



**For Immediate Release
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Debate Minnesota Promotes Civility in Politics Grand Rapids Hosts Debate for Eighth Congressional District Seat

Eagan, Minn., September 22, 2006—A U.S. House Eighth District debate between **Congressman Jim Oberstar (DFL)** and **Rod Grams (R)** will be held at **8 p.m. on Tuesday, Oct. 17** at **Reif Performing Arts Center**, 720 Conifer Dr., in **Grand Rapids**. The 90-minute debate will be **moderated** by **Patrick Marx** of the **Blandin Foundation**, and **Larry Oakes** of the *StarTribune* Duluth news bureau.

Debate Minnesota is hosting the debate, which is one of 15 that Debate Minnesota has scheduled for an important 2006 election year, including races for the U.S. Senate, Governor, the First, Sixth, and Eighth Congressional Districts, as well as 10 key state legislative races.

Debate Minnesota is a non-profit foundation 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.

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 in 2004 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.

Debate Minnesota 2004 hosted 19 debates in 19 districts around the state to wide acclaim.

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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To learn more about the Debate Minnesota Foundation, please visit www.debateminnesota.org.

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