

People's Alliance PAC 2008 Questionnaire for North Carolina State Auditor Candidates

PLEASE NOTE: After candidate interviews have taken place, these responses will be placed on the People's Alliance website <http://www.durhampa.org/>

Candidate's Name __Beth A. Wood__

1. North Carolina continues to suffer from embarrassing political scandals that have been in large part uncovered by the media and interested citizens like Jim Sinsheimer. What do you perceive as the role of State Auditor going forward in quelling corruption among our elected officials?

The Auditor's role going forward is to investigate all allegations of wrong doing, to investigate thoroughly and to report every finding of wrongdoing resulting from the investigations. No matter who is involved or what the allegations the State Auditor must report all findings.

The State Auditor must not give in to political pressures when asked not to publish findings and must make sure that all results of investigations are made known to the public, to the proper law enforcement authorities, to the Governor and to the General Assembly.

2. In your opinion, is the office of the State Auditor fully equipped and staffed to maintain tabs on non-profits receiving state funding? If not, what would you change?

The Office is not fully equipped to maintain tabs on non-profits receiving state funding. The responsibility for monitoring the spending and the use of State dollars belong to the agencies who pass those moneys to the non-profits.

I would make the "monitoring" aspect, which is the responsibility of State agencies, a focal point in each agency's audit and to ensure that the General Assembly is fully aware of the results of those and all other findings in the audits performed.

There aren't enough auditors in the Auditor's Office to properly monitor those moneys, but we can effectively audit how State agencies monitor the moneys they give to non-profits and report these findings to the General Assembly.

3. A recent audit highlighted malfeasance in North Carolina Central University's Assistant Provost's office. Is enough being done to prevent situations like this from occurring in our public universities in the first place?

To prevent situations like the one described above, there really needs to be active participation by a university's Board in making sure that the checks and balances are in place and working to prevent this type of situation from happening. The UNC Board of Governors should empower the various university Boards of Trustees to be more diligent to prevent situations like the one described above from happening in other universities.

University Boards must make sure that there is an internal audit function in place, that the internal auditors report directly to the board and they not be prohibited from going into any department or division. The internal auditors should have the full support of their Boards and their Boards should include members who understand the findings and the potential problems of the findings of both the internal and external audits.

Whether or not enough is being done is really specific to each individual university. Some do a great job, some do not. Again, this aspect of an organization's responsibility is an area that I plan, as the next State Auditor, to put more emphasis on within the audits performed and to ensure that the General Assembly are aware of the findings.

4. Durham recently suffered through a second repaving of the botched I-40 expansion project. This and other mistakes/situations highlight the failure of previous Department of Transportation reforms. What legal changes does the G.A. need to enact to clean up the NC DOT?

First of all, someone needs to determine what problems exist before legislation can be enacted. The cause of the problem of the repaving (and any other perceived problems) need to be determined and then take whatever action is necessary to correct the problems that led to the I-40 debacle.

The Auditor's Office is certainly a tool that the G.A. needs to be using to help determine what issues need to be changed within DOT (or any other agency) and any legislative changes needed.

One of my first initiatives as State Auditor is to work more closely with the General Assembly to use the audits performed by the State Auditor's Office to ensure accountability of all State agencies for the spending of taxpayer dollars.

5. Will you resign any and all employment with any other entity, even part-time, for the duration of your service if elected?

Yes. I currently teach auditing classes to CPAs across the nation for American Institute of CPAs; however, they are aware that once I become State Auditor I will no longer be teaching for them. The State Auditor's job is full time...and then some. If done well there is NO time for employment outside the Auditor's Office.

6. Will you resign any and all Board positions with any other entity, both to avoid conflicts of interest as well as to free up your time for public service?

Currently I do not hold any. Auditing standards do not allow auditors to hold such positions which may cause a conflict of interest or impair an auditor's independence.