

## Michigan GOP leader wants Paul barred from future debates

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COLUMBIA, S.C. (AP) — The chairman of the Michigan Republican Party said Wednesday that he will try to bar Ron Paul from future GOP presidential debates because of remarks the Texas congressman made that suggested the Sept. 11 attacks were the fault of U.S. foreign policy.

Michigan party chairman Saul Anuzis said he will circulate a petition among Republican National Committee members to ban Paul from more debates. At a GOP candidates' debate Tuesday night, Paul drew attacks from all sides, most forcefully from former New York Mayor Rudy Giuliani, when he linked the terror attacks to U.S. bombings.

"Have you ever read about the reasons they attacked us? They attack us because we've been over there. We've been bombing Iraq for 10 years," Paul said.

Anuzis called the comments "off the wall and out of whack."

"I think he would have felt much more comfortable on the stage with the Democrats in what he said last night. And I think that he is a distraction in the Republican primary and he does not represent the base and he does not represent the party," Anuzis said during an RNC state leadership meeting.

"Given what he said last night it was just so off the wall and out of whack that I think it was more detrimental than helpful."

Anuzis said his petition would go to debate sponsors and broadcasters to discourage inviting Paul.

Jesse Benton, Paul's campaign spokesman, said the candidate "is supporting the traditional GOP foreign policy. I think it's a shame when people try to silence the traditional conservative Republican standpoint."

After the debate Tuesday, Paul said he didn't expect his remarks to end his campaign.

"The last time I got a message out about my position on the war it boosted us up by tens of thousands and I didn't change my position," Paul said. "I think the American people are sick and tired of this war and want it ended."

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