

## **Abraham Lincoln to Mark W. Delahay**

Lincoln regretfully declines an invitation to attend the Osawatomie convention on May 18, 1859, which was to formally organize the Republican Party in Kansas. Lincoln warns against "the temptation to lower the Republican Standard [in whatever platform the convention might adopt] in order to gather recruits. "In my judgment," Lincoln continues, "such a step would be a serious mistake" that "would surrender the object of the Republican organization-- preventing the Spread and Nationalization of Slavery." This two-page, handwritten copy of a letter sent by Abraham Lincoln to Mark Delahay was probably given to the Kansas Historical Society by Delahay's daughter, Mary E. Delahay, in the early 1900s.

Creator: Lincoln, Abraham, 1809-1865

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## Abraham Lincoln to Mark W. Delahay

Lincoln, Abraham

Copy.

KANSAS STATE  
HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

41291.

Springfield Ills May 14<sup>th</sup> /859.

M. W. Delahay, Esq.

My Dear Sir;

I find it impossible for me to attend your Republican Convention at Ossawatimbe on the 18<sup>th</sup>. It would have afforded me much personal gratification to see your fine new Country, and to meet the good people who have cast their lot there; and still more, if I could thereby contribute anything to the Republican cause. You probably will adopt resolutions in the nature of a platform; and as I think, the only danger will be the temptation to lower the Republican Standard in order to gather recruits. In my judgement such a step would be a serious mistake - would open a gap through which an over would pass out than pass in. And this would be in deference to Douglasism, or to the Southern opposition element. Either would surrender the object of the Republican organization - the preventing the spread and Nationalization of Slavery. This object surrendered, the organization would go to pieces. I do not mean by this, that no Southern man must be



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2

placed upon our Republican National ticket for 1860. There are many men in the Slave States for any one of whom I would cheerfully vote to be either President or Vice President provided he would enable me to do so with safety to the Republican cause - without lowering the Republican Standard - This is <sup>the</sup> indispensable condition of a Union with us. It is idle to think of any other. Any other would be as fruitless to the South, as distasteful to the North, the whole ending in common defeat. Let a union be attempted on the basis of ignoring the Slave question, and magnifying other questions which the people just now are really caring nothing about, and it will result in gaining no single electoral vote in the South and losing every one in the North.

Yours very truly  
A. Lincoln.