



February 28, 2014

Reince Priebus, Chair
The Honorable Enid Mickelsen, Chair, Site Selection Committee
Republican National Committee
310 First Street, SE
Washington, D.C. 20003

Dear Chairs and members of the RNC Site Selection Committee:

I am writing in support of Columbus' bid to host the 2016 Republican National Convention.

In 1970, I began hosting an annual bodybuilding competition in Columbus, as a result of my friendship with local event promoter Jim Lorimer. In 1989, with Jim's help, The Arnold Classic, a one-day professional men's bodybuilding competition, debuted in Columbus. Over the years, Columbus has been an extremely successful location, as the event has expanded into the largest multi-sport fitness festival in the world.

The 2014 Arnold Sports Festival, Feb. 27-March 2, features 50 sports and events, including 14 Olympic sports. About 175,000 sports fans are expected to attend at five premier venues: the Greater Columbus Convention Center, Franklin County Veterans Memorial, LC Pavilion, Hollywood Casino and the Ohio State University's French Field House. Audiences also enjoy 700 fitness-related booths.

This is an event that other cities covet, but it remains in Columbus. Why? Because Columbus accommodates the Arnold Festival with venues, hotel rooms, transportation and visitor amenities for 175,000 visitors from around the world. And Columbus stands out against competing cities because of its widespread community collaboration to accommodate visitors and hold successful events.

It is the entire community's mobilization that makes the event possible -- the united effort of everyone, from civilians, to restaurant owners to taxi drivers, that creates an experience like no other. Everyone is proud to play a part. I don't see that kind of dedication and selflessness anywhere but Columbus.

Additionally, the unique districts that make up Columbus, such as the Short North Arts District, Arena District and historic German Village, plus others, provide a visitor experience that few cities can match. Steps away from the convention center and Nationwide Arena are hundreds of restaurants, shops and entertainment venues that welcome attendees with signs and offer special menus and discounts.

Columbus has everything it takes to successfully host a large event like the Arnold Sports Festival (or the Republican National Convention), along with an open, smart, collaborative spirit that makes it unlike anywhere else. It would make an excellent choice for our 2016 Convention.

With warm regards,

A large, stylized handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Arnold Schwarzenegger".

Arnold Schwarzenegger