



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **Historic BGA/ABC-7/ League of Women Voters Debates Begin**

How many candidates are committed to eliminating the "corruption tax" we pay when government is run for the benefit of the politicians and not the public through waste, fraud, inefficiency, nepotism, cronyism, patronage and clout?

And how many candidates are committed to restoring FAITH (Fairness, Accountability, Integrity, Transparency and Honesty) in government by putting taxpayers first?

Illinois voters will be getting answers to those and other key questions about ethics and reform during a series of debates that begin this Thursday, January 7 through a unique and historic partnership of the Better Government Association ABC-7 and the League of Women Voters.

BGA Executive Director Andy Shaw, the former political reporter at ABC-7, will be joining his former colleagues and other journalists to question candidates in the Republican and Democratic debates for governor and U.S. Senator.

"Illinois government is in crisis at all levels," Shaw said, "with spending out of control, budgets out of balance and ethical standards out of whack. These debates are a perfect opportunity to hold candidates' feet to the fire with tough questions about where they've been on these issues and where they'll go in the future.

"The BGA is calling on voters and taxpayers to pay close attention to these debates and the follow-up analysis, and to make intelligent decisions when they vote on February 2."

The debate schedule is as follows:

Tuesday, January 12	Democratic candidates for U.S. Senate
Wednesday, January 13	Republican candidates for Governor
Thursday, January 14	Republican candidates for U.S. Senate
Tuesday, January 19	Democratic candidates for Governor

The one-hour debates are at 7 p.m. in the studios of ABC-7, 190 N. State  
They will air live on the ABC-7 web site [www.abc7chicago.com](http://www.abc7chicago.com) and on ABC's 7.2 channel  
They will air in their entirety on tape at 11:05 p.m. the on the same night of the debate  
They will be analyzed and linked on our web site [www.bettergov.org](http://www.bettergov.org)

Unfortunately there is only room for representatives of the campaigns and the sponsoring organizations to attend the debates. They're not open to the public.



Shaw's successor as ABC-7 political reporter, Charles Thomas, will be moderating the half-hour debates for President of the Cook County Board.

Democrats are at the ABC-7 studios at 7 p.m. on Thursday, January 7.  
Republicans are at the ABC-7 studios at 7 p.m. on Wednesday, January 20.

Those debates will also air live on the ABC-7 website and 7.2 channel.  
The Democrats debate will be aired at 10:30 a.m. on Sunday, January 10.  
The Republicans debate will be aired at 10:30 a.m. on Sunday, January 24.

The Better Government Association thanks ABC-7 for continuing its long tradition of providing the Chicago area with excellent political coverage, including televised debates before every important election. It's an honor to join a team that also includes the foremost civic debate organization, the League of Women Voters.

If you have any questions, our contact information is above.

Thank you for your interest in this critical public service endeavor.

Andy Shaw,  
BGA Executive Director

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Founded in 1923, the Better Government Association is an independent, non-partisan government watchdog. Our mission is to combat waste, fraud, and corruption in government by conducting investigative research and litigation to expose problems; researching policy solutions promoting transparency and accountability in government; and using internship programs to train the next generation of investigators and public interest lawyers.