

April 6, 1998

General Service Board Of Alcoholics Anonymous
Attn: Mr. Gary Glenn, Chairperson
112 Park Avenue, #3b
New York, N.Y.

Dear General Service Board,

My name is Debra and I am alcoholic. I am a member of the group in FL. District Area 15 and my sobriety date is I am Vice Chairman of District Seven, Chairman of the 42nd Florida State Convention and was Chairman of the Bid Committee for the 2005 International Convention bidding for Orlando. On that committee with me were the then seated Delegates from Area 14 and Area 15.

When I found out about the cash incentive issue regarding the international conventions I was shocked and for the first time in my sobriety I felt disillusioned with Alcoholics Anonymous. In our meetings with the Orange County Convention Bureau and the Orange County Convention Center we were mast emphatic that when the delegation from GSO came to do a site inspection that the fastest way to lose the bid was to offer them anything. We told them over and over don't even offer them a pencil!!

My worst disillusionment and anger came when I learned of the letters that were sent to the bidding convention bureaus. It wasn't bad enough that Alcoholics Anonymous was soliciting funds, the fact that they were advised not to share this information with the AA's that were preparing the bid was upsetting.

During the course of our negotiations with them, we were offered an all expenses paid trip to the Orange Bowl on New Years. We, of course, thanked them for the offer but told them that due to our traditions we were unable to accept. Being a big football fan, I would have given my right arm to have tickets to a bowl game.

When this issue came to light and was brought up to the conference, it is my understanding that the facts were not completely understood by all. Consequently this vote was not an informed group conscious.

On Dec. 5, 1997 a minority report was filed and virtually ignored. According to concept five, not only is the minority opinion to be heard but *they compel a thorough-going debate on important issues*. This is a most important issue. It is in direct conflict with tradition seven which states *that any public solicitation of funds using the name of Alcoholics Anonymous is highly dangerous*. It goes on to tell us that *experience has warned us that nothing can so surely destroy our spiritual heritage as futile disputes over property, money, and authority*.

We all know that if Alcoholics Anonymous is destroyed, it will come from within. Let us guard our Traditions diligently so that this never happens. We must always remember, first and foremost, our primary purpose, and all do our part to assure that those coming after us have the same opportunity we had for recovery.

Tradition two is also in question here. When at several Regional Forums, questions regarding cash incentives were raised, those asking were told that the policy has been established and no questions will be entertained. *Our leaders are but trusted servants they do not govern.* When we are not even permitted to ask questions, isn't this a clear cut case of governing.

One of the main concerns to those of us that bid, is the fact that we did not have a fair playing field.

It seems to me that after the transportation fiasco in San Diego that Orlando and Atlanta would have been on the top of the list for consideration. We had solutions to the transportation problem. Atlanta had an established system of transportation that worked quite well for over one million people during the Olympics; Orlando went one step further and eliminated the need for a stadium, having everything under one roof and 70% of all motel rooms within a one mile radius. Could the fact that neither one of our bids included a cash incentive have anything to do with this?

Have you forgotten that our structure is upside down – The Groups and the individual AA members are the voice of AA. Please give us an opportunity to be heard.

Bill Wilson was quoted to say that the International Conventions should no longer be put on by the General Service Office. Maybe his foresight was right. Maybe the time has come to make this change.

Thank you for your consideration of my opinion.

In Love and Service,
/signed/
Debra
Chairman, Bid Committee

cc: All Seated Delegates