

## *A Note Regarding Congress Final Round Legislation*

For decades, the Sharen B. Althoff Wooster Invitational has provided congressional debate students with the opportunity to speak on legislation spanning the entire spectrum of American political discourse. With final rounds ranging from pre-set packets of legislation to dynamic, captivating ‘scenario-based’ sessions, the staff at Wooster has long sought to provide a unique round environment for some of Ohio’s finest congressional debaters.

This year’s final round legislation was written with that tradition in mind, presenting students with policy proposals that are likely to be debated by the United States Congress in the early months of the next presidential administration.

The first piece of legislation, “A Resolution for a Healthier America” focuses on the quality of food produced, purchased, and consumed in the United States. With the cost of groceries coming to the forefront in much of the election discourse, so too did a national conversation about *what* Americans should be purchasing and consuming. From food dyes to the use of ultra-processed ingredients, many Americans are taking a second look at ingredient labels.

The second piece of legislation, the “American Immigration Reform Act”, focuses on the construction of a border wall, a tariff on Canada and Mexico, and the end of sanctuary cities in the United States. The legislation is based on public comments made by the President-elect and his allies, as well recent developments related to potential tariffs on Canada and Mexico. Every aspect of this legislation came from public speeches, policy proposals, and past precedent from the first Trump administration.

It is understandable that some may hold deeply-held beliefs and even vehement disagreement regarding the policies proposed in this legislation. It must be noted that no word of this legislation was written with any personal, political bias. Rather, this inspiration for this legislation came from two simple and indisputable facts. First, every American will be impacted by real-world debates and legislation on these issues in the coming months. Second, every student in the final round will be voters themselves in the coming years. They, like all

Americans, deserve to engage in spirited and well-researched debate on these critical issues. Finally, unlike all other forms of debate offered by the OSDA, congressional debate does not force students to speak against their own convictions, allowing them to paint their own rhetorical canvas throughout the round. Through this, students may explore this legislation, chart their own path, and speak their mind with great conviction.

As a Wooster alumni and former coach in the OSDA, it was a great honor to write the legislation for this year's final round of congressional debate. With outstanding student competitors and great coaches and judges, I am confident that this year's final round will be another excellent chapter in the storied history of this great tournament.

-David Burnett