



**For Immediate Release
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Debate Minnesota Promotes Civility in Politics Minnetonka Hosts House District 43B Debate

Eagan, Minn., September 13, 2006—Debate Minnesota 2006 returns for an important election year. Led by a multi-partisan board of directors, the Debate Minnesota Foundation aims to promote civility in politics and engage voters with fair and open forums that highlight candidates' views on particular issues.

Debate Minnesota 2004 hosted 19 debates in 19 districts around the state to wide acclaim. In 2006, 15 debates are scheduled, including races for the U.S. Senate, Governor, and the First, Sixth, and Eighth Congressional Districts, as well as 10 key state legislative races.

The Minnesota House District 43B debate between Dave Johnson (R) and John Benson (DFL) will be at 7 p.m. on Wednesday, Sept. 13 at the Minnetonka Community Center, Council Chambers, 14600 Minnetonka Boulevard in Minnetonka. The 90-minute debate will be moderated by Lori Sturdevant, *StarTribune* editorial writer and columnist, and Bethany Wesley, managing editor of *Sun-Sailor* newspapers.

The famous Lincoln-Douglas debates during the 1858 Illinois Senatorial election were the inspiration for the Debate Minnesota mission. That year, the public square became an opportunity to exchange ideas and ideals, and a platform for the people to shape the country.

Debate Minnesota was established by the Independent Community Bankers of Minnesota, a non-profit association of independent, community-focused banks. Other sponsoring partners include Minnesota Sun Newspapers and the Minnesota Cable Communications Association.

The Debate Minnesota board of directors includes former Governor Al Quie; former U.S. Senator David Durenberger; former Minnesota State Attorney General Hubert H. Humphrey III; former State Senator Roger D. Moe; former State Senator Roy W. Terwilliger; former Minnesota Secretary of State Joan Anderson Growe; and ICBM President and CEO Will Haddeland. Additional board members include leaders from community banking and the media.

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About the Debate Minnesota Foundation: Debate Minnesota is a non-profit, tax-exempt, and multi-partisan foundation that administers debates within all applicable legal requirements including regulations of the Federal Election Commission and the Minnesota Campaign Finance and Disclosure Board. The Foundation spearheads debate roundtables to encourage public participation in the election process. Visit us at www.debateminnesota.org.

About the ICBM: The Independent Community Bankers of Minnesota was established in 1962 as an association of independent, community-focused banks providing active leadership for its members on programs, products, services, and the preservation of a competitive environment. ICBM is dedicated to enhancing community banks for the benefit of consumers, small businesses, and family farms. Visit www.communitybanks.org.