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Beyond Weights and Measures  
What the County Auditor Wants Voters to Weigh This Fall

Xenia, OH - Who writes the checks in your household? In typical families, the fiscal duties are handled by whomever can be trusted to keep a watchful eye on the family budget and pay the bills on time.

Even though she handles millions of dollars more than any family, Luwanna Delaney, County Auditor, said that similar trust is important in electing a county auditor.

Under Ohio law, elected county auditors have the power of the purse. They are the keepers of the county checkbook and write checks to keep government services operating.

"Every day, requests for money come through the auditor's office, and it's my responsibility to make sure that each check we write is for a proper public purpose and has been properly appropriated in the county budget," Delaney said.

She said that many residents only think about the county auditor when they see her name on a sticker affixed to a gasoline pump or grocery store scale. The auditor wants to remind people that the most important balance is the one she keeps on the county books.

"Making sure consumers get every gallon or pound they pay for is one aspect of my job, and it's the most visible," Delaney said. But, she explained, it's her role behind-the-scenes as the county's chief officer that requires the most accountability to taxpayers.

"I'm the county's gatekeeper to the treasury. No person or government agency gets a single dollar of your taxes without the expenditure first being reviewed by an employee from the Greene County Auditor's office," Delaney stated. It's the auditor's job to question requests for expenditures

and to ensure that money is spent legally, as intended by the voters.

With hotly contested races on the ballot deciding who will represent residents in the U. S. Senate and at the Statehouse, Delaney understands why the auditor's race doesn't get much attention. But, she said, "I view it as my responsibility to educate voters about the importance of an elected county auditor, no matter who holds the office."

Delaney believes it is vital that Ohio's county auditors are elected and accountable to voters. She explained that experience shows that officials who are appointed, not elected, are beholden to the politicians that have hiring and firing power.

"When it comes to spending taxpayers' dollars, the power should rest with voters, not bureaucrats," according to the auditor. "Because I answer to the voters and not politicians, once the county budget is approved, I can't be influenced to spend money where it isn't supposed to go."