

An Open Statement From A Minister In Nebraska Concerning Dan Osborn

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Thank you for taking the time to consider this statement.

What follows is not intended as an attack on any elected official, political party, or fellow citizen. It is a reflection on the issues, experiences, and concerns that have shaped my support for Dan Osborn and my belief that Nebraska benefits when voters engage in thoughtful discussion rather than partisan division.

In an era where political disagreements too often become personal conflicts, my intention is to focus on ideas, public policy, and the responsibilities of representative government. My hope is that this statement helps foster understanding, even among those who may ultimately reach different conclusions.

My name is Aaron J. Wisti. I am a registered Independent voter in Nebraska, an ordained Universal Life Church minister, a disability advocate, a caregiver for an individual living with disabilities, and a person who also manages disabilities of my own. The purpose of this statement is not to attack any individual officeholder, political party, or public servant. Rather, it is an effort to explain why many Nebraskans, myself included, have become increasingly concerned about the relationship between voters and those elected to represent them.

Over the years, I have participated in political discussions and meetings associated with the Reform Party under the leadership of Nicholas Hensley. After taking time away to address personal responsibilities and health concerns, I am preparing to re-engage in public advocacy in whatever capacity I am qualified to serve. My focus remains on disability rights, responsible public policy, government accountability, and issues affecting working-class Nebraskans.

I do not make these observations out of hostility toward Republicans, Democrats, or any other political affiliation. Public office carries significant responsibilities, and I recognize that governing requires balancing competing interests, legal obligations, and the needs of diverse communities. My perspective is informed in part by family history. My great-grandfather was involved in local politics during the early years of Superior, Wisconsin. While the political landscape of his era was vastly different from the one we face today, it gave me an appreciation for the challenges public officials encounter and the importance of remaining accountable to the people they serve.

Concerns Worth Addressing

My concern is not rooted in party labels. It is rooted in a growing perception among many Nebraskans that their voices, signatures, and votes are not receiving the consideration they deserve. Whether discussing medical cannabis, disability issues, welfare reform, immigration policy, or other public concerns, many citizens feel they have participated in the democratic process only to encounter delays, procedural obstacles, or responses that leave them questioning whether they were truly heard.

Medical cannabis has become a notable example of this frustration. Supporters point to voter-approved measures and petition drives as evidence that a substantial portion of Nebraska's population wishes to see legal access established. Opponents raise legal and procedural concerns regarding implementation.

Regardless of where one stands on the issue, prolonged disputes and delays have left many citizens frustrated and uncertain about whether the will of the voters is being respected.

I have also become increasingly concerned about the role that large political donors and well-funded interests play in shaping public policy. This concern is not directed at any single individual, nor is it an accusation of wrongdoing. Rather, it reflects a broader belief that government should remain responsive to working families, caregivers, veterans, farmers, small business owners, and people living with disabilities whose voices often carry less financial influence than major political donors.

That perception has consequences. When citizens begin to believe their participation no longer matters, trust in government declines. Regardless of party affiliation, elected officials have a responsibility not only to represent their constituents but also to demonstrate that the concerns of ordinary citizens are being seriously considered.

My purpose in addressing this publicly is not to condemn individuals but to encourage a broader discussion about accountability, transparency, and whether Nebraska's political leadership is adequately responding to the concerns expressed by voters. Healthy government requires public trust, and public trust requires citizens to believe their participation matters.

Concerns Regarding Corporate Donors

& Employment Opportunities For Disadvantaged Individuals

One of my concerns regarding economic policy in Nebraska is whether enough attention is being given to individuals who are attempting to enter the workforce, rebuild their lives, or overcome barriers associated with disability, poverty, limited employment experience, or other circumstances that place them at a disadvantage. This concern is not directed at any one elected official, political party, business owner, or corporation. Rather, it reflects a broader question about how economic opportunity is distributed and who has access to it.

Large employers and major industries play an important role in Nebraska's economy. They create jobs, contribute to local communities, generate tax revenue, and help drive economic growth. Their success benefits many Nebraskans, and acknowledging that fact is important. My concern is not with businesses succeeding. My concern is whether public policy gives equal consideration to those who remain outside the opportunities that economic growth creates.

Organizations with significant financial resources naturally possess greater access to policymakers, legal counsel, industry experts, and advocacy networks than the average citizen. This reality does not necessarily indicate corruption or misconduct. However, it can create a perception among voters that some voices carry more influence than others. When citizens begin to feel their concerns receive less attention than those of well-funded stakeholders, confidence in public institutions can begin to erode.

Questions Worth Asking

Are we doing enough to ensure that economic growth benefits Nebraskans from every walk of life? Are we creating opportunities for people who are willing to work but lack advanced degrees, specialized certifications, or years of professional experience? Are individuals with disabilities, caregivers, veterans, and those attempting to rebuild their lives being given realistic opportunities to contribute to their communities?

These questions are important because many jobs that provide financial stability require qualifications that not everyone possesses. For those entering the workforce for the first time, recovering from hardship, managing disabilities, or struggling to pay their bills, the path toward economic security can seem increasingly difficult. As a result, some Nebraskans feel disconnected from discussions about economic success because they do not see a clear pathway toward participating in that success themselves.

My perspective is shaped in part by personal experience. While my approach could certainly have been more polished at the time, I reached out through social media seeking opportunities to work for Governor Jim Pillen. I requested opportunities to perform general farm labor and other positions I believed I might be qualified to perform. Those inquiries did not receive responses. I recognize that elected officials, business owners, and public offices receive countless messages every day, many of which are likely impossible to answer individually. I do not view the lack of a response as hostility, nor do I believe it was intended as such.

