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Contact: Patricia Petersen | patricia@bridgfordforiowa.com | 805-252-2515

MICHAEL BRIDGFORD CALLS FOR OPEN DEBATE FOLLOWING SUCCESSFUL IOWA STATE FAIR APPEARANCE; ANNOUNCES VIRTUAL TOWN HALL FOR AUGUST 19

DAVENPORT, IA — August 17, 2026 — Independent candidate for Iowa's 1st Congressional District, Michael Bridgford, today released a statement outlining key campaign updates, including a successful address at the Des Moines Register Political Soapbox, his official acceptance of the Iowa PBS debate invite, and details for an upcoming virtual town hall.

State Fair Soapbox Success

Over the weekend, Bridgford took the stage at the Des Moines Register Political Soapbox at the Iowa State Fair, presenting his vision for representative leadership, civil discourse, and pragmatic solutions for Iowa families. Addressing fairgoers, Bridgford highlighted his commitment to independent representation that works across party lines rather than beholden to special interest groups.

*"I am in this race for the right reasons, I am not bought and paid for by anyone, and voters deserve a representative focused on the people, not partisan division," said **Bridgford**. "Our speech at the Soapbox resonated with Iowans across the district who are ready to move past partisan gridlock and put community priorities first."*

Iowa PBS Debate Acceptance

Bridgford has officially accepted the invitation from Iowa PBS to participate in the general election candidate debate. However, under Iowa PBS debate guidelines, at least two major candidates must accept the invitation for the broadcast debate to proceed. Bridgford is currently waiting to see if either or both of his opponents, Representative Mariannette Miller-Meeks and Democratic nominee Christina Bohannon, will agree to step onto the debate stage.

*"Voters in Iowa's 1st District deserve transparency and an open forum where all candidates defend their records and present their plans side-by-side," **Bridgford added**. "I have accepted the invitation, and I strongly urge my opponents to do the same so Iowans are not denied a critical, televised debate before Election Day."*

Virtual Town Hall This Wednesday, Aug. 19

To maintain direct line communication with voters and media outlets across the district, the Bridgford campaign will host an open virtual town hall this week.

- **WHAT:** Virtual Open Town Hall with Michael Bridgford
- **WHEN:** Wednesday, August 19, 2026, at 7:00 PM CT

- **WHERE:** Instagram: www.instagram.com/bridgfordforiowa
- **WHO:** Open to all members of the press and the public

This interactive session offers community members and reporters an unrestricted opportunity to join online and ask Bridgford anything- ranging from agricultural policy and cost-of-living solutions to campaign strategy and governance.

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