

By EARL WATT • Daily Leader Most of the candidates in the race for the Republican nomination for the Big First Congressional seat say the same things — cut spending, repeal Obamacare, less government. While the talk is similar, one candidate has a record of voting to support those issues, Tim Huelskamp.

Huelskamp has been a no-nonsense member of the Kansas Senate since 1996, taking his message of conservatism to Topeka. “I have a proven record of defending the principles that most Kansans, most Americans hold dear,” Huelskamp told a group at the Holiday Inn Express meeting room Wednesday evening in the fifth stop of the day campaigning for the seat that will be vacated by Congressman Jerry Moran who is running for the U.S. Senate.

While many candidates have pledged not to raise taxes, Huelskamp has never voted for a tax increase in Kansas since 1996.

While many have pledged to repeal Obamacare, Huelskamp was the first to sign a pledge to repeal it, and he has worked in the Kansas Legislature to protect Kansans by supporting legislation that will defend the sovereignty of Kansas from what he defined as an overreaching federal government.

Huelskamp expects to vote for a resolution to force Kansas Attorney General Steve Six to join the lawsuit against Obamacare when the Senate reconvenes later this month.

“Folks talk about what they will do,” he said. “We are doing it today.”

Huelskamp explained the dangers of Cap and Trade to agriculture, and instead of waiting until January to cast a vote in the U.S. Congress, he has been fighting excessive EPA regulations in the Kansas Senate.

“The EPA actually wanted to ban dust,” he said. “They wanted to prohibit burning in the Flint Hills. They backed away from that, but they said, ‘We can regulate it.’”

With the recent Tea Party movement gaining national attention, Huelskamp said he had been a part of similar meetings for years.

“We called them taxpayer rallies,” he said. “Last year, I went to four tea parties. I am excited to see so many people want to get involved in the process.”

The reason so many people are getting involved, according to Huelskamp, has been the ever-growing federal government, and candidates who say one thing on the campaign trail and do something else in Washington.

“We have a \$14 trillion debt, and it didn’t all happen in the last year and a half,” Huelskamp said. “It’s not all Obama’s fault. Republicans were spending before that. We have a Constitution, and administrations from both parties haven’t operated in the boundaries. This election is fundamentally about where we are headed as a nation. We have strayed a long way, and now thousands want a role, they want a seat at the table.”

As a fifth generation farmer, Huelskamp said that ag is the “past, present and future of the First District.” While he wanted to open markets, he said there is difficulty with so many in Washington that do not understand agriculture.

“The strongest part of the state today is where there is agriculture,” he said.

Huelskamp was at a hearing on education when he discovered that to get federal stimulus money, Gov. Parkinson signed a pledge to adopt national standards.

“But they couldn’t tell us what those standards were,” Huelskamp said. “So the governor signed a pledge, we didn’t get the grant money, and now we may have standards to meet that we don’t even know. I get frustrated when we are talking education in Kansas, and I’m told, ‘The feds told us to do it.’ We are at a crossroads of where we g as a country.”

With Huelskamp’s record as a pro-life, pro-family, less government positions behind him, Huelskamp said there would be no question of how he would represent the Big First.

“We have a record,” he said. “I love sharing my vision, but this is where the country is at, and we don’t like the direction the country is heading. The battle isn’t next January. The real battle is right now.”