



March 19, 2007

Ms. Janet Brown  
Executive Director  
Commission on Presidential Debates  
Suite 445  
1200 New Hampshire Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20036

Dear Ms. Brown & Members of the Commission on Presidential Debates,

New Orleans is very much alive....perhaps not as whole as we were pre-Katrina but very much alive....and on the road to recovery! From disaster has emerged an energized city, implementing urban educational initiatives, improving local governance and adopting “best practices” in restructuring our medical community. Yet, the old world charm of New Orleans remains untouched—our historic French Quarter is bustling with activity and our local restaurants are still busy serving up world-renowned cuisine. We invite you to experience our “new” New Orleans by allowing us the privilege of hosting a presidential debate in the fall of 2008.

Our application is a unique one. Since August 29, 2005, when Hurricane Katrina flooded 80% of the city, we have learned the importance of collaboration. A coalition of our four major private universities, Dillard University, Loyola University, Tulane University and Xavier University, will cooperate with the Women of the Storm in this endeavor. To our knowledge, this has never been proposed to the Commission on Presidential Debates; however, we firmly believe that such a collaborative effort in such an unusual set of circumstances may indeed send one of the most positive, educational messages across our country.

With millions of dollars of damages to each participating university and massive reconstruction efforts underway on every campus, the Ernst N. Morial Convention Center, located on the banks of the Mississippi River, is the ideal venue for this occasion. As detailed in our proposal, this state-of-the-art facility surpasses all requirements of the commission, is within walking distance of more than 24,000 hotel rooms and, of course, is minutes away from some of America’s finest restaurants. What an ideal setting for such a prestigious media event!

Though your organizational host is not a household name, the non-political, non-partisan Women of the Storm, composed of ethnically, socially and economically diverse women of New Orleans and the region, has a proven track record. Individually these women have expertise comparable to those in the best corporate board room; collectively their success in bringing national leaders and members of the United States Congress to see firsthand the devastation and challenges

facing New Orleans is unquestioned. We have the organizational ability, tenacity and passion necessary to host a debate!

In addition, our city and state officials, coupled with our business and educational community, heartily embrace this undertaking. Timing is everything—and, in our opinion, the timing for New Orleans to serve as a presidential debate site is now.

We thank you for your consideration of this request, and we look forward to welcoming you to one of America's most culturally rich, distinguished and historic cities.

Sincerely,

Anne M. Milling  
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