

CLAIREBALL



LIBERTARIAN CPA
FOR ILLINOIS COMPTROLLER

Campaign Biography



I'm Claire Ball, I'm an accountant, and I want to be your next Illinois Comptroller. I was born in Evanston, Illinois on October 29th, 1982. I grew up on the south side of Chicago in a little neighborhood called Mt. Greenwood with two siblings. Money was always tight in my household; I learned the value of a dollar very early on. I worked in a comic book shop when I started at my local community college, Moraine Valley, where I met my husband in my sophomore year. Together we went on to DeVry where I worked towards a Bachelor's degree in Accounting while waiting tables. Nothing teaches patience and understanding like working at a restaurant. Not only do you learn how to keep a smile on your face through the rudest of interactions, but you also learn how appreciative people are when they're shown a little kindness.

2005 and 2006 were intense years: not only did I receive my Bachelor's degree in Accounting, I bought a house, and got my first corporate job downtown. It was stressful but rewarding. I went back to college to get my Master's degree in Accounting and Finance. During my first comptroller campaign, I completed my studies and became a Certified Public Accountant. Every year I've taken on different jobs, responsibilities, and challenges. Currently, I work as a Senior Accountant for the Noble Network of Charter Schools in Chicago.

Growing up I have always had a strong sense of independence and personal responsibility – I own my successes and my mistakes. I expect the same from those around me. I really didn't think outside the bubble of "me" until a few years ago when I started paying more attention to politics and became involved in my local county chapter of the Libertarian party.

During the 2014 election, I started doing research for the Libertarian Comptroller candidate, and I was surprised by how many people running for elected positions had no direct experience in the job they ran for, such as Auditor General and Comptroller.

It seemed government was allowed a pass on qualifications when appointing and running candidates for office, and, as a result, our state is left suffering the consequences. Can you imagine hiring someone with no accounting experience to oversee the finances of a multi-billion-dollar enterprise the size of Illinois? It never happens in the real world.

Not only were the established party candidates lacking in proper knowledge of the positions they sought, but the parties worked hard to steamroll any attempts by 3rd party candidates, some with impressive backgrounds, to participate. Pushing people out purely because they don't support your party does not contribute to the success of the state and the people living in it. It was eye-opening and frustrating.

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In the fall of 2015, news stories broke about financial shenanigans at the College of DuPage. Three positions on that board were coming up for election. Having gone to a community college, I value them greatly, and the more I read, the more I thought I could do something. Armed with an accounting background and an independent mindset, I ran for a board of trustee position with the hopes of helping the college and making a difference in my community. I ran a good campaign against some good people, spoke with nearly every taxpayer in District 502, and found that my honesty and independence were very well received. I didn't win that race, but I felt wonderful getting involved and found that most Illinoisans were itching for people to run with honesty and integrity.

It wasn't until July of 2015, when I found out that the previous Libertarian candidate for Comptroller, Julie Fox, would not be running again, that I considered running for State Comptroller myself. From everything I learned during the 2014 election process, and my run for College of DuPage trustee, I just couldn't sit on the sidelines and watch our governing body continue to take advantage of our state and all of us living in it.

"We have never had an accountant in the role of Illinois Comptroller and that needs to end. We should demand that anyone running for the job have the same qualifications as those required in the private sector."

The Comptroller handles recordkeeping and payment authorization, using fund accounting practices with a modified accrual basis of accounting. It is a purely accounting job, and 198 years of our states' existence have given us lawyers, scholars and politicians in this crucial role, people using it as a political reward or stepping stone. We should demand that anyone running for the job have the same qualifications as those required in the private sector. Accounting stresses independence and that is severely lacking in our state government. Who would be better to report on how the Democrats and Republicans are handling state finances than someone completely removed from their political influence?

I don't want this position to get further into politics; I want this position to do the job and report honestly and accurately to the taxpayers. I will call out all instances of political games and abuse that I see, regardless of party affiliation, because it is the right thing to do.

That is what we need in Illinois. We need fiscal responsibility, integrity and transparency in all levels of state government. Help me wrest the office of Comptroller out of the political pit of disregard it has been trapped in and bring back the respect deserved for the role of managing our state funds.