



# THE OBESITY SOCIETY

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## **Obesity Society Announces Policy Forums in Conjunction with National Conventions**

*Conyers, Chavez, Rex to Headline Democratic Convention Forum  
Huckabee, Barbour, Clegg to Headline Republican Convention Forum*

*Silver Spring, MD* – Today, the Obesity Society, the leading professional and scientific organization dedicated to the study of obesity, announced details of the policy forums it is hosting in Denver and Minneapolis/St. Paul in conjunction with the Democratic and Republican National Conventions. The forums, entitled “The Challenge of Obesity for Policy Makers: Recommendations for the Next Administration,” will be co-sponsored by the Universities of Colorado and Minnesota, the Mayo Clinic and George Washington University and will feature roundtable discussions of policymakers at both the national and local levels, in addition to representatives of the Party nominees.

Both forums will be open to the media, delegates and the general public. The forum at the 2008 Democratic Convention will be held on Monday, August 25<sup>th</sup> from 8AM until 12:30PM at the Hamilton Building of the Denver Art Museum. The event will be moderated by Sally Squires, former Washington Post columnist and founder of the Lean Plate Club. Melody Barnes, Domestic Policy Advisor of the Obama for President Campaign, and Karen Kornbluh, Principal Author of the Democratic Platform, will address how an Obama administration would address the issue of obesity and the historic inclusion of obesity in the Democratic platform. Congressman John Conyers (MI-14), Mayor Martin Chavez (Albuquerque, NM) and South Carolina Superintendent of Education Jim Rex will discuss local strategies for addressing obesity.

The forum at the 2008 Republican National Convention will be held on September 2<sup>nd</sup> at 8 AM until 12:30 PM at the historic James L. Hill Research Library in St. Paul, MN. The event will be moderated by Lesley Stahl of CBS News *60 Minutes*. Former Presidential Candidate and Arkansas Governor Mike Huckabee, former RNC Chairman and Governor

Haley Barbour (MS), and New Hampshire State Senator Bob Clegg, who will address the St. Paul conference and discuss the strategies they have advocated at the state and national levels to combat the crisis of obesity.

In addition, the forums will include some of the most prominent experts in the field of obesity, including Gary Foster, Morgan Downey and Caroline Apovian of the Obesity Society; James Hill and Robert Eckel of the University of Colorado, and Michael Jensen of the Mayo Clinic. Eric Finkelstein, PhD, a health economist in RTI's Public Health Economics Program, will also make a presentation.

In announcing the details of these events, Gary Foster, President of The Obesity Society said, "The growing awareness of the obesity epidemic is leading to new strategies at the national and local levels as our policymakers seek ways to combat this problem. We hope that these events shine a spotlight on this issue and lead to practical recommendations for the next Administration."

Morgan Downey, Executive Vice President of the Society agreed, "The momentum behind this issue is evidenced by the prominent national leaders attending both forums. We were gratified that the Democratic Platform Committee included obesity in their platform, and hope that the Republican Platform Committee follows suit." (For Democratic Platform on Obesity go to [www.obesity.org](http://www.obesity.org).)

The Obesity Society ([www.obesity.org](http://www.obesity.org)) is the leading scientific organization dedicated to the study of obesity. Since 1982, The Obesity Society has been committed to encouraging research on the causes and treatment of obesity, and to keeping the medical community and public informed of new advances. The Obesity Society's vision is to be the leader in understanding, preventing and treating obesity and in improving the lives of those affected. The Obesity Society's membership reached 2,000 basic and clinical researchers, who have published extensively, and care providers in obesity treatment and prevention.

For information about the Denver event, please contact Samantha Warfield, [swarfield@squiermedia.com](mailto:swarfield@squiermedia.com) or 202-464-6959.

For information about the St. Paul event, please contact Kirsten Fedewa, at [kirsten@fedewaconsulting.com](mailto:kirsten@fedewaconsulting.com) or 202-365-6936.

For more information about these events or about the Obesity Society, please contact Jane Pratt at [jpratt@obesity.org](mailto:jpratt@obesity.org)

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