

# NEWS RELEASE

**Media Contact:**

Bob St. Charles

(407) 822-5614

[bob.stcharles@wftv.com](mailto:bob.stcharles@wftv.com)



## **HUGE TURNOUT FOR FLORIDA SENATE DEBATE** **Central Florida Viewers Tuned In For Debate**

**ORLANDO** – October 7, 2010 – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Voters won't head to the polls for another four weeks, but they turned out in big numbers to watch the Florida Senate Debate between candidates *Charlie Crist, Kendrick Meek and Marco Rubio*. The heated debate was produced by *Craig Patrick*, moderated by *ABC News Anchor George Stephanopoulos* and was held at the WFTV studios Wednesday evening. In Orlando, where the debate was held, the special live program was watched by more than **120,000** adults 18+. While that was the most viewed market, more than **334,000** potential voters tuned in for the debate in the top five Florida TV markets. \*NSI Overnight Ratings for Orlando, Tampa, Miami, West Palm, and Jacksonville.



"It was hard charging, hard hitting right from the start and crystallized a lot of the political conversation taking place all over the country," said *Stephanopoulos* today on *Good Morning America*. "That was one of the feistiest -- and most illuminating -- debates I've ever been part of," he told WFTV today.

"We have a strikingly talented and driven news and production team here at WFTV, three very feisty candidates, and a race that could swing the balance of power in Washington. It produced an incredible debate," was what *WFTV Executive Producer and co-moderator Craig Patrick* said. "We had a lively and passionate exchange that also covered substantive issues and a wide range of topics that matter to Central Florida."

The debate, featuring journalists *Craig Patrick* from WFTV and *Bendan McLaughlin* from WFTS in Tampa, aired live from 7 to 8 p.m. on WFTV in Orlando as was also aired by every ABC affiliate in the state. That includes 11 markets: Miami, Tampa/St. Petersburg, Orlando, West Palm Beach, Jacksonville, Pensacola, Panama Beach, Ft. Myers, Gainesville, Tallahassee and Sarasota.

"WFTV was proud to host this important debate to help Florida voters in their decision before they head to the polls," commented *WFTV Vice President and General Manager, Shawn Bartelt*. "The program demonstrated our commitment to not only our community but also to the state. We would like to thank ABC News and George Stephanopoulos for their support on this project," she continued.

### **About Cox Media Group**

Cox Media Group, Inc., a subsidiary of Atlanta-based Cox Enterprises, is an integrated broadcasting, publishing and digital media company that includes the national advertising rep firms of Cox Reps. With revenues exceeding \$1.5 billion, the company operations include 15 broadcast television stations and one local cable channel, 86 radio stations, four metro newspapers and more than a dozen non-daily publications, and more than 100 digital services. Additionally, CMG owns and operates Valpak, one of the leading direct marketing companies in North America.