

2010 GREAT debates



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Michigan Teamsters
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Congratulations on taking the mighty step of entering the 2010 gubernatorial race at a time when our state is in need of excellent leadership to navigate a period of difficult economic and social change.

Collectively, the diverse groups listed on this letterhead represent literally millions of Michigan residents, including corporations and business owners, educators, medical professionals, local government leaders, organized labor, attorneys, retirees, and arts and cultural leaders. Individually, we bring distinctly different perspectives to the public discourse. But, collectively, we agree that greater public participation in this year's important electoral process is good for the entire state.

We are the 2010 Great Debates Sponsor Coalition and we are writing today to request your participation in our televised debates planned for both the primary and general elections.

Specifically, we request your pledge to participate in:

- 1) A multi-candidate debate during your political party's primary election season, in July of 2010. All candidates approved for the August ballot for your party are asked to participate.
- 2) A two-candidate debate between the Republican and Democratic gubernatorial nominees for the November general election. The debate would take place in September or October, depending on candidate schedules.

We have formed this coalition out of intense, shared concern for the future of our state. As individual sponsors, we may have different views on some of the exact prescriptions to move Michigan forward. But, collectively, we agree on big-picture themes for this gubernatorial election, including:

- Economic Growth: What is your strategy to grow the Michigan economy? How will you design a competitive tax structure and public investment strategy to attract business investment and jobs and assure high-quality-of-life to attract and retain talented workers?
- Talent & Education: How will your education policies assure Michigan grows, attracts, and retains a world-class workforce to compete in the global economy?

· Efficient, Effective & Accountable Government: What are your budget priorities? What is the role of Michigan's public sector? What are the opportunities for reform?

We recognize there will be intense competition for candidates' time throughout the campaign season. That is why we have developed such a diverse and far-reaching coalition of Great Debates sponsors. We believe the diversity and bipartisanship represented on this letterhead assures a fair and credible atmosphere for debates this year. We have developed contractual relationships with Michigan's public television stations to produce and assure statewide broadcast of the Great Debates. And, collectively, we can assure wide public interest by marketing the Great Debates to the hundreds of thousands of individuals and organizations we represent statewide.

In addition, this coalition of sponsors seeks to foster televised debates in 50 legislative races across the state.

For gubernatorial debates, we propose a series of straightforward guidelines. These gubernatorial debates will:

- Be one hour in length.
- Be taped in studio, without a studio audience.
- Air on television the same day as taping.
- Be moderated by recognized professional journalists.
- Be structured so that each candidate has equal time to answer questions and respond to fellow candidates' answers.
- Allow each candidate to review in advance of the debate an in-depth "candidate issue guide" listing the key over-arching issue themes (as outlined above) for the debate and outlining the in-depth policy platforms of all sponsor organizations listed on this letter.
- Third-party candidates would only be allowed in the general election gubernatorial debates if they can prove ballot status and demonstrate 15 percent approval ratings in reputable polls (the same standard used in by the national presidential debates commission).

We are seeking all candidates' written pledges to participate in the Great Debates. To do so, simply confirm in email by writing John Bebow, executive director of the Center for Michigan, at jbebow@thecenterformichigan.net. (The Center for Michigan will serve as staff/organizer for the Great Debates.) In your email, please indicate your willingness to participate in the general debate format outlined in principle in this invitation recognizing full and final details will be negotiated and confirmed with all campaigns closer to the date of debate tapings. If you have further questions, please contact John Bebow by phone at 734-769-4625.

We will work with all campaigns to establish firm debate taping times with a goal of settling on exact taping times in early spring. To that end, we look forward to confirming your participation as soon as possible.

Finally, to help you prepare for the debates, we will issue a detailed candidate issue guide outlining the main state policy issues of concern to each of the organizations on this letterhead.

Thank you very much for your consideration and good luck in your campaign.

Sincerely,



Steve Gools
Michigan Director
American Association of
Retired Persons – Michigan



Steven C. Hess
Executive Vice President and
General Counsel
Accident Fund Insurance
Company of America



Jennifer H. Goulet
President
ArtServe Michigan



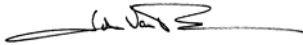
Jack Kresnak
President & CEO
Michigan's Children
(on behalf of sponsor Birth to
Five Policy Alliance)



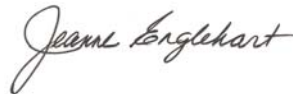
Doug Rothwell
President & CEO
Business Leaders for Michigan



Phil Power
President
The Center for Michigan



John Van Fossen
Director of Government &
Public Affairs
Clark Hill



Jeanne Englehart
President & CEO
Grand Rapids Chamber of
Commerce



John Brown
Vice President – Government
Relations
Jackson National Life
Insurance Company



Mark Gaffney
President
Michigan AFL-CIO



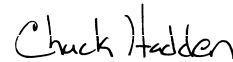
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Executive Director
Michigan Association of Health
Plans



Bill Martin
CEO
Michigan Association of
Realtors



Iris Salters
President
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Association



Chuck Hadden
President & CEO
Michigan Manufacturers
Association



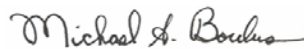
Dan Gilmartin
Executive Director & CEO
Michigan Municipal League



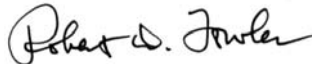
Kim Sibilsky
Executive Director
Michigan Primary Care
Association



Bill Black
Executive Director
Michigan Teamsters



Michael Boulus
Executive Director
Presidents Council State
Universities of Michigan



Rob Fowler
President & CEO
Small Business Association of
Michigan