.

Then, there is our war on drugs. It isn't working. It never has. It won't work. But Americans, listening to a century of drug-czar propaganda, believe we can pass laws to protect people from themselves.

And if what we're doing doesn't work, the answer always is, "do more of the same."

There is no end to the number of people who want to change us. Some conservatives want to regiment our lives and be sure we don't break any of their taboos. Some liberals want to tell us what to drive, what to produce, even what to eat.

Some day, maybe we'll see the folly of all this. Mandates seldom change behavior. Education can, but people have to care enough to want to change.

The focus on drunk driving has reduced the problem greatly, but harsher and harsher penalties fail to reach the core of problem drivers. Billions spent on drug enforcement only made the cartels unimaginably wealthy.

Will we ever figure this out?

I can't say. Right now, I need to go write an editorial and tell people what to think about the new governor.

Steve Haynes is editor and publisher of The Colby Free Press and president of Nor'West Newspapers. In his spare time, whenever that is, he like to ride and watch trains.

### One journey ends, another begins

Kansas is a great place. In Kansas, we know our neighbors and look after them. We teach our children to be moral, responsible citizens. And we work hard to provide for our families and build a better future.

The pioneering spirit of those Kansans years ago who settled our state and tamed the West lives on in us today. We are independent people who want to make a difference. I appreciate you allowing me the opportunity to make a difference during my years of service in the U.S. House of Representatives.

Monday, I began a new journey and now have the honor of representing all Kansans in the U.S. Senate. We lead a special way of life in Kansas, one that is worth fighting to preserve for the next generation. That fight has been and will continue to be my focus.

As a senior member of the House Agriculture Committee, I worked on legislation that will help Kansas farms and ranches remain viable, so they can be passed on to the next generation. This included fighting for estate tax reform, working to open markets overseas, writing farm bills and preserving the viability of crop insurance. These things are important, regardless of your job or where you live in Kansas, because agriculture matters. It is a mainstay of our economy. When agriculture is successful, Kansas is successful.

Improving the quality of life for the nearly 250,000 veterans living in our state has also been a top priority. As a member of the House Veterans Affairs Committee, I was a staunch advocate for veterans who had trouble getting the health care they needed because the VA hospital or health clinic was too far away.

During my tenure, I oversaw the development of five new VA outpatient clinics in west-



U.S. Senator Jerry Moran

#### • From the Senate

ern and central Kansas that have brought care closer to home. I have also been a part of ongoing efforts to allow rural veterans to obtain health care from their local doctor or hospital.

Kansas ranks fourth in the nation in total highways with over 134,500 miles of public roads. Our state's aviation industry accounts for about 20 percent of our manufacturing employment and employs tens of thousands of Kansans. During my time on the House Transportation Committee, I authored bills to improve highways and railways in Kansas, while also protecting and promoting the growth of the aviation industry in our state.

In rural Kansas towns, access to quality health care is essential to the prosperity and survival of the towns we call home. As co-chairman of the House Rural Health Care Coalition, I led the fight to save rural hospitals, sponsored legislation to bring more physicians to underserved areas and worked to restore Medicare funding for small hospitals. As co-founder of the Congressional Community Pharmacy Coalition, I worked to make sure that Kansans have access to a pharmacist in their hometowns.

Since first coming to Congress in 1997, I have made it a priority to stay connected to the Kansans I represent, so I have returned home each weekend, and have held annual town-hall

meetings in each of the 69 counties I represented.

In the years ahead, I will continue to return home and travel throughout all 105 counties in our state to hear from Kansans directly. Most importantly, I will not forget where I came from and the Kansans who helped me along the way.

My generation has a responsibility to the next generation of Americans, to be good stewards of what we have been given. As I begin this new journey, I remain committed to do what is necessary today, so our children and grandchildren can enjoy the same freedoms and opportunities that we have in Kansas and in this great country.

Jerry Moran of Hays has been the junior U.S. Senator from Kansas since Monday.

### Where to write, call

U.S. Sen. Pat Roberts, 109 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510. (202) 224-4774

U.S. Sen. Jerry Moran, Russell Senate Office Building Room C-4, Washington, D.C. 20002 (202) 224-6521

State Sen. Ralph Ostmeier, State Capitol Building, 300 SW10th St., Room 225-E., Topeka, Kan. 66612, (785) 296-7399 ralph.ostmeier@senate.state.ks.us

### Mallard Fillmore

#### • Bruce Tinsley

