**KAYLA KOETHER REPORT**



**CASCADE STRATEGIES – JULY 2020**

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BIOGRAPHY

Name: Kayla Anne Koether

Birth: Oct. 10, 1989

Residence: 1615 A Highway 9

Decorah, IA 52101

Family: Partner Landon Corlett

Education: BA, International Agriculture and Rural Development, Grinnell College

Military: None

Professional Experience: Farmer

AmeriCorps Nutrition Educator, Northeast Iowa Food and Fitness Initiative;

Program Manager, Winneshiek Energy District; Specialist, Iowa State University Extension and Outreach

Political Experience: None

TIMELINE

Oct. 10, 1989 Born in McGregor, IA

2008 Graduated from MFL MarMac High School

2012 Graduated from Grinnell College with BA in International Agriculture and Rural Development

2012-2013 AmeriCorps Nutrition Education, Northeast Iowa Food and Fitness Initiative

Program Manager, Winneshiek Energy District

Present Specialist at Iowa State University Extension and Outreach

ELIZABETH WARREN

* **In June 2020, Elizabeth Warren endorsed Kayla Koether’s state house campaign**
  + On June 20, 2020, Elizabeth Warren tweeted, “.@KaylaForIowa has worked hard to make sure rural Iowa doesn’t get left behind. Her commitment to revitalizing and rebuilding rural Iowa runs deep, and I know she will bring the voices of working people to the Iowa legislature. I’m proud to endorse her.”[[1]](#footnote-1)



* **Elizabeth Warren supports moving American into full Medicare for All**
  + According to the Warren Democrats website (ElizabethWarren.com), “My plan for health care reverses the Trump Administration’s sabotage of our health care, allows everyone in America to choose a Medicare for All option for little or no cost, and cuts costs for families before moving us into full Medicare for All - all in my first term. Add your name if you agree: We need Medicare for All.”[[2]](#footnote-2)
* **Elizabeth Warren: “We need a Green New Deal -- and we need it now”**
  + According to the Warren Democrats website (ElizabethWarren.com), “The world’s leading experts have long known that climate change is man-made, and we are running out of time. We already see its effects everyday -- record floods, terrifying wildfires, devastating hurricanes -- in events that cost lives and cause billions of dollars in damage, and that disproportionately impact our most vulnerable communities.

“But right now, Washington refuses to lift a finger without permission from the fossil fuel industry. That’s dangerous and it’s wrong. We need a government that makes different choices -- a government that will stop handing out enormous tax giveaways to big oil companies, and stop refusing to invest in our children’s and grandchildren’s futures.

“This is a crisis. We need bold, aggressive action. We need a Green New Deal -- and we need it now. Elizabeth is proud to be an original cosponsor of Senator Ed Markey and Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez’s Green New Deal resolution, which commits the United States to a ten-year mobilization to achieve domestic net-zero emissions by 2030. It provides the framework for an ambitious effort to transform our economy and save our planet.”[[3]](#footnote-3)

PROGRESSIVE CHANGE CAMPAIGN COMMITTEE

* **Kayla Koether says that she is committed to championing local issues, adding that, “Local people and our issues, not those of out-of-state donors, will guide my work in the Iowa State Legislature”**
  + According to her campaign website, Kayla Koether lists her number one commitment as “Championing Local Issues.” According to the website, “Local people and our issues, not those of out-of-state donors, will guide my work in the Iowa State Legislature.”[[4]](#footnote-4)
* **Kayla Koether is listed as a Progressive Change Campaign Committee Champion**
  + According to the Progressive Change Campaign Committee website, Kayla Koether is listed as a 2020 Champion. According to the website, “The candidates on our Champions List are running great campaigns powered by the grassroots, not corporate interests. We’re proud to support them as they take power back for their communities and turn big ideas into action.”[[5]](#footnote-5)
* **Kayla Koether has made campaign expenditures to the Progressive Change Campaign Committee in Washington, D.C.**
  + According to the Iowa Ethics & Campaign Disclosure Board, Kayla Koether made the following campaign expenditures in 2018 and 2020.[[6]](#footnote-6)

