

2018 ELECTION QUESTIONS – STATE AUDITOR

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Does the auditor provide sufficient oversight of local governments? What additional measures, if any, do you recommend?

The auditor provides an important piece of oversight, but of course the most important parts of government oversight are elected officials and the voters to whom they are directly accountable. A good audit - and maybe more importantly, an honest, open, and supportive relationship with an auditor - ensures local decision makers and citizens have the information to keep local government accountable.

Accurate, thorough, understandable audits that come with support before, during, and after the audit can build trust, provide accountability, and ensure that solutions are grounded in local reality. I want to be the State Auditor that works alongside local officials and citizens with the data they need to improve their communities. This will be my top priority in office.

In addition, I believe this election could result in an historically large number of first time local elected officials. In that case, the next state auditor needs to be ready to provide the direct training and support new leaders need to understand local finances.

Another issue that will need attention in the near future will be the stability of our public pensions. The next auditor will need to understand the complex data that will be presented by a number of different, and sometimes opposing, groups. She will need to be able to bring elected leaders, pension recipients, and their communities together to find solutions that will stabilize our funds while still providing fair benefits.

Should counties be allowed to hire private firms?

The notion that an audit should be conducted independently, free from any possible financial influence by the subject of that audit is not controversial on its face. Unfortunately, the current cost of independent audits in Minnesota can be prohibitive for local governments. I believe that our next auditor needs to advocate for a fully-funded office that can provide accountability without cost to our communities. I have already begun working with legislators and local leaders to find legislative solutions to the current issues around county audits. As auditor, I am committed to ensuring local governments have both the accountability and support they deserve.

Why are you running for office? What are your personal priorities?

I am running for Minnesota State Auditor to support the great work that happens close to home. My experiences in local government have prepared me to effectively and efficiently fulfill the main roles of the auditor: oversight, education, and representation. I know that when neighbors

have clear, quality, focused information, we can find solutions that directly improve the lives of Minnesotans.

My personal priorities for the office are oversight, education, and representation. She oversees over \$20 billion in local spending, helping analyze how money is being spent and with what kind of results. She supports local leaders and activists with the training, data, and analysis they need to make decisions in our communities. And she represents Minnesotans on boards that deal with issues like investments, economic development, housing, and pensions.

But perhaps most importantly, our auditor is an arbiter of truth. And in this time of fake news and unprecedented assaults on truth-tellers, we need a State Auditor who is committed to defending real, unbiased data.

Briefly summarize your personal background and qualifications.

I am a math teacher who recently served as Secretary-Treasurer of the Minnesota AFL-CIO. I have also lobbied to support public pensions; served on my city's Economic Development Authority and Governor Dayton's School Finance Working Group; been a board member of the Minnesota Coalition for the Homeless; and bargained contracts with my local school district.