

Today's Message

Today's message is *perception is reality*. In the world of politics, perception is reality. Politicians try to make the voters (and/or delegates in a caucus state) and their supporters believe something that may not be true. Illusionists use “*smoke and mirrors*.” Their hands are quicker than your eyes. Professional politicians use crafty wording. You the voter must decide who is being honest; your job is not easy.

Sometimes, professional politicians are completely dishonest and prone to parsing words with statements like, “It depends on what the definition of ‘is’ is.” Often, they mislead the delegates by providing only half of the information.

I do not live in the political world; my world is reality. During my campaign for State Auditor, I have informed you that:

- There are *no* Constitutional qualifications for State Auditor or Attorney General.
- The State of Minnesota has two Auditors (an elected State Auditor and an appointed [Legislative Auditor](#)).
- The elected State Auditor has *no* Constitutional duties with regards to examination and oversight of local governmental entities. The State Auditor's Constitutional duties include sitting on the [board of investment and the exchange of public lands](#).
- The Legislative Auditor is *appointed by*, and *reports to*, the bi-partisan [Legislative Audit Commission](#).

- Before the 1973 Reorganization Act, the two Auditors were one and the position was called Public Examiner; the Governor appointed the position.
- Before the 1973 Reorganization Act, the State Auditor was the finance officer for the state, and the State Treasurer was in charge of revenue collections ([click here to see a flowchart of the Evolution of Minnesota Financial Departments](#)).
- In 1998, the voters amended the State Constitution and eliminated the elected position of [State Treasurer](#).
- In 2007, the Democrat controlled Legislature and Governor Pawlenty [abolished the Department of Employee Relations \(DOERs\)](#) and merged the Department of Finance with DOERs. This created Minnesota Management and Budget, which was the former State Auditor's Office before the 1973 Reorganization Act.
- When the State Legislature and Governor Wendell Anderson split the Public Examiner's Office and gave the oversight of local governmental audits to the duty-less, elected State Auditor, they violated the auditing standard of independence in fact and appearance and the standard of integrity ([click here, section 2.08 addresses integrity](#)).
- The State of Minnesota has never elected a State Auditor who was a Certified Public Accountant (CPA).
- [65% of the State Auditor's Office's biennial budget is the Audit Practice Division](#). The Audit Practice Division employs 65% of the employees in the State Auditor's

Office (numbers do not lie). These employees produce audit reports that are sent to the State Auditor for final signature. These reports require the signature of a licensed CPA. Any elected State Auditor who is not a CPA would have to hire a licensed CPA (Deputy State Auditor) to co-sign the audit reports.

- The licensed Deputy State Auditor serves at the *beck and call* of the unlicensed elected politician. This is a serious internal control weakness, which decreases the integrity of the reports and calls into question whether or not the Office of the State Auditor (OSA) is a reputable audit entity.
- The OSA has an [unfunded audit mandate](#) to audit all 87 counties and 3 first-class cities.
- The OSA has not done an [annual financial audit of Hennepin County since 1970](#).
- The OSA does not audit school districts. Private CPA firms audit them.
- The OSA does not audit the Department of Education. The Office of the Legislative Auditor audits them.
- The structure of the OSA has created a [dysfunctional Audit Practice Division that cannot meet its deadlines](#). This problem has existed since 1996 and all prior State Auditors have ignored the problem.
- There is [no government policing of CPA firms](#) that are auditing: school districts, small cities, and counties that have been released of the unfunded audit mandate (should I mention [Enron?](#)).
- There is no incentive to decrease the size of the OSA

because the salary of the State Auditor is directly related to the number of employees working in the OSA ([click here for more information](#)).

The above bullet points are not “smoke and mirrors.” They come from observations and easily researched fact.

How did we get to this stage of silliness? The answer is politics. We have never elected a State Auditor who possessed the training and disciplined temperament of a Certified Public Accountant.

I ask all delegates to the state convention to ask yourself if we should continue the *status quo* and endorse a candidate for State Auditor who is using a Constitutional office so that he or she can build a social network and advance his or her statewide name recognition before running for higher office like Governor, Lt. Governor or U.S. Senate without ever having to cast a single vote on a critical policy issue like Life.

The wind is at our backs for clean government and new ideas. I am one of *the few* with genuine ideas. I’m Jeff Wiita, I’m a CPA, I know the [proper role of government](#) and the definition of *limited government*, and I’m asking for your vote for State Auditor at the Republican Convention.

Keep Smiling 😊
Jeff Wiita, CPA