

August 28, 2012 **EMBARGOED UNTIL DELIVERY**

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Tampa Host Committee Chairman Al Austin

(Remarks as Prepared for Delivery) August 28, 2012

Tampa, Fla. – The following are the remarks as prepared for delivery by Tampa Host Committee Chairman Al Austin. The actual remarks may differ.

Good afternoon.

It has been my pleasure to serve as chairman of the 2012 Tampa Bay Host Committee. On behalf of the Tampa Bay community, welcome. We're glad you are here.

You may know that we were finalists for the last two conventions, which ultimately went to New York City and then to Minneapolis/St. Paul. Apparently, the third time *is* a charm.

With more than 15,000 members of the media here from around the globe, I am pleased that Tampa Bay will no longer be the best kept secret in the world.

For me, to stand on this stage, in this city, is the realization of a long-time dream.

There has not been a convention for either party in the state of Florida since 1972. That same year, I was a delegate to the convention in Miami Beach. I have been a delegate or alternate at every convention since then.

And I've been working hard at building my community, and creating jobs and opportunity for the Tampa Bay area.

Having you all here in this Forum will have a significant impact on the future of our region.

Because you chose us, thousands of people have the opportunity to get to know our people, our businesses, our attractions -- and our food.

You are creating jobs for caterers, waiters, taxi drivers, and so many more Floridians. And you are filling up hotel rooms that often sit empty after the summer tourism season ends and families head back for their children to start school.

So thank you for stimulating our economy. Hundreds of volunteers have spent countless hours to prepare for the next few days.

We trust that you will enjoy our city and our hospitality, and that you come back often.

Thank you for entrusting us with the great honor of hosting the 2012 Republican National Convention.

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