



U.S. Rep. Sharice Davids, D-Kansas, said Oct. 27, 2025, that she voluntarily had her congressional paycheck withheld until resolution of the current federal government shutdown. All five Republican members of the Kansas delegation have done likewise. In this image, Davids speaks during an April 30, 2025, budget hearing in the U.S. House. (KANSAS REFLECTOR SCREEN CAPTURE FROM U.S. HOUSE YOUTUBE CHANNEL)

KS delegation halts their paychecks amid shutdown

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TOPEKA — All six members of the Kansas congressional delegation voluntarily put a halt to payment of their federal salaries during the ongoing government shutdown.

The latest to join the group, Democratic U.S. Rep. Sharice Davids of the 3rd District, said Monday that she sent a letter to the chief administrative officer of the U.S. House requesting her paycheck be withheld until adoption of a bipartisan resolution to the impasse.

“Washington’s dysfunction is unacceptable, and Kansans

have had enough,” Davids said. “I continue to urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to come to the table to end this shutdown, and I will refuse to accept a paycheck until this shutdown is resolved.”

Other Kansans, all Republicans, also declined paychecks during the standoff: U.S. Sen. Jerry Moran, U.S. Sen. Roger Marshall, U.S. Rep. Tracey Mann of the 1st District, U.S. Rep. Derek Schmidt of the 2nd District and U.S. Rep. Ron Estes of the 4th District.

Members of the U.S. House and U.S. Senate earn \$174,000 in annual salary, which amounts to \$14,500 per month.

The U.S. House passed a bill that would keep the federal government open into November, but the Senate hasn’t been able to reach agreement on a funding measure.

Schmidt, who represents much of rural eastern Kansas, said “the whole situation is so unnecessary and very frustrating.”

He said the Senate had two options: One, pass the “clean, bipartisan” bill endorsed more than a month ago by the House. Or, the Senate could approve a different bill that could be voted on by the House.

Estes said failure of Congress to pass a temporary funding bill didn’t stop paychecks from going to lawmakers during a shutdown. He sent a letter weeks ago to U.S. House administrators with instructions to withhold his net pay until an appropriations agreement took effect.

Payton Fuller, a spokesperson for Marshall, said the GOP senator likewise “feels

strongly that if federal workers and the military are required to work without pay, then it’s not right for him to be accepting a paycheck.”

In a recent interview, Marshall said a breakthrough could occur Nov. 1 because air traffic controllers and members of the military were due a paycheck. He said political pressure could be “the seminal moment that pushes us forward.”

The federal budget dispute also poses a threat to recipients of SNAP, or the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, which delivers food aid to approximately 187,000 people in Kansas. It risks suspension of funding for WIC, the program for Women, Infants and Children that provides healthy food, breastfeeding support and nutrition education to about 50,000 Kansans.

Thousands of Kansans have been placed on furlough in October, but federal employees viewed as essential have been required to stay on the job without pay. Kansas is home to more than 25,000 federal employees and more than 21,000 active-duty members of the military

“My mom, an Army veteran, raised my brothers and me on her own,” Davids said. “If she had missed even one paycheck, it could’ve meant choosing between keeping the lights on or putting food on the table.”

She said an agreement by Congress to reopen the federal government should include a provision protecting families from rising health care costs when insurance tax credits expired later this year.

Student of the Week

Sophia Merando

★★★★★

Frontenac High School

Sophia Merando is the daughter of Chis and Jennifer Merando and the granddaughter of Angela and Arthur Price and Steve and Marsha Merando. Her sisters are Samantha and Hannah Merando.

At Frontenac High School, Sophia is involved in Student Council, the Fellowship of Christian Athletes, the National Honor Society (NHS) and Track and Field.

Sophia serves as Student Council vice president, vice president of the Senior Class and as NHS secretary.

Sophia said her favorite high school class has been English and her favorite high school memories are of Friday-night football games with her friends. She said the most challenging task she has faced as a senior is “balancing workloads of high school and college classes while also filling out scholarship applications and applying for college.”

Outside of school, Sophia enjoys working out, playing with her dogs and reading. Her favorite food is sushi, her favorite music is country and her favorite film is “10 Things I Hate About You.” She said her dream destination is Italy and the celebrity she would most like to meet is Candace Owens.

Sophia said the best advice she has received is “Comparison is the thief of joy. Don’t worry about what others are doing and focus on being happy with yourself.” She said the advice she would give younger students is, “don’t procrastinate. It will leave you with more work in the end.”

Sophia said the person who is her biggest inspiration is her big sister, Samantha. She said she is most grateful for her family because “They have given me everything and never fail to show up for me.”

After high school, Sophia plans to attend Missouri State University where she will major in nursing.



Sophia Merando

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energy to pay it forward for the next generation. I ran for the School Board four years ago as a way to play a role in continuing the tradition of strong community support in Frontenac.

Experience, skills and personal qualities

I’m a former middle school teacher, I once owned an education-focused small business, and I have worked at Pitsco Education in Pittsburg for more than 25 years. In June 2024, I was named the CEO at Pitsco. During my time at Pitsco I have overseen the development of new educational products and curriculum for K-12 schools, and I travel across the country meeting with school superintendents and other district officials to understand the needs of their districts and to suggest solutions that will help their students and teachers. I also served for seven years on the Frontenac Education Foundation, prior to being elected to the School Board.

The issues

Teacher turnover, as well as a lack of college graduates entering the

teaching profession, is a nationwide dilemma. I believe much of the challenge is based on how we, as a society, have diminished the importance positive role models have on our children. This is not something that has occurred overnight. To regain the positive perception of the teaching profession, we need to create an environment where quality teachers feel supported by the community. Public education, led by positive role models, creates an environment where any child, from any circumstance, has the opportunity to dream of a better future for themselves and for their family.

The role of a school board member

I believe the role of a school board member is to make decisions that benefit the students, teachers, and Frontenac community, and not to push an agenda or grind axes. One of the most important roles for a board member, in my opinion, is being objective and open-minded. As a member of the School Board, I want to ensure our district is successfully preparing our students for the exciting opportunities in front of them.