

FACE THE STATE

May 9, 2008

The Hon. Mark Udall
4346 Prado Dr.
Boulder, CO 80303

Dear Mark:

The election this November to decide who will serve as Colorado's next U.S. Senator is extremely important. As such, I hereby propose to you the following:

You and I should engage in a series of seven Lincoln–Douglas style debates around Colorado between Memorial Day and Labor Day.

The intentions of so many outside and independent groups to have influence on the outcome of our contest have been well stated. I do not regard these outside efforts to be a healthy trend in America's political system and I know you hold a similar opinion.

These anticipated interferences demand you and I find bold ways to remain in charge of our campaigns and our contrasting messages. I think you'll agree that holding our own debates, on our own terms, focusing on issues upon which we agree to debate is a sensible strategy. It is a strategy that will allow both of us to more thoroughly clarify our campaigns, but most of all it will benefit voting Coloradans.

You and I should discuss the issues important to voters in a series debates this summer. There will be many other traditional debates and forums in the fall sponsored by many organizations but I don't think Colorado voters should have to wait.

Let's start now by agreeing to a set of seven Lincoln–Douglas style debates around the state –one in every Congressional District – between Memorial Day and Labor Day. Let's give voters in every part of the state a chance to hear directly from us on the issues important to them and to our state. We can agree on the topics in advance and then all we need is a time keeper for each debate. Our campaigns can work out the details.

This year marks the 150th anniversary of the debates between U.S. Senate candidates Abraham Lincoln and Stephen A. Douglas. In 1858, they debated seven times around the state of Illinois, two hours at a time.

In the spirit of those historic debates let's have our own series of seven debates this summer across Colorado to discuss the issues important today. I think these debates could be the high-water mark of the campaign and perhaps renew a national and historic standard of campaign civility.

I hope you agree and I respectfully request that you consider this offer and respond by Friday, May 16th so we can get the ball rolling.

Very truly yours,

Bob Schaffer

