



2026 Candidate Questionnaire

Candidate Name: Brooke Lierman

Position: Comptroller

District: N/A

How do you propose to enhance and improve the “customer service” component of Office of the Comptroller’s functions? Do you envision a role for AI to aid in the performance of areas such as payroll, revenue collection and the State Pension system?

As Comptroller, I am committed to leading an office that treats every Marylander with respect, responsiveness, and results. Marylanders deserve a tax administration and financial management system that is easy to navigate, transparent, and focused on solving problems quickly.

Improving customer service begins with making it easier for individuals and businesses to get answers on their own. We inherited outdated technology in COBOL and by the end of my first term we will have implemented five new major systems, including (next summer) a new personal tax system, MD Tax Connect. We have a new, easier-to-navigate website and the agency’s first ever customer relations management (CRM) system - MyCOMConnect- so taxpayers can find information, securely track refunds, submit questions, and receive updates without needing multiple phone calls. Our new unclaimed property system will ensure people can find their lost money and property and claim it seamlessly and quickly. For those individuals who want to speak to a person, we have worked to improve the services delivered in our call centers and 11 statewide branch offices so that working families and small business owners can get help when they need it. Based on the data we have from our new COMStat program, we know that we need additional staff on our phones and have made budget requests for the past two years requesting additional help. (Due to budget constraints, thus far we have not received the full funding we need to fully staff our phone lines.)

I also believe technology, including responsibly-used AI tools, can play an important role in making the Comptroller’s Office more efficient and proactive. We will be considering use of these tools after our system upgrades. AI can support faster responses to routine questions by augmenting staff training, help automatically route inquiries to the right team, and identify patterns that can reduce errors in revenue collection. It can also assist in monitoring systems connected to payroll and revenue administration to help identify discrepancies earlier, notify individuals when action is needed, and reduce processing backlogs. However, AI will never replace human judgment or the need for compassionate, knowledgeable staff. Any use of AI must include strong privacy safeguards, transparent public communication, and oversight to ensure it improves service for all Marylanders.

Customer service is ultimately about building trust in government. By modernizing access points, improving communication, and using technology responsibly, we can ensure that every filer, retiree, state employee, and small business owner feels heard and receives the help they need. I am committed to continuing this work so that Maryland’s Comptroller’s Office becomes a national model of efficient, equitable, people-centered service.



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The Comptroller is part of the three-member Board of Public Works. Describe how you will set priorities for the approval or denial of projects. In your answer, please address how you would ensure that infrastructure projects are developed with an eye on environmental impact and the health and safety of all

As Comptroller, I am honored to serve on the Maryland Board of Public Works. I carefully review every item that comes before the Board and my team and I hold meetings with agencies prior to meetings to understand the contracts before us. I want to know whether a project delivers real value for Maryland taxpayers, whether it meets its minority business enterprise and small business goals, and whether it is designed with long term resilience in mind.

I work to ensure best value for Marylanders and bring transparency to our state spending. Best value is achieved by ensuring there is robust competition on contracts, we are planning for a more climate resilient state, and that we are supporting Maryland-based businesses and minority business enterprises.

I have worked to make the BPW more transparent and accessible to the public. After supporting legislation by Delegate Phillips and Senator Hayes to create a mechanism for more transparent decision making, I led the creation of a BPW dashboard to give Marylanders a clear, user-friendly way to see how the Board of Public Works spends state dollars. For the first time, anyone can search contracts by agency, vendor, dollar amount and date, and quickly understand where public money is going. By making this data fully accessible online and easy to navigate, I have strengthened transparency, improved accountability and ensured that Marylanders have the tools they need to track state spending in real time.

What is your position regarding divestiture of state pension funds from businesses?

Maryland's pension system must focus on delivering strong, reliable returns for the more than 400,000 current and retired public servants who depend on it. As a fiduciary of the system, I am obligated to focus solely on ensuring that we are generating the returns needed to meet our obligations and grow our fund to safeguard the retirement savings of our state employees.

There are many important aspects to my fiduciary duty and I have taken several significant actions, working with our full board and our Chief Investment Officer, to strengthen the fund. First, we have strengthened our work on climate risk analysis and recently adopted a climate advisory council to inform our investment management teams. Second, we are the second state in the country to adopt responsible workforce management principles for our private equity investments. Third, we use our proxy voting power for determining the direction of public companies. For instance, I spoke out against the proposed one-trillion-dollar compensation package for, Elon Musk, stating that our fiduciary responsibility demands accountability and sustainable value. Additionally, I also joined a coalition of 16 state financial officers



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representing more than \$3 trillion in pension assets to challenge investment firms like BlackRock to embrace active stewardship for working families and retirees.

Any decision to divest must be based on clear financial analysis, fiduciary responsibility, and a careful review of long-term impacts on beneficiaries. Our CIO has direct oversight of all investing strategies.