

# Challenger: Incumbent Treasurer Crane's actions incompetent at best

*Democrat decides to run following recent scandals involving Idaho's treasurer*

**Anthony Kuipers/Moscow-Pullman Daily News**

Deborah Silver thinks Idaho's incumbent treasurer Ron Crane should be fired - if not for corruption, then for incompetence.

He would be, Crane's Democratic challenger said, if he were running a business or were a state employee.

Among his most grievous offenses, Silver said during a meeting Monday with the Daily News editorial board, is the \$10 million in investment losses incurred by the state in 2009. These losses were identified by an independent state audit report this past February, which stated Crane's office made inappropriate transfers that cost Idaho taxpayers millions of dollars.

Then there are the limousines and the gas card. Last year, it was discovered Crane had been riding in limousines for business travel in New York City and using a state-issued gas card for his commute to and from work in Idaho. Crane had not been keeping records of such activities, she said.

He's a treasurer who "does not seem to think that he needs to keep records, does not see the irony that he's driving around in a limo and not keeping records for that properly, as well as driving around in a limo when we're cutting the budgets of education by a third," Silver said.

Silver, a certified public accountant who works in Twin Falls, said Crane's corruption motivated her to throw her hat in the ring for the office.

In Twin Falls, she and her husband run a private accounting firm, which has been in business for nearly 30 years. Before that, she was an auditor for a national accounting firm in Boise for a year and taught at the College of Southern Idaho for five years.

When she found out Republicans were not stepping up to challenge Crane, she and her husband decided to start campaigning.

"This is the only way, really, to fire him, is for someone else to be elected," she said. "And the only way for that to happen is that the people of Idaho have to know, and (Crane's) story just simply fell through the cracks."

Silver said since Crane is a Republican, his actions did not undergo the kind of scrutiny someone on the other side of the political aisle would have received.

"Everyone knows if a Democrat was (the treasurer) he would have been called on this," she said.

As treasurer, Silver said she would follow the audit's recommendations, which include tighter internal controls to prevent losses in state dollars and lapses in record-keeping.

She said her career as a CPA has prepared her for being honest and transparent with taxpayer money. Taxpayers, she said, expect the state to handle their money responsibly, and right now there is a disconnect between those expectations and what's really happening.

"People not only take money advice from me, they pay me for it," she said. "And we're actually paying (Crane) for money advice, and this is what we get. Non-conformance with standards. At best, incompetence."

Anthony Kuipers can be reached at (208) 883-4630, or by email to [akuipers@dnews.com](mailto:akuipers@dnews.com).