

**NAME:** Michelle Au  
**PARTY:** Democratic  
**SEEKING:** Senate District 48

**1. Why are you seeking your office?**

As a physician, I took an oath to take care of people. However, it has become evident over the course of my medical career that many of the factors which make individuals and communities unhealthy are outside my ability to remedy at the bedside. Factors like access to healthcare, affordability of healthcare, and larger social issues such as access to quality education, economic opportunity, and safety have more effect on health than any surgery, medication, or therapy I could prescribe. Working to improve these social factors of health as a state senator would be an extension of my life's work.

**2. What do you expect to accomplish if elected?**

I aim to improve access to quality healthcare for more Georgians by defending the protections afforded by the Affordable Care Act, and in doing so, improve statewide healthcare outcomes. In particular, I seek to improve the state's maternal mortality rates, which rank 50<sup>th</sup> out of 50 in the nation. In addition, I seek to strengthen and modernize our public school system—which I am personally invested in, as I send all three of my children to public school. Fully funding our public schools includes the resources our teachers and kids need to be able to teach and learn safely.

**3. What distinguishes your candidacy?**

In this age of Covid-19, it's become apparent that we need experienced leaders with backgrounds in medicine and public health to craft sound, science-based policy. As a front-line physician with a Masters degree in Public Health, I would bring a needed voice to the state legislature. The well-being and health of our community will always be my focus. There are no issues too small or large for me to care deeply about. As I've proven throughout my medical career and as mother, I will listen to and advocate tenaciously for the best interests of all those I represent.

**4. Pick any one issue. Expand on how you will address it.**

Georgia ranks near the bottom for access to healthcare, healthcare outcomes, and affordability of care. One way to improve along all these metrics is full expansion of Medicaid, allowing the federal tax dollars Georgians already paid to return to our state and help our own citizens. Medicaid expansion would create tens of

thousands of healthcare jobs in Georgia, and allow more than 500,000 Georgians access to insurance. It would also allow the state to save \$3 billion on more costly healthcare programs and increase state revenue from the healthcare sector.

### **5. Suggest ways to jump-start the economy after COVID-19.**

Georgia must protect not only the health of our individual citizens, but also their livelihoods during this pandemic. We must maximize revenues and budget resources to prioritize long-term recovery with investments in health, education, and job creation. We also need to leverage federal aid, including Medicaid expansion. I support modernizing our tax code as well as direct measures to help small businesses, including stimulus payments, grants and tax credits. Finally, I would encourage the passage of the Georgia Earned Income Tax Credit, to help low and moderate income households weather this time of financial crisis.

### **6. Please give a 100 word summary on your background**

I'm a proud first-generation Chinese-American. I attended medical school at Columbia University, where I also did my residency training in both pediatrics and anesthesiology. My family and I moved to Georgia in 2008, and I am currently an anesthesiologist and a small business owner with my private group at Emory-St. Joseph's Hospital. In my free time, I'm also a writer—my first book was published in 2011 by Grand Central Publishing, and I've had pieces printed in *The Atlantic*, *Slate*, and *The Boston Globe*. I live with my husband and three children in Duluth.