

Representative Mautino Opening State to Legislative Audit Commission

Good Morning,

Chairman Barickman, Chairman Rita, Sen. Martinez, Rep. Reis, honorable members of the Audit Commission and Executive Director Jane Stricklin. I would like to thank the subcommittee for the opportunity to interview as a candidate for the position of the next Auditor General for the State of Illinois.

First, some background on me. I have lived my whole life in Bureau County, in the City of Spring Valley and the great state of Illinois. I graduated from Hall Township High School and then attended Western Illinois University on a Reserved Officers Training Corp Scholarship. I received my Associate Degree in Liberal Arts from Illinois Valley Community College in Oglesby, IL in 1982 and graduated with a Bachelor Degree in Marketing, Finance, and Business Administration from Illinois State University in Bloomington-Normal in 1984.

Upon graduation, I returned home and worked as the Corporate Brand Manager for Mautino Distributing Company. A small family owned fourth generation business with 60 employees and annual sales of 12 million dollars. My responsibilities included office operations, inventory control, supplier relations, and sales. During my time at Mautino Distributing Company I worked as the internal auditor from 1985 to 1991 for production sales and quality assurance. In this capacity I audited 900 retail accounts on a weekly basis to ensure compliance. I also participated in external audits for the Adolph Coors Company and the Miller Brewing Company. My responsibility was to correct and address discrepancies in external audits. I believe this practical experience will be extremely beneficial if I am selected the next Illinois Auditor General.

In 1991, I was appointed to the Illinois General Assembly to fill the remainder of my father's unexpired term in the House of Representatives. As a legislator for the past 25 years, I have strived to fulfill my duties with honor and dignity throughout my district, the legislature, and the State of Illinois.

Throughout my service to the people of my District, the State of Illinois, and the members of the General Assembly, I have been entrusted with complicated issues before the General Assembly. Leading bi-partisan negotiations on such issues as Unemployment insurance, firearm owner rights and Business expansion permitting. As Chairman of the House Insurance Committee, I negotiated the implementation of Oxley-Sarbanes which was the financial regulatory modernization act for Insurance and Securities in Illinois. Understanding all sides of complex issues and working with the parties to develop solutions has always been one of my strengths.

As a member of the Appropriations and Revenue Committees, I have helped develop budgets for the State of Illinois and have carried and passed the legislation to fund the Auditor General's office, as well as, legislation funding the transfer bill, which allows for the conduct of audits within the agency for the past 10 years.

Most of my legislative career has been focused on fiscal issues, with an emphasis on compliance and transparency – the fundamental framework of the duties for the Office of the Illinois Auditor General. My work on the Revenue Committee, the Appropriations Committee, and the Economic and Fiscal Committee have provided me the opportunity to develop a profound understanding of the complexity of state budget management and inter-agency operations. Furthermore, my work on the Legislative Audit Commission makes me uniquely qualified to fulfill the duties of the Illinois Auditor General.

In 1997, I joined the Legislative Audit Commission and served as its Chairman for the remainder of the term replacing the late Terry Deering. I continued as a Commission member until my recent resignation, returning as Chairman in 2003. All told, I have served on the Legislative Audit Commission for 18 years, 12 years as its Chairman.

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During my time on the Legislative Audit Commission, I have worked closely with the Auditor General's Office when findings against agencies have warranted investigation by the Illinois State Police, Attorney General, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Furthermore, I have worked effectively with four different administrations – Republican and Democratic – as they responded to and addressed those findings.

Throughout my tenure on the commission, we reviewed and interpreted over 2,000 audits, resulting in more than 8,000 findings. During my time as Chairman, I authorized and approved Audits which were used in the investigation and eventual impeachment of former Governor Rod Blagojevich. I defended the Auditor General against attempts by Governor Blagojevich to usurp the power of Article 8, Section 3 of the Illinois Constitution and the Illinois State Auditing Act. Continuing the independence of the Office of the Illinois Auditor General is vital to the protection of the people's trust.

The position of Auditor General is predicated on trust and ethics, and as a member of the General Assembly Bi-Partisan Ethics Committee who has dealt with challenging situations, I have worked to demonstrate good judgment and fairness by authorizing investigations and recommending discipline for General Assembly members and staff who may have broken the law and/or may have behaved in an unethical manner.

I understand how difficult it can be to maintain sound internal controls and strict compliance with statutory and regulatory requirements on a consistent basis. Fortunately, there are measures in place to guarantee accuracy, transparency, and fairness.

First, the highly-qualified and credentialed staffs of the Illinois Auditor General's Office investigate, review, and report their findings on compliance issues, ensuring the Illinois Auditor General's Office maintains the highest standards of professionalism. Secondly, the Office of the Auditor General is scrutinized on-site every three years by a peer review team of professional auditors from other states and the federal government. They review every document associated with audits they select for review. The third key to ensuring the accuracy, transparency, and fairness of the administrative operations of the Auditor General's Office is the biennial audit performed by external auditors selected by the Legislative Audit Commission. My understanding of the work of the Legislative Audit Commission and the position of the Illinois Office of the Auditor General runs deep.

The Auditor General's office has received awards and extremely positive reviews on their work at the State and Federal levels. I hope to have the opportunity to continue this tradition and respectfully have submitted my name for nomination to be the next Auditor General of Illinois.

If nominated by the Legislative Audit Commission and elected by the members of the Illinois General Assembly I plan to have a residence in Springfield and fulfill the 10 year term commitment.

I am proud of my service as a member of the Illinois House of Representatives and am honored to have held the position for the past 25 years. I am grateful to have been raised in a successful family business and to have learned the value integrity, hard work, and sound business practices. As an applicant for the position of Auditor General, I look forward to the challenge of conducting audits in accordance with professional auditing standards and the direction of the Illinois General Assembly. I promise to be independent, objective, and fair. Furthermore, I vow to avoid partisanship and policy questions, and most importantly, to conduct and report findings with the utmost accuracy and transparency to the Legislative Audit Commission, the General Assembly, and the people of Illinois.

Thank you for your time. I would be happy to entertain any questions.