



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Candidate for Minnesota State Auditor Unveils First-of-Its-Kind Public Fraud Risk Score for Local Governments

A bold transparency tool to protect taxpayers, strengthen accountability, and modernize oversight statewide

St. Paul, MN — Today, Mayor Nate George, candidate for Minnesota State Auditor, announced a groundbreaking new solution to proactively monitor for fraud, that will publicly measure every local government entity's risk for fraud and financial mismanagement—and put that information directly in the hands of the public.

The Fraud Risk Score will appear on a public, online dashboard and evaluate objective, commonsense factors such as:

- Whether basic internal controls are in place
- Past incidents of fraud or misuse of funds
- Current non-compliant audit findings
- Trends in fund balances over time
- Adequate separation of financial duties

"This is about sunlight and accountability," said Mayor George. "Minnesotans work hard for their tax dollars. They deserve to know whether those dollars are being protected—or put at risk—by weak controls and poor oversight."

From Audit Reports to Actionable Accountability

Currently, critical audit findings are buried in long technical reports that few residents ever see. The Fraud Risk Score translates that information into a clear, easy-to-understand metric that allows:

- Taxpayers to see how their local government is doing - whenever they want
- Local officials to identify and fix weaknesses before fraud occurs - incentivized compliance
- The state to target oversight and support where it's needed most - improving efficiency

"This score isn't about naming and shaming," Mayor George emphasized. "It's about prevention. Fraud doesn't start with a crime—it starts with ignored warning signs and complacency. This tool flags those signs early."

Linking Accountability to Public Dollars

In addition to public transparency, the Fraud Risk Score can be used as a benchmark for eligibility for state grant funding, ensuring that governments receiving taxpayer-funded grants meet minimum standards of financial responsibility. This practice can also be applied to private local NGOs receiving public funds.

“If you’re asking for public money, you should be able to show you can safeguard it,” said Mayor George. “That’s not partisan—that’s just responsible government.”

A 21st-Century Auditor for a 21st-Century Minnesota

The Minnesota State Auditor’s Office oversees billions in local public funds—but the tools used to communicate risk haven’t kept pace. The Fraud Risk Score represents a shift from reactive audits to **proactive fraud prevention**.

“As State Auditor, I will modernize oversight of local government, empower taxpayers with information to hold their city, county and school board accountable, while making accountability the rule—not the exception,” Mayor George said. “This score sends a clear message: protecting public dollars matters, and it should always be a top priority.”

Why the focus on local government?

Mayor George explained that, “the State Auditor’s authority comes from Chapter 6 of MN State Statutes, which specifically limits the auditing and investigatory authority of the Office of State Auditor to local government. Auditing state agencies is specifically reserved for the Office of the Legislative Auditor, despite other candidates’ messaging that alludes to holding state government accountable for fraud. State law would have to be changed to allow the Office of State Auditor to audit and investigate state agencies, but then you have duplication of effort, which is just another form of wasteful spending.”

For more information about the Fraud Risk Score and Mayor Nate George’s campaign for Minnesota State Auditor, visit www.nategeorgeformnstateauditor.com

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