

**NAME:** Michelle Au  
**PARTY:** Democratic  
**SEEKING:** State 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 determinants 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—a system in which I am personally invested, as I send all three of my children to public school in district. I also seek to expand and fully fund viable mass transit options in the region.

**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 have already spent to return to our state and help our own citizens. The health of individuals is intimately related to the health of the entire community, and we owe it to all Georgians to improve healthcare access for everyone. Medicaid expansion could particularly improve care at our under-resourced

rural hospital systems, and improve our maternal mortality outcomes, with currently rank worst in the nation.

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

To survive the Covid-19 pandemic, we must protect not only the health of our individual citizens, but also their livelihoods. One thing that has become readily apparent is that many of those who perform “essential services” deserve to be making more in income. Therefore, I support raising the minimum wage to \$15/hour. In addition, I support 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.