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Recipient** | **Date** | **Purpose** | **Amount** |
| Progressive Change Campaign Committee | 03/09/2018 | Web Fees | $25.00 |
| Progressive Change Campaign Committee | 04/10/2018 | Web Fees | $25.00 |
| Progressive Change Campaign Committee | 05/10/2018 | Web Fees | $25.00 |
| Progressive Change Campaign Committee | 06/09/2018 | Web Fees | $25.00 |
| Progressive Change Campaign Committee | 07/10/2018 | Web Fees | $25.00 |
| Progressive Change Campaign Committee | 08/10/2018 | Web Fees | $25.00 |
| Progressive Change Campaign Committee | 09/10/2018 | Web Fees | $25.00 |
| Progressive Change Campaign Committee | 10/10/2018 | Web Fees | $25.00 |
| Progressive Change Campaign Committee | 11/13/2018 | Web Fees | $25.00 |
| Progressive Change Campaign Committee | 12/10/2018 | Web Fees | $25.00 |
| Progressive Change Campaign Committee | 01/09/2019 | Web Fees | $25.00 |
| Progressive Change Campaign Committee | 02/11/2019 | Web Fees | $25.00 |
| Progressive Change Campaign Committee | 03/11/2019 | Web Fees | $25.00 |
| Progressive Change Campaign Committee | 04/10/2019 | Web Fees | $25.00 |
| Progressive Change Campaign Committee | 02/18/2020 | Web Fees | $25.00 |
| Progressive Change Campaign Committee | 03/18/2020 | Web Fees | $25.00 |
| Progressive Change Campaign Committee | 04/20/2020 | Web Fees | $25.00 |
| Progressive Change Campaign Committee | 05/18/2020 | Web Fees | $25.00 |
| Progressive Change Campaign Committee | 06/18/2020 | Web Fees | $25.00 |

* **During the same time that Kayla Koether’s campaign has been making monthly expenditures to the Progressive Change Campaign Committee, the Committee has been advocating for the abolishment of ICE**
  + In a June 29, 2018, article, the *New York Times* reported, “Abolish ICE!

“That was the seemingly radical message that Chardo Richardson, a House candidate in Florida, published in an online statement four months ago, endorsing a call to eliminate the Immigration and Customs Enforcement agency.”[[7]](#footnote-7)

* + According to the same article, “Some Democrats point to other progressive proposals that were once similarly dismissed by party leaders but have since gained traction among mainstream Democrats, like Medicare for all and tuition-free public college. The hope among grass-roots activists is that progressive energy will give these same people the political cover to embrace an abolish-ICE policy that has mostly thrived on the fringe.

“‘ICE operates through the tactics of fear, violence and intimidation, with questionable legality, and tears families apart,’ Stephanie Taylor, a founder of the liberal organization Progressive Change Campaign Committee, said in a statement. ‘We applaud the growing number of progressives who are calling for an end to this terror.’”[[8]](#footnote-8)

* **During the same time that Kayla Koether’s campaign has been making monthly expenditures to the Progressive Change Campaign Committee, the Committee has been one of the biggest political organizations promoting a single payer health system**
  + In a June 8, 2018, article, *Politico* reported, “Democratic voters want single payer health care. But don’t expect to hear Democratic candidates talk about it — at least not in those words.

“To avoid divisive intraparty fights that drive candidates left — only to be attacked by Republicans for favoring socialized medicine — the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee warned aspirants last year about the political liabilities of endorsing ‘single payer,’ according to sources familiar with the advice. An influential progressive group even urged candidates to discard the often-misunderstood phrase and embrace ‘Medicare for all’ to draw strong connections with the popular seniors’ health program.”[[9]](#footnote-9)

* + According to the same article, “Meanwhile, the Progressive Change Campaign Committee, one of the biggest political organizations promoting a single payer health system, began urging candidates to avoid the term and use ‘Medicare for all.’

“‘There is no more popular brand in America or the American government than Medicare — or Social Security. Democrats should be wrapping themselves in the flag of Medicare,’ said PCCC co-founder Adam Green.”[[10]](#footnote-10)

* **The Progressive Change Campaign Committee supports the Green New Deal**
  + According to the Progressive Change Campaign Committee website, “As a nation, we’ve been in peril before: World War Two, The Great Depression. The solution today is the same as it was then: a full-scale economic mobilization that puts millions of Americans to work. Climate change is an existential threat. Our solution is a Green New Deal.

“The Green New Deal invests in new jobs like installing solar panels, insulating our schools, manufacturing electric cars, building new housing, retrofitting every building in America, and growing healthy food. That means millions of jobs for white, black, and brown Americans, and clean air and water for all of our communities. No one gets left behind.

