

MANCHESTER AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Policy on Presentations by Political Candidates - 2008

Chamber Board members have expressed an interest in meeting political candidates, and hearing their viewpoints and plans on issues relevant to the Chamber's mission. To ensure fairness, and to limit any potential liability to the Chamber because of time constraints and limited meeting dates, the Board agreed that a policy was needed prior to granting any requests by political candidates to speak before the Chamber and/or seek its endorsement or contributions.

This document defines a policy and procedures to be used by the Chamber in response to requests by political candidates during the 2008 election season.

1. The Chamber as an entity will not endorse any candidate or political party, nor will the Chamber contribute any funds to any candidate or their campaign.
2. The Chamber will not organize or host any debates or other activities with multiple candidates involved.
3. The Chamber will not invite any particular candidate or political group to speak before the membership.
4. If an individual candidate requests to speak at a general membership meeting or the Annual Meeting, the following procedures will apply:
 - a. The candidate will be allowed five minutes to introduce themselves, give brief remarks, answer member questions, and distribute literature. The candidate's planned presence will be listed on the meeting agenda.
 - b. The candidate will be requested to limit remarks to issues within the Chamber's scope and purview.
 - c. The candidate will not be the primary speaker or "program" for that particular meeting.
 - d. Candidate requests will be accommodated on a first-come, first-serve basis, as the meeting agenda time allows.
 - e. Candidates may stay after the conclusion of the regular meeting and mingle with Chamber members as they so choose.
5. The Chamber's web site may be used to provide general information on polling places, links to municipal government web sites, and to the Michigan Chamber of Commerce, wherein further information may be found by members so interested.

Prepared by Ray Berg, President
January 12, 2008