

Opportunity 08

Ideas for the Next President

May 12, 2008—Washington, D.C.—Energy > Challenges for the Next President Opportunity 08 hosts Sen. Lamar Alexander for a discussion of energy issues facing the next president.



RALPH ALSWANG

December 5, 2007—Washington, D.C.—The Youth Vote Opportunity 08 joins with Harvard University's Institute of Politics to release findings of the Fall 2007 Youth Survey on Politics and Public Service.

November 16, 2007—Las Vegas—National Security at Home and Abroad The morning after the Democratic presidential candidates' debate at the University of Nevada, an Opportunity 08 forum features national foreign policy experts and analysts.

October 17, 2007—Iowa City—Forum on Energy and National Security Opportunity 08 joins the University of Iowa for a forum featuring leading policy experts on biofuels and energy policy, the environment, and national security. v



LINDA EDGE-DUNLAP

December 3, 2007—Washington, D.C.—Better Direction on Main Street Brookings experts and a bipartisan panel of representatives from major campaigns discuss and define the policy issues that cut the widest swath across the majority of voters.

September 26, 2007—Manchester, N.H.—> The Budget Deficit and the Soaring Costs of Health Care Opportunity 08 joins Saint Anselm College for an Opportunity 08 forum on key domestic issues facing presidential candidates in the New Hampshire primary.



ARTHUR DURITY

February 28, 2007—Opportunity 08: Independent Ideas for Our Next President Brookings partners with ABC News to launch Opportunity 08, a project to help presidential candidates and the public focus on critical issues facing the nation.

May 22, 2008—Cleveland—Reforming Health Care: Improving Quality, Controlling Costs, Expanding Coverage Brookings and the Cleveland Clinic host an Opportunity 08 forum on reforming health care.



RALPH ALSWANG

June 7, 2007—Washington, D.C.—The Future of Political Communications—Connecting with Young Voters With the Internet rapidly transforming the political communications landscape, Opportunity 08 experts address how to engage with younger voters in the upcoming election season.



COURTESY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI

April 7, 2008—Miami—The Future of the Military With the field of presidential contenders narrowed to three, Opportunity 08 looks at the future of the U.S. military.

September 18, 2007—Washington, D.C.—Barack Obama The Tax Policy Center and Opportunity 08 host Illinois Sen. Barack Obama for a speech on the economy, opportunity, and tax policy.

April 28, 2008—Washington, D.C.—Transportation and the Economy Opportunity 08 hosts Transportation Secretary Mary Peters for a discussion of America's transportation infrastructure.

January 11, 2008—South Carolina—Competitiveness: From Charleston to China Just a week before the state's Republican presidential primary, Brookings hosts an Opportunity 08 forum with national economic policy experts and leading political analysts.

June 26, 2008—Washington, D.C.—U.S. Foreign Policy and the 2008 Presidential Campaign Sen. Chuck Hagel discusses U.S. foreign policy in the context of the 2008 presidential campaign.

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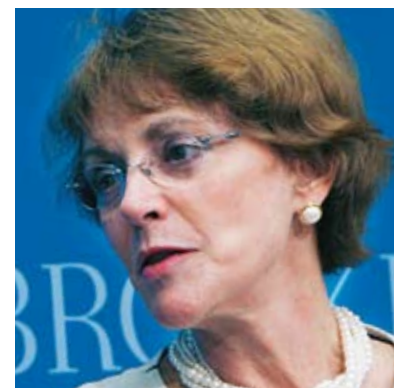
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Barack Obama unveils his proposals for a more equitable tax system at an Opportunity 08-Tax Policy Center event in September 2007.

THE BROOKINGS INSTITUTION

MISSION STATEMENT

Brookings's mission is to conduct high-quality, independent research and, based on that research, to advance innovative, practical recommendations to advance three broad goals:

- Strengthen American democracy.
- Advance the economic and social welfare, security, and opportunity of all Americans.
- Secure a more open, safe, prosperous, and cooperative international system.

Policy Center
Institute and Brookings Institution

OPPORTUNITY 08

Independent Ideas For Our Next President

RALPH ALSWANG



I've always believed that in times of general adversity, strong institutions get stronger. Now is such a time, and Brookings is such an institution.

In the same way that Brookings scholars helped America respond to the Great Depression and helped the world recover from World War II, we are working hard to generate innovative and pragmatic ideas that set the agenda, shape the debate, and design effective policy responses for today's challenges.

We didn't wait until what Strobe has called "the black September of the era of globalization" to focus on the burgeoning financial crisis. Back in December 2007, Brookings helped to put the looming recession at the center of the national agenda, taking full account of its international dimension. Trustee Larry Summers gave an influential speech at Brookings calling for a stimulus package made up of tax rebates for working-class Americans. Senior Fellows Doug Elmendorf, Jason Furman, Martin Baily, and Alice Rivlin weighed in as well, offering advice in a series of reports and appearances before Congress.

Working quickly to gather ideas and form a consensus, Brookings convened a session of leading economists to debate the plan and explained clearly its benefits and costs. The

\$150 billion stimulus package was passed by Congress in February—less than two months after it was proposed at Brookings.

While the legislation helped foster almost 3 percent annual growth in the second quarter, it was clear to our experts that deeper problems lurked. Then—and now—experts across Brookings pooled their expertise to analyze the options facing the United States and the international community, advising senior officials, congressional leaders, and President-elect Obama's transition team on how to approach the problem from both a short-term and long-term perspective.

At the same time, Brookings engaged in a high order of multitasking on the issues that came to dominate the 2008 presidential contest. On energy security, education, health care, migration, and competitiveness, we marshaled our breadth and depth to ask the big questions and to find the right answers.

