

46th District Democrats Legislative & Statewide Questionnaire

Candidate Information

Candidate Name: **Pat McCarthy**

Office sought: **Washington State Auditor**

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Have you read the 46th LD Democrats Draft 2016 Platform? Yes , No
(Go to http://www.46dems.org/2016_ld_caucus and click "Draft Platform")

Why are you running for this office?

I have a strong desire to restore confidence in the State Auditor's Office. I have the professional management skills and abilities to run the office well, and I have a hands-on understanding of the local governments the office is charged with auditing. I have interfaced with the State Auditor's Office for many years in different elected capacities, as a School Board Director, County Auditor, County Executive, and in my service as President of Sound Transit.

I believe in public service and have dedicated myself and my life's work to service of all kinds. No matter the time, place, or role, I have made accountability, transparency and integrity hallmarks of my public stewardship. I would do the same as State Auditor.

Please briefly describe your qualifications for this office and your personal and professional background.

Over the last 29 years, I've been honored to serve the public at different levels of local government, including three elected positions: as Pierce County Executive for the past seven years, as Pierce County Auditor from 2003 to 2008, and as a member of the Tacoma School Board from 1987 to 1999. I've also been honored to serve in regional leadership roles, including chairing the Sound Transit Board of Directors, and as President of the Puget Sound Regional Council.

As county executive, I've worked hard to ensure the diverse communities that make up the Puget Sound can prosper, even through the Great Recession and its aftermath. I've committed to making sure every person I was elected to serve has a voice in their government. I'll take those same values and commitments with me into the State Auditor's office.

Do you consider yourself a Democrat? Have you ever been a member of another party? Have you been actively involved with the Democratic Party?

I have been actively involved in the Democratic Party in Pierce County since 1975, when I first moved to Tacoma as a young wife and mother at 21. I attended my first caucus in 1975. Over this period of time I have strongly supported Democratic candidates and causes. I have proudly run as a Democrat each time I have sought partisan office. I have never been a member of another political party.

I have contributed to many Democratic candidates over the years, and recently hosted events in my home for Governor Jay Inslee, U.S. Senator Patty Murray and King County Executive Dow Constantine. In the past few years I have made contributions to local progressive initiatives and organizations such as Keep Pierce County Blue, the Pierce County Young Democrats, and Win With Women PAC.

What's your plan to win?

I am running a statewide campaign, mixing traditional political strategies like organizational endorsements with newer digital outreach tools. I have won Pierce County four times over the past decade, with 64% of the vote in 2012. It is critical for Democrats to win Pierce County in a statewide race.

I have received the endorsements of the National Women's Political Caucus, AFSCME/WSCCCE Council 2, the Young Democrats of Washington, the 34th LD Democrats, and the Whatcom County Democratic Women's Club. I also have the endorsement of Former Governor Chris Gregoire and Former Congressman Norm Dicks, both of whom I worked with while they were in office.

In King County, I have received the sole endorsements of Executive Dow Constantine; Seattle Mayor Ed Murray; King County Councilmembers Claudia Balducci, Joe McDermott, and Dave Upthegrove; State Representatives Jessyn Farrell, Ruth Kagi, Cindy Ryu, and Judy Clibborn; and the mayors of Issaquah, Redmond, and Auburn.

What do you see as the most important functions of the position you are running for? What qualities do you possess that make you the candidate best suited to this role?

I am the only candidate in this race who has already run a large public entity like the State Auditor's office. Pierce County has 3,000 employees, providing a vast range of services that are important to the day-to-day lives of 830,000 residents. Managing the day-to-day operations of a state agency the size of the State Auditor's office is not an entry-level job in public administration. I have the skills, know-how, and experience to ensure the office is on track.

If elected what would your top three priorities be?

In addition to the restoration of public trust in the State Auditor's office, the creation of entirely new mechanisms to audit the McCleary reforms will be the heavy lift for the new State Auditor. Many people in state public policymaking have not even begun to consider the degree to which the new State Auditor will be tasked with auditing the reformation of basic education funding.

An additional opportunity for using the office of auditor in a progressive manner may be to create real audit mechanisms to test, track, and report on the efficacy of tax exemptions. Ultimately the State Auditor's office is an executive role and not one of lawmaking, but I will work closely with the State Legislature on policy changes that would improve the office's performance.

How will you support women and families' economic opportunities? Would you support legislation closing the wage gap, funding childcare options, and requiring paid family leave?

I have earned the endorsement of the National Women's Political Caucus in part because of my deep familiarity with all these challenges, having spent decades as working mother and grandmother. Yes, I would support all of these pieces of legislation.

As the first woman elected Pierce County Executive, I've sought to promote the economic, political and social equality of women throughout my tenure in office. 39% of administrators under my chain of command are women, and I've hired or promoted eight women to one of the seventeen director-level positions (Information Technology, Human Resources, Economic Development, Communications, Government Relations, External Affairs, Administrator of Ferries and Airports, and Community Connections). Women are paid the same as men in any position, and mothers and fathers both receive parental leave (4.5 months for mothers and 3 months for fathers).

How will you work to address racial equity?

I will look first and foremost to the State Auditor's office itself. The office's hiring and recruitment processes must be inclusive and color-blind. In regards to public policy, racial inequities can be perpetuated by disproportionate, inadequate funding for schools and other public services in areas with large, non-white populations. One of the highest-profile examples

of these inequities is Washington's K-12 education financing system, which negatively impacts the educational opportunities of students of color. In building a fair, robust system for auditing new education dollars appropriated as a result of the McCleary ruling, I will help ensure that our state's laws and budgets are not furthering racial inequities.

