

Missouri State Archives

Finding Aid RG 6.12

Office of State Auditor

Margaret B. Kelly, 1984-1999

Correspondence, 1984-1998

Abstract: Correspondence, 1987-1998, of former state auditor Margaret B. Kelly, 1935-.

Extent: 1.4 cubic ft. (3.5 Hollinger boxes).

Record Description: Paper.

Alternative Formats: None.

Location: Missouri State Archives.

Administrative Information

Access Restrictions: No special restrictions.

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Historical and Biographical Notes

Margaret Blake Kelly was born on September 17, 1935, in Crystal City, Missouri, to Emory and Florine Blake. According to the *1985-1986 Official Manual of the State of Missouri*, Kelly's "accounting skills were encouraged early on by her father, a longtime officer of the Crystal City State Banks." She went on to earn a Bachelor's in Accounting

from the University of Missouri-Columbia in 1957 and a Master of Business Administration from Southwest Missouri State University in 1975. Kelly also passed the Certified Public Accountant examination in 1982. In 1986, Southwest awarded Kelly an honorary doctorate in business administration.

Early in her career, Kelly worked for the firms Williams and Romack in Columbia; McNabb, Westermann, Mitchell, and Branstetter in Springfield; Fox and Company in Springfield; and Williams-Keepers in Jefferson City. In 1982, Kelly ran for Cole County Auditor and won, serving in the role from 1983 until her appointment as State Auditor in July, 1984, to replace the outgoing James F. Antonio. This appointment made her the first woman to hold a statewide office in Missouri (first woman elected was Harriet Woods as Lt. Governor in November, 1984). Kelly ran for a full-term in 1986 and was re-elected in 1990 and 1994. According to the *1997-1998 Official Manual of the State of Missouri* more than 1,700 audits were conducted under her leadership. She also unsuccessfully ran for Lt. Governor in 1992 and Governor in 1996. After leaving office in January, 1999, Kelly retired from public office.

Over the course of her career, Kelly was heavily involved with various accounting organizations. She served as vice president (1977), treasurer (1976), and as a member of the board of directors (1976-1977) for the American Society of Women Accountants. She later served as treasurer (1983-1984) and a member of the board of directors (1983-1984) for the Association of Government Accountants, Mid-Missouri Chapter. In 1985, she was elected as the first woman to serve on the National State Auditors Association committee; she later served as President. She also served as a member of the U.S. Government Auditing Standards Advisory Council and as vice president of the National Association of State Auditors, Comptrollers, and Treasurers. She was a member numerous other national and statewide accounting and women's organizations, including, but not limited to, the Institute of Certified Public Accountants, Missouri Society of Certified Public Accountants, Association of Government Accountants, Women Executives in State Government, and the Philanthropic Educational Organization (P.E.O.).

Kelly married attorney William Clark Kelly on August 17, 1957. They have three sons: Kevin, Tom, and John.

Timeline

Year	Event
1935	Kelly was born on September 17.
1957	Kelly graduated from the University of Missouri-Columbia with an accounting degree.
1957	Kelly married William Clark Kelly on August 17.
1975	Kelly graduated from Southwest Missouri State University with an MBA.
1982	Kelly became a Certified Public Accountant.
1982	Kelly ran for and was elected Cole County Auditor.
1984	Kelly was appointed State Auditor.

Year	Event
1986	Kelly ran for State Auditor and won the election. She won re-election in 1990 and 1994.
1986	Southwest Missouri State University presented an honorary doctorate in business administration to Kelly.
1992	Kelly unsuccessfully ran for Lt. Governor.
1996	Kelly unsuccessfully ran for Governor.
1999	Kelly retired from public office.

Additional Descriptive Information

Bibliography

Menezes, Bill. "Missouri Gets First Woman Auditor." *Daily American Republic* [Poplar Bluff, MO], 17 Jul. 1984, p. 2. Accessed July 21, 2026:
<https://shsmo.newspapers.com/image/938586478/>.

Official Manual of the State of Missouri. Jefferson City, MO: Missouri Secretary of State. Volumes 1878 through 1999-2000. Accessed March 13, 2026.
<https://mdh.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/bluebook>.

"Retired state Auditor Margaret Kelly joins Schweich on campaign swing." STLPR.org. Accessed September 14, 2026. <https://www.stlpr.org/politics-issues/2010-09-28/retired-state-auditor-margaret-kelly-joins-schweich-on-campaign-swing>.

Related Material

RG 6.01 [Audit Reports](#)

RG 6.02 Office of State Auditor

Correspondence, 1984-1998

Extent: 1.4 cubic ft. (3.5 Hollinger boxes)

Arrangement: Chronological

Scope and Content

This series contains Margaret B. Kelly's correspondence. Only one copy of form letters announcing changes, attorney general opinions, or legislative issues was retained. Some correspondence with national audit organizations tracks Missouri auditor comments on pending and/or suggested changes to the practices and guidelines. Correspondence is in reverse chronological order within folders as originally filed.

Container List

Box	Folder	Date
1	1	1984, July-December
1	2	1985, January-April
1	3	1985, May-October
1	4	1985, November-December
1	5	1986, January-June
1	6	1986, July-December
1	7	1987, January-May
1	8	1987, June-December
2	1	1988, January-February
2	2	1988, March-December
2	3	1989
2	4	1990, January-September
2	5	1990, October-December
2	6	1991, January-July
2	7	1991, August-December
2	8	1992, January-June
2	9	1992, July-December
3	1	1993, January-July
3	2	1993, August-December
3	3	1994, January-March
3	4	1994, April-May
3	5	1994, June-August
3	6	1994, September-December
3	7	1995, January-June
3	8	1995, July-December
3	9	1996, January-June
4	1	1996, July-December
4	2	1997, January-July

Box	Folder	Date
4	3	1997, August-December
4	4	1998, January-June
4	5	1998, July-December