

Jessica Holmes Info

Background:

I currently serve as North Carolina State Auditor. In November 2014, Wake County voters elected me as a County Commissioner At-Large to represent almost one million constituents and help oversee a \$1.1 billion dollar budget and a staff of over 4,000 employees. Subsequently, I was elected unanimously by my colleagues to serve as Chair of the board and was appointed to serve on the NC Association of County Officials Board of Directors. Local government experience is an asset as the State Auditor is an ex-officio member of the NC Local Government Commission, which approves the issuance of debt and assists local governments regarding fiscal management.

In August 2021, I was appointed to serve as a Deputy Commissioner in the North Carolina Industrial Commission where I resolved controversies by rendering impartial and well-reasoned decisions according to law. I will continue to honor these same principles as State Auditor and lead OSA with integrity, transparency, and a focus on accountability.

Additionally, I have served on and chaired several boards and committees including the North Carolina Foundation for Public School Children, Wake County Smart Start, and am currently a member of the National State Auditors Association.

Why run for office:

I have a demonstrated history of public service and valuing the concept of living a purpose-driven life. We are fortunate to live in a state “*where the weak grow strong and the strong grow great.*” My life story is a testament to North Carolina’s state toast. Coming from humble beginnings, I have benefited from several federal and state programs under the authority of the State Auditor from hurricane relief, free lunch programs, and affordable housing. Ensuring that tax dollars are used efficiently and most effectively isn’t a talking point for me – it’s personal.

If I had to pick three issues:

I prioritize audits and investigations around sound methodology accounting for impact on North Carolinians, risk of harm to vulnerable populations including seniors, people with disabilities, underserved communities and the kitchen table issues we all care about. The OSA touches most aspects of our daily lives from education, infrastructure, environment quality and human services. All of the issues mentioned are important and are fundamentally intertwined to ensure our quality of life.

How would you work with fellow representatives:

In spite of the national rhetoric and current political climate, the Council of State functions well and collaboratively to fulfill our duties and responsibilities. I will continue to have a team mentality and be solutions oriented regardless of who sits next to or across the table from me. Philosophical differences of opinions are inevitable, but our collective diversity of opinions and experiences add to a healthy and inclusive discourse that improves our decision-making.

There is no one person or party that I am aligned with 100%. The surge in independent voter registrations across the country is indicative of the fact that many voters are breaking away from partisan allegiances and focusing on issues. I disagree with extremism and misuse of government resources on both sides of the aisle and will stay focused on the best interests of North Carolinians, my faith, and family and being solutions-oriented.

Role of the office:

The North Carolina State Auditor is the state's *independent* watchdog, charged with identifying wasteful government spending and ensuring federal and legislative funds get to the people and places that need it most. Accordingly, the state auditor should be unbiased and conduct irrefutable audits and investigative reports irrespective of party affiliation or political leanings. Money isn't red or blue, it's green – and my job is simply to follow the money. I take an unbossed and unbought approach and will take on anyone who would engage in fraud, waste or abuse of our tax dollars.

In which city do I live and three favorite things.

I reside in Raleigh and enjoy the walking trails at several of my favorite parks including Umstead Park, the Sunflower Field at Dorothea Dix Park. Also, the North Carolina Museum of Art is my favorite museum where I enjoy the many events and exhibits each year. That said, I was born and raised in Pender County and take every opportunity to lift up my hometown, Maple Hill, and share the joys I experienced riding horses at full gallop in the summer, helping in my grandmother's garden (or rather eating straight from it), and the fellowship of a small-town community. Being from a rural community and serving in public office in an urban county offers me a unique perspective when it comes addressing rural vs. urban issues and importance of economic development and access to resources for all North Carolinians.

Where is our state headed:

North Carolina has challenges ahead and a decision to make as to our direction at the ballot box during Early Voting Oct. 17 – November 2 and on Election Day, November 5. Candidates on both sides have shared our values and priorities and it's up to the voters as to where we go from

here. Our state has a lot to be proud of such as being ranked as America's top state for business for two years in a row. Still, we there's work to do regarding funding for public schools, ensuring healthcare and broadband access in every corner of our state, and rebuilding after catastrophic storms. We are a resilient state and come together for the common good when necessary. For example, almost all Council of State members, including myself, were-at-the-ready to vote in favor of emergency declarations to get resources to fellow North Carolinians impacted by storms and unprecedented flooding. Our Governor, legislative leaders, first responders, transportation workers, line workers, and volunteers from across our state have unified around a common goal, taking care of each other, and I'd like to see more of that.