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## MINNEAPOLIS SAINT PAUL HOST COMMITTEE FOR 2008 REPUBLICAN NATIONAL CONVENTION LAUNCHES *MORE TO MINNESOTA GOPARTY CARD*

*Committee Seeks Participants in Program Designed to Drive Traffic to Minnesota  
Businesses While Offering Specials to Visitors*

ST. PAUL, MINN. (February 21, 2008) – In order to welcome the 45,000 visitors expected for the 2008 Republican National Convention and increase traffic to Minnesota businesses, the Minneapolis-Saint Paul Host Committee has launched the *More to Minnesota GOParty Card*.

The Host Committee is working closely with the local Chambers of Commerce, the Visitor and Convention Associations from St. Paul, Minneapolis, Bloomington, representatives from Mall of America and Explore Minnesota to reach out to area businesses to garner their participation. The *More to Minnesota GOParty Card* will offer discounts and special deals from participating Minnesota businesses from August 23 until September 7 as an additional incentive to come early and stay longer.

"The Republican National Convention offers a major opportunity to showcase the metropolitan area and beyond," said Cynthia Leshner, President of the Minneapolis-Saint Paul 2008 Host Committee. "The *More to Minnesota GOParty Card* will help raise awareness for area businesses by enticing convention goers to come to Minneapolis, St. Paul and the Bloomington area before, during and after the big event so they can experience our unique restaurants, retail, entertainment and more."

Committee on Arrangements President and Chief Executive Officer Maria Cino said, "We expect 45,000 visitors to join us for the 2008 Republican National Convention. Our guests are already touring, dining and staying in Minneapolis-Saint Paul – and we expect that activity to increase in the weeks to come. This exciting discount program is great news for our guests and an even greater opportunity for Minneapolis-Saint Paul -area businesses to showcase all they have to offer. It is our hope to see many storefronts with the *GOParty* logo in their window as the convention approaches."

Interested businesses are asked to provide a discount of at least 20 percent on select products or services. Participation is free and will include a company listing in the Official Convention Guide that will be distributed to all convention attendees by early summer and listed on the Host Committee Web site [www.msp2008.com](http://www.msp2008.com). Participating businesses will also be identified by a window display with the *More to Minnesota GOParty* logo.

More than 100 businesses around Minnesota have already signed up and applications will be accepted online at [discount@meetminneapolis.com](mailto:discount@meetminneapolis.com) or by calling 651.MSP.2008 (651.677.2008). The deadline for committing to participate is Friday, March 14. For more information, please visit [www.msp2008.com](http://www.msp2008.com).

The concept and design of the cards and window displays were developed by ED Design, a Minneapolis creative agency that donated its time and creative talent to the project.

"We are so thankful for the in-kind contributions of creativity and time from companies such as ED Design," Leshner said. "It's that generous support and spirit that are going to make this convention a success and a win-win for everyone involved."

#### **About The Minneapolis-Saint Paul 2008 Host Committee**

The Minneapolis-Saint Paul 2008 Host Committee is charged with promoting the commerce, image and prestige of Minneapolis, Saint Paul and the entire region in preparation for the 2008 Republican National Convention. The Host Committee is made up of community leaders who are committed to educating people and businesses to come to Minnesota to work, live, play, visit and invest. For more information, visit [www.msp2008.com](http://www.msp2008.com).