

Debate Proposal

Florida House of Representatives

District 66

Candidates: Baxter Troutman (incumbent) and Robert Gray (challenger)

Date: Wednesday, Oct. 27, 2004

Time: 7:00 pm.

Place: Webber International University
Yentes Conference Center
1201 North Scenic Highway
Babson Park, FL 33827

The debate will be held in the ballroom of the Yentes Conference Center, opened in 2001. The ballroom includes a stage and seating-room for 320 people. A limited number of reserved seats will be provided for Webber International University faculty, staff and students who RSVP. The total reserved seating for the Webber community is not expected to exceed 75 spaces. Additional reserved seating will be made available to members of the media. All remaining seats will be available to the public on a first-come basis.

Duration: Approximately one (1) hour

Questions: There will be 10 questions asked of each candidate, plus candidate closing statements. Each individual question will be directed toward an individual candidate. The candidate will have 90 seconds to respond. The other candidate will have 1 minute to respond.

Direction of questions will alternate between candidates. A coin toss will determine the candidate who may choose to receive the first or second question.

Questions will be determined based on public opinion research and candidate position statements and records.

Each candidate will be given two minutes for a closing statement, with the first statement being made by the candidate who received the second question. A candidate may not use the closing statement to make a new charge against the opposing candidate. If the candidate given the final statement directs a new allegation, not previously addressed in the debate, against the other candidate, the moderator may choose to allow the other candidate a thirty-second response.

A system of colored lights will apprise the candidates, moderator and audience to the timing of candidate responses. The moderator may stop candidates who continue past the allowed time.

If the moderator determines a candidate has not attempted to answer the question as asked, or has otherwise deviated from topic, the moderator may direct the candidate back to topic, interrupting the candidate, if necessary.

Volunteers: Webber International University will provide student volunteers for duties including timing answers and distributing programs. A volunteer concierge will be assigned to each candidate from time of arrival at debate location until the candidate leaves.

Stage set-up: Each candidate will be seated at a table with a white table cloth. Each table will include a microphone on a small table stand. Mr. Gray shall be seated at the stage-right table and Mr. Troutman at the stage-left table. Candidates should remain seated throughout the debate.

Drinking water, a legal-sized pad of white paper and two ball point pens will be available on each table.

The moderator will be seated at a matching table, located at the front of the stage, at floor level. The moderator will be facing the candidates.

Rules: No campaign materials from any candidate are allowed on the University campus.

No persons other than the candidates shall be on the stage during the debate. The University shall provide seating for any campaign staff members who are in attendance.

Audience members will be instructed to refrain from applause, heckling or other distractions. Disruptive audience members may be asked to leave the University campus. In case of disturbance, the moderator may choose to interrupt the debate until order is restored.

The moderator shall introduce each candidate, with Mr. Gray being introduced first. The introduction shall include the candidate's name, as listed on the ballot, or as the candidate indicates to debate organizers prior to debate. Additionally, the introduction shall include current office position or occupation, and political party identification.

A candidate may not interrupt the other candidate's response time. The moderator will ensure appropriate respect for each candidate's time.

Candidates may ask for a question to be repeated or clarified, if needed.

Full effort will be made by debate organizers to ensure impartiality and objectivity in the debate, including the physical arrangements, question design, and marketing of the debate.

Members of the media, campaign staffs, and debate organizers will be allowed the use of cameras. Flash photography should not be used. Any movement of photographers should avoid distracting candidates or audience members.

Candidates may not use props or visual displays during the debate. Candidates may bring notes on index cards or white paper. As much as possible, notes should be kept flat on the table.

Full effort will be made to ensure the factualness, impartiality, and free availability of all materials, such as debate programs, provided by the debate organizers to audience members.