



August 31, 2020

The Commission on Presidential Debates
Attn: Co-Chairs Frank Fahrenkopf, Jr., Dorothy S. Ridings, Kenneth Wollack;
Executive Director Janet H. Brown
P.O. Box 58247
Washington, D.C. 20037

Rudolph W. Giuliani
Former Mayor, New York
Donald J. Trump for President, Inc.
725 5th Avenue
New York, NY 10022

Dear Members of the Commission:

By now you are surely aware of House Speaker Nancy Pelosi's assertion, unprompted, that Joe Biden should withdraw from all debates with President Trump this fall. She said, "I don't think that there should be any debates." This was especially alarming because as Speaker of the House of Representatives, Pelosi became the highest-ranking Democrat official to urge Biden to cancel debates, adding her voice to other prominent Democrats advising the same.

The public discussion of cancelling the debate schedule should not be allowed to continue unchecked. To be clear again, President Donald J. Trump and Vice President Mike Pence are fully committed to the three presidential debates agreed upon and the single vice presidential debate. We are concerned that arguments to eliminate debates have escalated and we now believe that re-stated written confirmation from the Biden campaign is needed to ensure that he will attend three debates in person.

Written assurance of Joe Biden's attendance at debates is important because we have seen this act before. There have been numerous instances of Biden saying one thing about a given topic in public, only to have his campaign come behind him and clean up his statements after the fact. While he may verbally give vague assertions of his intentions, there is no way of knowing what his handlers truly have planned for him. Presidential debates are too vital to the dissemination of information to voters to leave their very existence subject to the whims of political consultants pulling Joe Biden's strings.

As we have discussed many times, because of the early voting calendar in many states and increased attention to absentee-by-mail voting and other early voting options, there is certain to be a record number of votes cast well before Election Day arrives. The very first ballots in the nation will be in voters' hands in North Carolina on September 4. As time passes, eight million Americans in 16 states will have the opportunity to vote before the first scheduled debate arrives on September 29, and fully

49 million Americans in 34 states will be able to vote before the final scheduled debate on October 22. Again, while we have committed to the debates as currently scheduled, we request that the Commission add a fourth debate before September 4 or move one of the existing debates to a date earlier in the calendar.

The Commission has previously stated that it would be amenable to a discussion of a schedule adjustment should both campaigns agree. As the Biden campaign has indicated no willingness to do so, we ask that the Commission step in and act in the best interests of the voting public. The Commission has long cast itself as the arbiter of how presidential debates should be conducted, who the moderators will be, and when they will be held. In this instance, it is clear that the public interest would be served by changing the date of one of the events, but the people are being poorly served because of the recalcitrance of one of the candidates. The Commission must act as an agent of the people and make a decision that best addresses the public need for information before voting commences.

We also take this opportunity to resubmit our request for a formal, detailed plan for in-person debates in the event that location hosts withdraw because of the coronavirus or other reasons. We require information regarding which television studios, in which cities, have been approached and arranged as alternate locations where the events could be held. Without this sort of detailed information, we remain convinced that Biden will retreat to the safety of his remote video link, where he can rely on handlers, a teleprompter, or notes positioned near the camera as he clearly did on CNN last week.

We can't believe we have to say this, but the people should hear from the candidates for president side-by-side before votes are cast. With Joe Biden's hastily-planned private plane excursion to Pennsylvania this week, it is clear that he is reacting to sliding poll numbers by leaving his basement, at least for one day. If Joe Biden's handlers are now issuing day passes for the candidate, it stands to reason that they could let him out to stand on stage with President Trump before a sizeable portion of voters begin to cast their ballots.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Rudolph W. Giuliani". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Rudolph W. Giuliani
Former Mayor, New York

CC: Fmr. Vice President Joe Biden
Basement
Wilmington, DE