

Today's Message

Today's Message is *checks and balances*. I am illuminating this topic today because there seems to be some confusion and misinformation about both my proposal to combine the State Auditor's Office with the Legislator's Office and also about the actual responsibilities of the State Auditor's Office.

Many of you have expressed interest in my proposal to combine the State Auditor's Office with the Legislative Auditor's Office in order to recreate the Public Examiner's Office. My proposal for combining the offices, does *not* advocate a change in the appointing authority of the Chief Auditor position.

Currently, the Legislative Audit Commission (Legislative Branch) appoints the Legislative Auditor. The Legislative Auditor polices state agencies (Executive Branch). All appropriations start in the House and eventually become the biennial budget of the state. The money is *spent by the Executive Branch* and is *policed by the Legislative Branch* (Legislative Auditor's Office).

Some of the misinformation that has been circulating is that the Governor (Executive Branch) would be the one to appoint the new Chief Auditor position under my plan. That would be bad *checks and balances*. Since the Legislative Branch polices the spending by the Executive Branch, it would be much wiser to keep the responsibility for appointing the new Chief Auditor position in the hands of the Legislative Audit Commission.

To clarify, the Executive Branch spends the money while the

Legislative Branch polices the spending. The State Auditor does *not* police any part of the budget/spending cycles of *state* agencies. The State Auditor's Office oversees *local government* entities, not *state* agencies. The new Chief Auditor position would have oversight over both state agencies and local government entities if the State Auditor's Office and Legislative Auditor's Offices were combined to recreate the Public Examiner's Office, as I am proposing.

My Plan to privatize the Audit Practice Division and replace it with a Peer Review Division would downsize the State Auditor's Office and save the State money in the process (62% reduction in the biennial budget for the State Auditor's Office). That is the only way the State Auditor can decrease any part of the State biennial budget.

Contrary to what other candidates have claimed, the State Auditor does *not* have any other power to cut *state* spending or to reduce the size of the State's budget deficit.

[For reference, here is a link to the [Legislative Auditor.](#)]

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At the federal level, Reps. Colin Peterson, D-Minn. and Mike Conaway, R-Texas recently introduced ([H.R. 4410](#)) in the U.S. House of Representatives. The purpose of this bill is to require the U.S. Comptroller General (the Chief federal auditor) to be a CPA.

It would be embarrassing to see the Democrats take the lead on governmental transparency. In Minnesota, the GOP could take this

issue back by endorsing a CPA for State Auditor.

The American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA) recently announced its support of the legislation. “Taxpayers are rightly demanding ever-increasing accountability and transparency from the U.S. government,” said AICPA President and CEO Barry Melancon, CPA. “It is essential that the Comptroller General have the education, skills, background, training, and discipline of a CPA.” [SmartBrief](#)

The Comptroller General is appointed by the President of the United States and serves a 15-year term. The position has been vacant since March 2008 when former Comptroller General David Walker, who was a CPA, resigned to become president of the Peter G. Peterson Foundation. The previous Comptroller General, Charles Bowsher, also was a CPA. Bowsher was appointed in 1981 and served a full term of 15 years. The current acting Comptroller General, Gene Dodaro, holds a bachelor’s degree in accounting from Lycoming College in Williamsport, PA, but he is *not* a CPA. [WebCPA](#)

I strongly support similar legislation at the State level for the Legislative Auditor. The current Legislative Auditor is [James R. Nobles](#). He serves a 6-year term. He has been the Legislative Auditor for 27 years. He is *not* a CPA, but when he was appointed, the qualifications of CPA were not as significant as they are today. Upon his retirement, there should be a state statute requiring his replacement to be a licensed CPA.

The state statute should also include a disqualification clause that the

new Legislative Auditor cannot have been involved in any current or past political activity. Since I am running for elected State Auditor, this would disqualify me for the position of Legislative Auditor, or, under my plan, to the new Chief Auditor position. Because of this, you can see that I am supporting this idea to promote fiscal responsibility and not for any personal gain.

The next time you see a candidate or receive a phone call from a candidate for State Auditor, ask him or her about eliminating the elected position of State Auditor.

If you think my Plan has merit because it is based on limited government and a sound business model for government, talk to other delegates to the State Convention. At the State Convention, you can “Help Eliminate the Elected Position of State Auditor” by voting for **Jeff Wiita CPA** for State Auditor. Remember, we do not have *Card Check* in the GOP at the State Endorsing Convention. Your vote is *private* and it should also be *conservative*.

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Keep Smiling 😊
Jeff Wiita, CPA