Dear Bill,

Thanks so much for agreeing to serve as the debate moderator for a debate on affirmative action, to be held at Union Missionary Baptist Church, 500 S. Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd., Lansing on Thursday, Oct. 19, from 7:00 to 8:30 a-m. The event is cosponsored by Toward A Fair Michigan (TAFM) and Union. The 2 debaters are William B. Allen, Ph.D. (Political Science, MSU) and Vidu Soni (Public Administration, CMU).

As we discussed by phone, TAFM will provide you with an honorarium of $250 and reimburse you for your mileage (see attached form for this purpose).

This e-mail is intended to pull together in one place everything you will need as moderator.

After you have been introduced, you will introduce the speakers (as described below). Here is an overview of the debate and of your responsibilities:

1. Date and Time: Oct. 19, 7:00-8:30 pm. Please plan to arrive by 6:30 pm if at all possible, so that you can talk with the speakers and cosponsors and review procedures before the debate starts. Thanks!

2. Overview of speakers' order & time allocation: Please see the attachment (Order-Timing of Speakers).

Timing: It will be very important to adhere to the time limits set, as well as to make sure that both debaters are dealt with in the same manner when it comes to enforcing time limits. Barbara Grutter (TAFM President) will introduce you, then take a seat. [See bio sketch for yourself in the "FlyerBackPage" attachments; let me know if you want Barb to say anything other than this, please] Barbara will also be the timekeeper & will signal time warnings during the presentations and rebuttal statements. It will be helpful, of course, if you are also watching the time.

Order of speakers: TAFM alternates the order of speakers by event, so that at one debate the "pro-AA" speaker speaks first and then at the next event, the "con-AA" speaker speaks first. At this debate, the "pro-AA" speaker (Dr. Soni) speaks first, and the "con-AA" speaker (Dr. Allen) speaks second. TAFM uses an "open first, close last" order for the presentations and rebuttals; then, alternates in Q&A and thereafter. The attachment spells this out for you.

3. Introductions: You will introduce the speakers; see the attached "Flyer Back Page," which has the bio sketches for Dr. Allen and Dr. Soni. Please introduce each of them before they give their initial presentation. Rather than reading the bio sketches as written, please consider them as source material from which you draw to give the actual introductions within the brief amount of time allocated for this purpose. Since you know each of them personally in some fashion or another, please feel free to amplify the introductions from that perspective. Many thanks.

4. Debate rules: During your introductory remarks, you will also need to remind the speakers and inform the audience about the "debate rules" for the event. Please use the "Order-time of speakers" document to give an overview of the order of speakers, the time limits, the opportunity for rebuttal, and so forth. Please let everyone know up front that time limits will be enforced. [The timekeeper will give signals, but it is your job to enforce the time limits, if need be] Also, this is the time to invite the audience to use the index cards provided to write down their questions. We will have volunteers on hand to collect the questions & give them to you. Please let the audience know that the speakers will each be invited to give a 2-minute (max) response to each question. Finally, please be sure to mention during your introductory remarks that there are evaluation forms to complete (see attached). TAFM very much values audience feedback. Please mention the evaluations again later, as shown on the "Order of Speakers…" document.

5. Question & answer period: As indicated above, we are taking written questions from the audience, rather than oral questions. Please be sure to mention that the reason for this is to enable us to cover as many questions as we possibly can. In choosing questions, please try to alternate between questions that reflect a "pro" affirmative action stance and those that reflect a "con" affirmative action stance as best you can (realizing some questions may not reflect a pro or con stance). The order for responses needs to be handled so that it also alternates between the pro & con speakers. Responses are limited to 2-minutes. Please be sure to announce that.

6. Summations and thanks: Please end the questions so there is time for each speaker to make a 2-minute summation statement; see the attachment. Also, as you are moving to close the program, please remind the audience to complete the evaluation forms, and thank the event cosponsors.

Here is the link to the TAFM guidelines for format & for the moderator:
http://towardafairmichigan.org/DebateGuidelines.html

You might also find it helpful to browse some of the pages at this website: http://www.debateproject.com/introduction/index.cfm. We have used the information from this Debate Advisory Standards Project in developing the TAFM debate format and standards. The information on the website conveys very well the sort of even-handed, high-level, professional approach that TAFM sets as our goal for each of our debates.

Hope I have not totally overloaded you by putting all this into a single message; just thought it would be good to have it all in one place.

If you have questions, please e-mail, or call me at 517-749-6938.

Once again, many thanks for your participation! I look forward to seeing you on the 19th.

Sincerely yours,

Carol Allen
Program Director
Toward A Fair Michigan