“Economic inequality, racial injustice, and the climate crisis are not different problems, they are part of the same problem. Unchecked corporate power got us here. The Green New Deal puts ordinary people back in charge -- not big corporations.”[[11]](#footnote-11)

* **The Progressive Change Campaign Committee supports Medicare for All**
  + According to the Progressive Change Campaign Committee website, “Medicare for All would make health care affordable, accessible, and guaranteed for everyone — something we all need. Despite the Affordable Care Act, nearly 10 percent of the population were still uninsured in 2016. Without real competition, the private insurance industry is jacking premiums sky high. The U.S. currently spends 16 to 17 percent of our entire GDP (gross domestic product) on healthcare, more than any other comparable industrialized nation. It’s time for Medicare for All.

“Along with our allies, we’re making it happen! From endorsing and raising money for Medicare for All candidates, to researching all the Democrats who made Medicare for All part of their platforms, to running polls that show how popular the issue is, we’re ready to fight and win.”[[12]](#footnote-12)

POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY

* **According to the Iowa Secretary of State’s office, Kayla Koether changed her party affiliation from “No Party” to “Democrat” the week after the 2016 Iowa Caucus**
  + According to her Iowa voter profile report, as provided by the Iowa Secretary of State’s office on Aug. 17, 2018, Kayla Koether changed her party affiliation from “Democrat” to “No Party” on and effective Oct. 23, 2012. According to the Secretary of State’s office, Kayla Koether switcher her affiliation from “No Party” to “Democrat” on and effective Feb. 9, 2016.[[13]](#footnote-13)
  + In a Jan. 30, 2016, article, the *Des Moines Register* reported, “A caucus is a gathering of fellow party members to discuss their presidential preferences, elect local party leadership and discuss issues that make up the party’s platform.

“The Iowa caucuses for both parties will be held at 7 p.m. on Feb. 1.

“There are several differences between the Democratic and Republican caucuses, but the key one is that in the Democratic caucus, the participants separate into groups based on their support of a candidate. In the Republican caucus, participants simply cast a vote of support.”[[14]](#footnote-14)

* + According to the same article, “You must be eligible to vote in the state of Iowa; 18 years old by the date of the presidential election, Nov. 8, 2016; and registered as a Democrat or Republican.

“You can register to vote or change parties on caucus night. No specific identification is required.”[[15]](#footnote-15)

TAXES

* **In 2018, Kayla Koether was critical of the 2018 Iowa tax cuts, saying, “The tax cuts passed went disproportionately to the wealthiest in Iowa and out-of-state corporations”**
  + In an Oct. 18, 2018, candidate profile in the *Gazette*, when asked if she would vote to roll back the state income tax passed in the prior session, or if she would vote to expand them, Kayla Koether replied, “If elected, I would seek a more balanced approach that is fair to the middle class Iowans in my district. The tax cuts passed went disproportionately to the wealthiest in Iowa and out-of-state corporations.

“We should instead focus tax policy on solving the problems of working Iowans, whether by covering costs of child care or incentivizing small-town businesses and rural entrepreneurs. We must ensure sufficient revenues to provide services Iowans deserve, including world-class public education.”[[16]](#footnote-16)

* **The bill, which was the largest tax cut in Iowa history, reduced Iowans’ state tax bills by an average of $300 annually**
  + In a May 30, 2018, article, the *Des Moines Register* reported, “Iowans will have their state tax bills reduced by an average of $300 annually under a tax cut bill signed by Gov. Kim Reynolds on Wednesday that could become a major campaign issue this fall.

“Reynolds, a Republican who made changes in tax policy a cornerstone of her agenda for the 2018 legislative session, celebrated with about 75 people, including key GOP lawmakers, during a ceremony at MobileDemand, an eastern Iowa manufacturer of rugged tablet computers.

“‘I signed this bill for every Iowan who works hard to earn a paycheck and deserves to keep more of it,’ Reynolds said.”[[17]](#footnote-17)

IMMIGRATION

* **In 2018, when asked her position on sanctuary cities, Kayla Koether said, “We should not detain someone without a warrant. We cannot ask law enforcement to do that”**
  + In an Oct. 11, 2018, article, the *Driftless Journal* reported, “Candidates for state and local office attended a political forum last week. (Comments made during the event by those seeking county offices were published in Tuesday’s Public Opinion.)

“Sponsors for last week’s event at Luther College included the Decorah Chapter of the American Association of University Women (AAUW), the Luther College political science and social work departments and the Luther College Center for Ethics and Public Engagement.”[[18]](#footnote-18)

* + According to the same article, “When asked about policies regarding sanctuary cities for undocumented immigrants, Koether said, ‘We should not detain someone without a warrant. We cannot ask law enforcement to do that.’