What the experience reinforced, however, was a concern shared by many ordinary citizens: that it can sometimes feel difficult to connect with those in positions of influence. For many Nebraskans, the issue is not seeking special treatment. The issue is seeking an opportunity to contribute through honest work, support their families, and participate meaningfully in the communities they call home.

Nebraska is often associated with the idea of "The Good Life." To me, that phrase represents more than economic statistics or political victories. It represents a responsibility to ensure that opportunity remains accessible to all Nebraskans, including those living with disabilities, those caring for loved ones, those starting over after hardship, and those who simply want the dignity that comes from earning their way through work.

These observations are not intended as attacks on individuals, businesses, or political affiliations. They are questions about representation, economic mobility, accessibility, and public trust. They are questions worth discussing if we hope to build a Nebraska where opportunity is not reserved for the well-connected, but remains available to every citizen willing to contribute to the betterment of their community.

Representation, Opportunity, and Public Trust

One area where I have become increasingly cautious as a voter involves the relationship between elected officials, major political donors, and large corporate interests. My concern is not that individuals such as Governor Jim Pillen or Senator Pete Ricketts are incapable of serving Nebraska, nor is it an accusation of wrongdoing. Rather, it is a concern shared by many citizens who question whether the priorities of working families, people with disabilities, and those living near the margins receive the same level of attention as the interests of large organizations and well-funded stakeholders.

Throughout Nebraska, there are citizens who work hard, follow the law, pay taxes, participate in elections, and still struggle to maintain a basic standard of living. Among them are individuals living with disabilities, caregivers, veterans, and working-class families who often feel disconnected from policy decisions that directly affect their daily lives. When public policy appears to favor economic interests that are already well represented, many people are left wondering whether their concerns are being heard with equal seriousness.

My skepticism is not based solely on political debate. It is also shaped by personal experience. While my approach could certainly have been more polished at the time, I reached out through social media seeking nothing more than an opportunity to work. Specifically, I expressed interest in performing general farm labor or any other work I might have been qualified to do. Those requests never received a

response.

I understand that elected officials, business owners, and political offices receive an overwhelming volume of correspondence. Many of those messages are likely hostile, unreasonable, or impossible to answer individually. I do not interpret the absence of a response as a personal slight. However, the experience reinforced a broader concern that many Nebraskans share: the feeling that ordinary citizens often struggle to find meaningful access to the people who hold positions of influence and authority.

My intention was never to seek special treatment. It was simply an honest request for the opportunity to earn my way through work. As both a person living with disabilities and a caregiver for someone facing similar challenges, I believe many disabled individuals want the same thing most Nebraskans want: the opportunity to contribute, to be productive members of their communities, and to be judged by their willingness to work rather than by the limitations they face.

Nebraska is often associated with the idea of "The Good Life." To me, that phrase carries a responsibility. A truly good life is not measured solely by economic growth, campaign fundraising totals, or political victories. It is measured by whether ordinary people can find meaningful work, whether families can afford to live with dignity, whether individuals with disabilities have opportunities to participate in society, and whether citizens believe their voices matter regardless of their income, status, or political affiliation.

These concerns are not intended as attacks on any individual officeholder. They are questions about representation, accessibility, and public trust. They are questions I believe deserve thoughtful discussion from citizens and elected officials alike.

Questions Worth Asking

In recent years, many Nebraska voters have found themselves searching for alternatives to politics as usual. My own support for Dan Osborn stems not from party loyalty or personal allegiance, but from a belief that elected officials should remain accessible to the people they represent and willing to engage directly with the concerns of ordinary citizens.

As an Independent voter, an ordained minister, a caregiver, and an advocate for disability rights, I have spent much of my adult life associating with people whose concerns often receive little public attention. Through those experiences, I have come to value leaders who are willing to listen first and speak second, particularly when addressing issues affecting working-class families, individuals with disabilities, veterans, and those struggling to make ends meet.

My perspective is also shaped by family history. My great-grandfather's involvement in local government during the early years of Superior, Wisconsin gave me an appreciation for the responsibilities carried by public officials. Although the political system has evolved considerably since his time, the principle remains unchanged: public office exists to serve the people, and public trust must be earned through accountability, transparency, and responsiveness.

A Voice That Cuts Through The Noise Of Political Distraction

What has drawn many voters to Dan Osborn is the perception that he is willing to challenge traditional political structures and engage directly with Nebraskans who feel overlooked by both major parties. While political opponents have raised criticisms and accusations against him, contentious claims frequently accompany competitive campaigns. I believe candidates should ultimately be judged by their records, their willingness to listen, and their ability to represent the interests of their constituents.

I have grown increasingly skeptical of a political culture that often appears more attentive to major

donors and entrenched interests than to working-class Nebraskans. This concern is not personal animosity toward any elected official. It is a reflection of a broader frustration shared by many citizens who believe that access to political influence should not depend upon wealth, connections, or institutional power.

My support for Dan Osborn is based on a belief that Nebraska benefits when candidates are willing to speak plainly, engage directly with voters, and remain independent enough to challenge established assumptions. Whether one agrees with all of his positions or not, many supporters view him as a candidate willing to have difficult conversations rather than simply repeating familiar political talking points.

As someone who has worked as a caregiver while managing my own health limitations, I understand the value of service. Real leadership requires showing up, listening, and doing difficult work even when it is inconvenient. Those are qualities many Nebraskans appear to be searching for in their elected representatives.

My hope is not for the victory of one faction over another. My hope is that Nebraska continues moving toward a political culture where citizens feel heard, public officials remain accountable, and disagreements are resolved through dialogue, participation, and the ballot box rather than hostility and division. It is within that spirit that I offer my support for Dan Osborn's candidacy and encourage fellow Nebraskans to carefully evaluate every candidate on the merits of their character, record, and willingness to serve.

Respectfully,

Aaron J Wisti