Describe your stance on Washington's tax structure. What needs to be changed? What should stay the same?

Our state's tax code is decades out-of-date, and working families are shouldering the burden of this deeply-flawed system. Working families are paying a far greater share of their incomes in taxes than the wealthiest Washingtonians, and these same households are often the ones hit the hardest by reductions in public services caused by our structural budget deficit.

As a county executive, I can see the consequences of this broken system each time I look at our general fund revenues and operating budget. We need an additional source of state revenue, and we need to repeal or significantly alter the property tax restrictions in place that originate with Tim Eyman's I-747. We need the state legislature or Washington voters to change state laws if we want to really start making improvements, but the State Auditor can play an important role in the meantime of ensuring that the available revenue we do have is being spent in the smartest, most equitable way possible.

Are there issues that you've worked on or are excited to work on that are not receiving much media attention?

The county I lead is home to Joint Base Lewis-McChord. I would be remiss if I did not use this space to emphasize the ongoing importance of getting veterans and military families the support and services they've earned, from all levels of government and the private sector. Though our country no longer has the military presence in Iraq and Afghanistan we did last decade, the impacts of these conflicts on the women and men who served there are still very real: access to quality healthcare, the costs of higher education, civilian job opportunities, and more. Veterans are disproportionately affected by these challenges, and Washington's elected officials need to be mindful of this in the decades ahead. I have been honored to serve as Co-Chair of the Elected Officials Council of the South Sound Military & Communities Partnership since its inception in 2011. The State Auditor's office and other state agencies should take

advantage of "Hire A Veteran" programs that connect public-sector employers with qualified job applicants who have served in our armed forces.

How will you combat climate change?

Though this policy decision is outside the control of the State Auditor's Office, I will support and pay careful attention to any new carbon reduction policies as they relate to state and local governments. When the opportunity presents itself, I will always take actions and set agency policies that reflect Washington state's deeply-rooted commitment to our planet. As a mother of four and grandmother of ten, the future livability of our planet matters to me enormously.

Question	Support	Oppose	Qualify, if needed
Do you support or oppose Raise up Washington's initiative to increase the minimum wage?	X		
Do you support or oppose access to safe and legal abortion?	X		
Do you support or oppose amending Washington's Constitution to require a two-thirds vote to raise revenue?		X	
Do you support or oppose allowing coal or oil to be exported from Washington State's ports?		X	
Do you support or oppose making two years of community college or technical school tuition-free?	X		
Do you support or oppose requiring paid vacation and sick/safe leave?	X		

Do you support automatic voter registration?	X		
Do you support or oppose the death penalty?		X	
Do you support or oppose barring employers from asking criminal history questions in job applications?	X		
Do you support or oppose legislation to fix Washington's "three strikes" law?	X		

The following questions are position specific. You only need to complete the questions for the position that you're running for.

Auditor

How will you restore confidence in the office of Auditor as a successor to Troy Kelley?

If we want to restore the public's confidence, the next State Auditor needs to have demonstrated an ability to lead and manage a large government organization. I have a proven track record in leading a large government entity, Pierce County, the second largest County in the State of Washington, through the largest recession in recent history. I managed through that recession and resized our operation consistent with the resources we had to keep the county fiscally stable. I bring those skills and ability to lead the State Auditor's office.

The public wants and needs to rely on those of us who lead organizations to do our jobs, to ensure fiscal responsibility with their tax dollars. You rebuild the public's trust in stewardship of the office through good communication. I would meet with the various stakeholders and listen to the concerns or strengths they perceive about this office. I would listen to the staff who currently run the office. I would listen to the public at large, holding town forums and digital meetings on changes they would like to see. I would then put together a plan on improving communication with the public and instituting changes where appropriate.

I have a track record to back this up. I served as Pierce County Auditor during the contested 2004 gubernatorial election between Chris Gregoire and Dino Rossi, and in the aftermath I

joined with other county auditors in creating a successful initiative for restoring public confidence in our elections systems. By the end of the second recount, many voters on both sides of the aisle had lost confidence in election operations across Washington. Even though the focus was centered on King County, the entire state was reeling from the process, and the public mistrusted those of us who worked in elections offices.

I suggested to my colleagues in the county auditors' association that we launch a campaign to restore confidence with our respective voters. The Secretary of State also joined in that effort. I joined my colleagues from the other three most populous Puget Sound counties in a series of editorial board meetings in all four counties to talk about the improvements we made to our election operations.

In Pierce County, I ran a campaign I titled "Champions of Democracy", showcasing the people who actually did the work in election offices. I wanted to dispel the notion that the people who worked in elections were bad or dishonest. The public did not really know who worked in elections, and we had to educate them and let them know that the people who worked in elections were your grandmas, grandpas, neighbors, favorite former teachers, judges, and more. They are good people doing good work.

I believe these public outreach campaigns and our increased communication strategies made a huge difference in turning around the negative perceptions about the operations of elections. I know it did in my county, and I'll use this proven leadership experience to do the same with the State Auditor's Office.

How will you prioritize agency and organizational audits?

Apart from the self-obvious criterion of responding to whistleblower complaints and other substantiated accusations, the State Auditor should support good, smart, equitable public policy, and the prudent use of public funds toward those ends. Audits and audit mechanisms focused on the improvement of basic and higher education, environmental protection, and social welfare come high on the list. Following that, it is possible to use established metrics for tracking system failures and propensities for error to establish a rational hierarchy of on-going process audits. Audits exist to protect our public resources, and to support the effective implementation of public policy of the state government.