

# BRINGING KANSAS HOME

2011 KANSAS HOUSING CONFERENCE



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KS Housing

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**IDEAS** – glimmers of hope in US

On world scene: the Arab Spring

The Internet -- and Twitter -- have undercut authoritarian regimes.

1. Anti poverty programs work

Anti-destitution programs work to reduce the poverty rate from 30% to 13%

There are actually very few disincentives for work in these programs – the idea that they discourage work is not correct

However they are focused on workers, special needs populations, and those with “perceived deservedness.”

There are few universal programs beyond K-12, social security, Medicare and infrastructure, e.g. roads.

“An Assessment of the ‘effectiveness of Anti-Poverty Programs in the US”  
June 2011. Institute for Research on Poverty University of Wisconsin  
Discussion Paper 1392-11

2. Should shift our language from anti poverty to economic security. This parallels the shift in concepts from hunger to food security. Can bring wider acceptance of policies and programs. Wider Opportunities for Women, Elder Economic Security Initiative. Douglas Gould.org. Ford Foundation and Meg Bostrom. Reframing Institute. Georg Lakoff.

3. Needed a new social contract at work: New American Foundation, Thomas Kochan, MIT

Henry Ford’s concept that workers should earn enough to buy his car.

4. Green jobs, 1 million now but 30 million needed. Not enough now to come close to absorbing the unemployed. Apollo Alliance.

5. The Labor market after the great recession, Implications for income support policy. Gordon Berlin, MDRC, June 2, 2011. “In 1990’s when work was plentiful, the US re-engineered its safety net from a system that supported people who did not work to one that supports them when they do...” But now...

6. 30 b in rental housing assistance to 5 million people. Asset building Program, Center for Housing Policy, New America Foundation, Reid Cramer. Rental Assistance Asset Accounts. RAAA’s Escrow accounts, as earnings grow, instead of 30 out of every \$100 increase going to rent, it goes into

escrow account, which is paid out when they leave subsidized housing. So the theory is that people can be enticed to leave subsidized housing.

As income grows

7. Asset building, The Assets Report 2011, Ried Cramer and Rachel Black, the New America Foundation, June 2011. Virtue of this report is its Comprehensive and systematic analysis

Feds “spend” 519 billion on asset development

46 billion in direct spending (most of it in post-secondary education) and

473 billion in Tax spending, of which about half is mortgage interest deduction.

8. Child Savings Accounts (Britain)

9. Median Net worth of whites \$113,000

Hispanics, 6,000

Blacks 3,000

“Asset development – only for the white middle class?”

10. Pay for Success Bonds, social Impact Bonds

Google it, or go to [Whithouse.gov](http://Whithouse.gov), for this new 100 m experiment.

LOOK OUT. Watch your back!

11. “Low wage jobs and no wage growth: Is there a way out? “insurance compensation for low earnings.” YES. EITC.

Extend past \$40,000

add couples.

Can you build a housing element into the EITC?

Prof. Lane Kenworthy University of AZ, New America Foundation.

ACADEMICS ARE BACK IN THE POLICY DISCUSSION

EVERYBODY SHOULD READ THIS: New America Foundation, A Vision for Economic Renewal, July 26, 2011.

Dignity Voucher, page 57.

Includes **20 other ideas for job growth** (pages 14—15)

12. Poverty and Race Research Action Council

“Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing and Second Mortgage market Reform:

Phillip Tegler and Henry Korman, June 2011

Fair Housing Act will be kept alive by PRRAC in the Fannie and Freddie redesign.

13. WSJ May 26, 2011.

Article comparing what the thinks tanks are saying

All major think tanks EPI to AEI and Heritage, Center for American Progress and Bipartisan Policy Center

CBO baseline shows and EPI recommends federal spending as 28% of GDP

Roosevelt Campus Network

Center for American Progress

Bipartisan Policy Center

All suggest 23% to 24% of GDP

Heritage suggests 18% of GDP

4 say: carbon tax

All agree: Cut farm subsidies, and reduce tax loopholes or tax expenditures.

14. US has more square feet of built space per capita than any civilization in the history of the world. At some point we will get serious about using those closed military bass, empty malls, warehouses, etc.

Need to reduce costs:

Eliminate govt rules, regs, zoning, set-backs  
Lower energy costs dramatically,  
Change norms about how many people live in a unit.  
The 20-somethings are already moving back home!

15. Neighborhood stabilization program.

There is a symbiotic relationship between bankers and housers.  
Just like food stamps and farmers.  
The 12 million in questioned costs in KS NS program will go away.

Change the law to give a tax credit or CRA credit to banks for handing over  
Real Estate Owned properties to housers.  
Feds are ready to do it with their 252,000 units – Wall Street Journal article  
in today's paper!

15. Guard against mission creep or boundary erosion. When adjoining  
domain fails, e.g. community mental health, their problems leak into other  
domains.

For you public housing folks, are you public housing?  
Or permanent supported housing with inadequate support services?  
See if can modify the requirements for state agencies to pay for all needed  
treatment,  
Compel treatment? Mandatory methadone?

16. Interesting new ideas – Green Housing in Topeka HA  
Assisted living in Kansas City HA

17. Stanley Greenberg published an article in the NY Times July 31, 2011  
“Why the Voters Tune Out Democrats”  
His answer seems to be that the public think the Dems are as much in bed  
with the lobbyists and corporations as the Repubs.

18. Populism, agrarianism. Where are the Populists? Only on the Right?

In the 1890's. The Populist Party stressed the superiority of a simpler rural  
life as opposed to the complexity of city life, with its banks and factories.

Populist Party grew out of the belief that the Dems and Repubs were controlled by bankers, landowners and elites who were hostile to the needs of the small farmer. “Omaha Platform” In 1892 Presidential election James Weaver carried 4 states, CO, ID, NV, **Kansas**

19 The Transition Town movement’s Initial Genius, Craig Comstock  
[www.CommonDreams.org](http://www.CommonDreams.org)

20 National Community Action Partnership just published

“ Facing the New Realities: Preparing Poor America for Harder Times Ahead.”

Says that optimism about jobs and resources are fictions.

Needed: Community Economic Laboratories that focus on local economy, barter,

21. Where are the Feds?

1960’s – Feds led in social program R&D

1993 JJ and I lead consultants on EZ/EC initiative

Every major innovation of the past 50 years, the Feds had a role in either supporting the R&D, or picking up ideas from states and taking them national

Last 30 years -- ?? Where are the Feds?

Feds backed out of housing and CED in the 1980’s – leading to the rise of the Intermediaries, LSC, HSC, Enterprise.

Only major R&D effort by the Feds since then was the EZ/EC initiative in Clinton I.

22. Where are the courts?

The concept of “rights” seems to have run out of steam in the 1980’s. The only new right since then was for people with disabilities. Will the legislature or legal advocates ever create another protected class? Who might it be?

23.. Leslie Foderaro analyzed 40 commencement speeches for ideas and word patterns, (Leslie Foderaro, NY Times, June 12, 2011)

# 1 idea was “have courage in an uncertain economy”

Graduates should redefine success as more than material success: world, country, love and service outnumbered money, happiness and success in the speeches

So I say to you, world, country, love and service – and keep up the good work!

24. You can beat the trends – on a small scale. You can create little bubbles where a group of determined people – partners – make something happen in spite of large negative trends. This is where unreasonable optimism pays off. Persist!