MIKE FOLEY

State auditor is running as gubernatorial candidate.

Mike Foley has a plan he says will bring tax relief to Nebraskans.

Foley, who is one of of six running for governor, talked about that strategy during a visit to Gothenburg on Feb. 14.

“There’s never been a governor who’s served as auditor with a good bird’s-eye view of what happens with the structure of government,” he said.

With a $10 billion state government enterprise with many parts and complexity, the state auditor said there are inefficiencies that can be corrected.

Those corrections could bring about tax relief, he said.

First of all, Foley said people who are not adequately trained are spending millions without adequate supervision.

“There’s a tremendous learning curve,” he explained, noting that the largest departments and especially—health and human services, roads and education—could all be operated more efficiently and save taxpayer money. “As governor, I can work with the next state auditor.”

By lowering the tax rate a few notches, Foley said the state could soar above the surrounding states that now have a lower tax burden.

“With a lower tax rate, outside businesses will be looking at us,” he said.

What Foley will bring to the governor office is 14 years of public service, including eight as state auditor, and six years in the Nebraska Legislature where he served on the appropriations committee.

Foley said his greatest strength is his willingness to take positions even if they’re unpopular.

For example, as auditor he said he found problems in state agencies that brought about the ire of some agency directors.

“Shining a light is important. That’s how we get things fixed,” Foley said. “The public has a right to know when money is not spent properly.”

Besides lowering the tax rate, he said he’ll focus on educating students well in Nebraska and keeping them here.

Foley, who’s a native New Yorker, said he married his way into the state.

He went to Washington D.C. and became the director of financial analysis for the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners.

“I thought I’d be there forever as captivated as I was by the political scene,” he said.

However he met and married a Nebraska farm girl, Susan (Seiker) Foley and moved to the Cornhusker State.

The couple has six children.

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