

August 19, 2008

Anna Cioffi
Hamline University Campus Organizer
Minneosta Public Interest Research Group
1313 Fifth Street SE
Minneapolis, MN 55105

Dear Ms. Cioffi:

Thank you for your August 14 invitation to participate in the Minnesota Public Interest Research Group (MPIRG) debate with Congresswoman Betty McCollum on the Hamline University Campus. I am pleased to accept this invitation.

I believe open debates are a critical component of our American democracy and share your desire to encourage greater youth participation in this election. In order to avoid any "scheduling conflicts" for Congresswoman McCollum, I will place high priority on scheduling a date for this debate.

It is my sincere hope that Congresswoman McCollum will abandon her pattern of avoiding debates in this election cycle and will accept your invitation to debate at Hamline. Earlier this month she declined to participate in a debate sponsored by the League of Women Voters Minnesota. As the sitting Congresswoman representing the Fourth Congressional District for nearly eight years, it is extremely disappointing that she is refusing to engage with voters during this election year. There is simply too much at stake. I trust that your efforts will yield a different result.

I look forward to hearing from you regarding scheduling a date for the MPIRG debate.

Sincerely,



Ed Matthews

cc: Congresswoman Betty McCollum
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