“Sanctuary cities limit their cooperation with the national government’s effort to enforce immigration law.”[[19]](#footnote-19)

* **According to ICE, “no judge in this country has the authority to issue a warrant for a civil immigration violation. Congress, by statute, vested this authorization solely to supervisory immigration officers. Local police officers don’t need a warrant when they encounter someone breaking the law in a public space, and the same holds true for ICE officers”**
  + According to a Sept. 12, 2019, Letter to the American Public from U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, “ICE does not need a warrant to make an arrest

“ICE officers are sworn federal law enforcement officers who operate within the confines of the law. Section 287 of the Immigration and Nationality Act provides ICE officers the authority to arrest aliens without a judicial warrant. In fact, no judge in this country has the authority to issue a warrant for a civil immigration violation. Congress, by statute, vested this authorization solely to supervisory immigration officers. Local police officers don’t need a warrant when they encounter someone breaking the law in a public space, and the same holds true for ICE officers. Obstructing or otherwise interfering with an ICE arrest is a crime, and anyone involved may be subject to prosecution under federal law. In addition, encouraging others to interfere or attempt to obstruct an arrest is extremely reckless and places all parties in jeopardy.”[[20]](#footnote-20)

ELECTIONS

* **In 2018, Kayla Koether filed a lawsuit seeking to get absentee ballots counted, after she had lost the election by fewer than 10 votes**
  + In a Nov. 30, 2018, article, *The Hill* reported, “A Democrat who lost her race for an Iowa state House seat by fewer than 10 votes filed a lawsuit Thursday seeking to get 33 absentee ballots counted.

“Kayla Koether filed the emergency suit with the U.S. District Court in Des Moines after a recount this week showed she lost to Republican Dave Bergan by only nine votes.

“The recount did not include 33 absentee ballots from Winneshiek County received on Election Day and the day after. These ballots did not have a postmark to confirm when they were mailed.”[[21]](#footnote-21)

* **Kayla Koether asked the judge to order election officials to count 29 mailed absentee ballots that did not have postmarks but did have postal bar code markings that revealed they were mailed on time**
  + In a Dec. 21, 2018, article, the Associated Press reported, “An Iowa judge has dismissed a lawsuit filed by the Democratic challenger to a northeast Iowa House seat who lost the election by nine votes saying the appropriate challenge should be taken up by the House under Iowa law.

“Democrat Kayla Koether asked Judge Scott Beattie to order election officials to count 29 mailed absentee ballots that did not have postmarks but did have postal bar code markings that revealed they were mailed on time.”[[22]](#footnote-22)

* **An Iowa judge has dismissed Kayla Koether’s lawsuit, saying the appropriate challenge should be taken up by the House under Iowa law**
  + In a Dec. 21, 2018, article, the Associated Press reported, “An Iowa judge has dismissed a lawsuit filed by the Democratic challenger to a northeast Iowa House seat who lost the election by nine votes saying the appropriate challenge should be taken up by the House under Iowa law.”[[23]](#footnote-23)
* **In January 2019, the Iowa House voted to reject the 29 absentee mail ballots, saying that while absentee ballots were confirmed by a U.S. Postal Service scan of a barcode on the envelopes as having been sent to election officials on time, those barcodes are not allowed under state law to be used to validate ballots**
  + In a Jan. 30, 2019, article, the Associated Press reported, “The Republican-led House voted Monday to reject 29 absentee mail ballots cast in a northeast Iowa House district, handing the seat to a Republican who won by nine votes in the first contested election to go before the Legislature in 27 years.

“The mailed absentee ballots were confirmed by a U.S. Postal Service scan of a barcode on the envelopes as having been sent to election officials on time, but House Republicans insist those barcodes are not allowed under state law to be used to validate ballots.

“Iowa law says mailed absentee ballots must be postmarked to confirm they were mailed by the deadline one day before an election. The 29 ballots had no postmark.”[[24]](#footnote-24)

* **Kayla Koether missed voting in at least the 2010 and 2014 primary elections in Iowa**
  + According to her Iowa voter profile report, as provided by the Iowa Secretary of State’s office, Kayla Koether registered to vote on Nov. 8, 2007, and voted in the following elections in Iowa.[[25]](#footnote-25)