All of this illustrates the strides we've made in fulfilling the Brookings strategic plan that the Board of Trustees adopted in 2007. Helping the nation and the world meet the challenges of today and tomorrow requires managing ourselves in a way that is ambitious, disciplined, and forward-looking. Even in an uncertain economic environment, we have the combination of discipline, commitment, and momentum necessary to keep us on track.

Which gets me back to where I started: Precisely because there are so many questions and uncertainties, what Brookings has to offer is more essential now than ever. And this Institution would not be able to perform that service without the participation and support of our friends and trustees. So thanks ... and on to the new administration!

John L. Thornton, Brookings Chairman

Every year finds its own way of giving Brookings an opportunity to translate its motto—quality, independence, and impact—into events, projects, and publications. The past year was in a class by itself, with a historic election, the nation embroiled in two wars, the planet—as Barack Obama said in his first statement as President-elect—“in peril” because of climate change, and a global financial crisis that started on Wall Street.

Our signature project this year was Opportunity 08, which focused contenders and voters on the major issues that Obama has cited. Beyond the Beltway, we organized programs in Iowa and New Hampshire and held Board of Trustees meetings—timed to candidate debates during the primaries—in Las Vegas and Charleston. Trustees—notably Ken Duberstein, Tom Donilon, and Brian Green-spun—contributed their insights and leadership to Opportunity 08 forums.

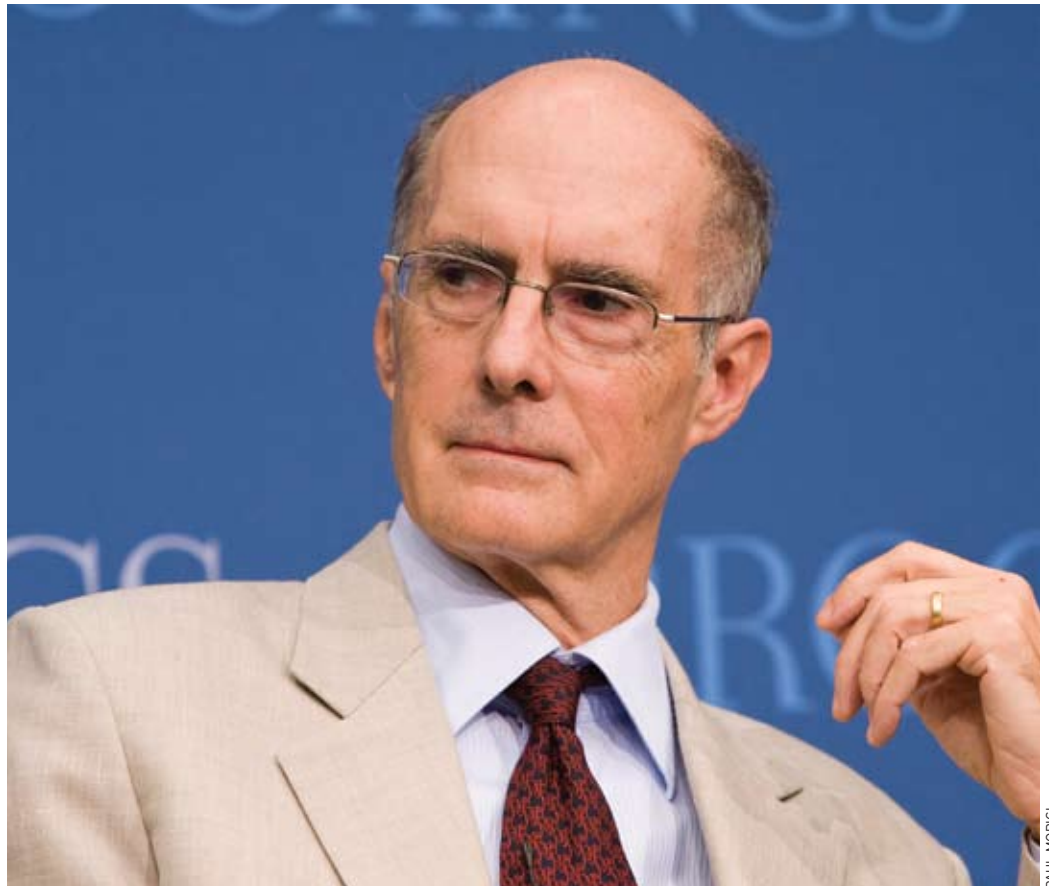
As backdrop to the political campaign, the economy rapidly cascaded from troubled waters to the global maelstrom of the fall. Our Economic Studies experts contributed substantially to the design of the February 2008 stimulus package and provided recommendations to the administration and Congress, with Global Economy and Development experts, as the housing and credit crises deepened.

A well-timed new arrival to the Brookings leadership team is Darrell West, a highly regarded political scientist and policy center director from Brown University who now heads up Governance Studies. “GS,” as we call it, got another big boost as our trustee, Ezra K. Zilkha, endowed a chair that is now held by Senior Fellow William Galston.

“Governance”—a word that has been key to the Brookings vocabulary from our founding 92 years ago—is increasingly taking on a global dimension. Addressing the challenge of how to manage this unruly but interdependent world of ours involves all five research programs. For example, Metropolitan Policy, Foreign Policy, and Governance Studies joined Economic Studies and Global Economy and Development in tackling the question of how to reform international institutions to prevent something like the Great Meltdown of 2008.

For this reason—and many others—we’re grateful that our International Advisory Council, now in its third year, has become an integral part of the Brookings family along with our Board and our many other friends and supporters.

As you will see, the pages that follow highlight much more than impressive accomplishments, large numbers, and new names. The annual report for 2008 documents a remarkable year, one in which the Institution lived up to its legacy and is poised to fulfill its potential in response to the challenges and opportunities ahead.



PAUL MORIGI

Strobe Talbott, Brookings President