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May 18, 2007

Frank J. Fahrenkopf, Jr.
Paul G. Kirk, Jr.
Commission on Presidential Debates
1200 New Hampshire, N.W., Box 445
Washington, D.C. 20036


Dear Mr. Fahrenkopf and Mr. Kirk:

We understand the Commission on Presidential Debates is currently reviewing the proposals for the 2008 Presidential debate sites. Three of the 19 proposals this year are from Western states: Arizona State University in Tempe, Arizona; Metropolitan Exposition Recreation Commission in Portland, Oregon and Clark College in Vancouver, Washington; and Washington State University in Spokane, Washington. On behalf of the Western Governors' Association, I am writing in support of these proposals.

The Western Governors recognize the importance of the Presidential debates in the process of electing the nation's President. We believe the debates not only afford the electorate an opportunity to understand the positions of the respective candidates but also can expose the candidates-and the national electorate-to the interests and priorities of the communities and regions in which the debates are held. Given the tremendous diversity that exists across this country, and in particular the unique issues that arise from region to region, the Western Governors advocate that the Commission ensure regional balance among the selected host sites.

In 2004, the Commission hosted a successful debate at Arizona State University in Tempe. This year, with the proposals from Arizona, Oregon and Washington, the Commission once again has the opportunity to bring the Presidential debates to the West, ensuring regional balance. We strongly urge you to support these proposals.

Sincerely,


M. Michael Rounds
Governor of South Dakota
Chairman

cc: Commission on Presidential Debates Board of Directors
Janet Brown, Commission Executive Director