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Election** | **Koether Status** |
| 06/05/2018 | 2018 Winneshiek County Primary | Voted |
| 02/06/2018 | Winneshiek County Special School | Voted |
| 11/08/2016 | General Election | Voted |
| 06/07/2016 | Primary Election | Voted |
| 11/04/2014 | General Election | Voted |
| 06/03/2014 | Primary Election | Did Not Vote |
| 11/06/2012 | General Election | Voted |
| 11/02/2010 | General Election | Voted |
| 06/08/2010 | Primary Election | Did Not Vote |
| 11/04/2008 | General Election | Voted |
| 12/11/2007 | NICC Special Election | Voted |

ABORTION

* **Kayla Koether criticized the Iowa state legislature’s fetal heartbeat bill, saying, “This legislation is a serious affront to women’s constitutional rights & a distraction from the real issues that threaten rural Iowa”**

* + In a May 3, 2018, tweet, Kayla Koether wrote, “Thanks to @FlipItIowa & other organizations for tagging me today around what’s coming out of Polk County. This legislation is a serious affront to women’s constitutional rights & a distraction from the real issues that threaten rural Iowa... Defending this deeply flawed legislation in expensive court battles will drain taxpayer $ that should be spent on our schools, hospitals, & revitalizing rural communities. While others manufacture wedge issues to divide us, here in Northeast Iowa... We will continue to focus on bringing people together to find common goals & improve our communities. Here in NEIA, we won’t let these wedges divide us, but instead continue to focus on what we will build together. #KaylaForIowa”[[26]](#footnote-26)



1. <https://twitter.com/ewarren/status/1274379523526713346> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. “My First Term Plan For Reducing Health Care Costs In America And Transitioning To Medicare For All,” Warren Democrats, Accessed July 9, 2020 [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. “Fight For a Green New Deal,” Warren Democrats, Accessed July 9, 2020 [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Commitment, Kayla Koether for State House website, Accessed Sept. 12, 2018 [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. 2018 Champions, Progressive Change Campaign Committee website, Accessed Sept. 12, 2018 [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Expenditures By Committee: Kayla Koether for Iowa, Iowa Ethics & Campaign Disclosure Board, Accessed July 24, 2020 [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Sydney Ember and Astead W. Herndon, “How ‘Abolish ICE’ Went From Social Media to Progressive Candidates’ Rallying Cry,” *New York Times*, June 29, 2018 [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Sydney Ember and Astead W. Herndon, “How ‘Abolish ICE’ Went From Social Media to Progressive Candidates’ Rallying Cry,” *New York Times*, June 29, 2018 [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Jennifer Haberkorn, “The 2 words you can’t say in a Democratic ad,” *Politico*, June 8, 2018 [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Jennifer Haberkorn, “The 2 words you can’t say in a Democratic ad,” *Politico*, June 8, 2018 [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Our Issues: Green New Deal, Progressive Change Campaign Committee website, Accessed July 24, 2020 [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Our Issues: Medicare for All, Progressive Change Campaign Committee website, Accessed July 24, 2020 [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Voter Profile Report: Kayla Koether, Iowa Secretary of State, Aug. 17, 2018 [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. “How do the Iowa caucuses work?” *Des Moines Register*, Jan. 30, 2016 [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. “How do the Iowa caucuses work?” *Des Moines Register*, Jan. 30, 2016 [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. “Kayla Koether, candidate for Iowa House District 55,” Gazette, Oct. 18, 2018 [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. William Petroski, “Reynolds signs measure for largest tax cut in state history,” *Des Moines Register*, May 31, 2018 [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. Lissa Blake, “Candidates for state, federal office attend forum,” *Driftless Journal*, Oct. 11, 2018 [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. Lissa Blake, “Candidates for state, federal office attend forum,” *Driftless Journal*, Oct. 11, 2018 [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. “ERO Letter to the American Public,” U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Sept. 12, 2019 [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. Chris Mills Rodrigo, “Iowa Dem who lost state House race by 9 votes sues to have absentee ballots counted,” The Hill, Nov. 30, 2018 [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. “Judge dismisses Iowa House race ballot dispute lawsuit,” Associated Press, Dec. 21, 2018 [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. “Judge dismisses Iowa House race ballot dispute lawsuit,” Associated Press, Dec. 21, 2018 [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. David Pitt, “Iowa House rejects ballots in challenged election,” Associated Press, Jan. 30, 2019 [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. Voter Profile Report: Kayla Koether, Iowa Secretary of State, Aug. 17, 2018 [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. <https://twitter.com/KaylaForIowa/status/992206139701022721>; <https://twitter.com/KaylaForIowa/status/992205728889888768>; <https://twitter.com/KaylaForIowa/status/992205291155488768> [↑](#footnote-ref-26)