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**COMMISSION ON PRESIDENTIAL DEBATES ANNOUNCES SITES, DATES,
AND CANDIDATE SELECTION CRITERIA FOR 2012 GENERAL ELECTION**

Frank J. Fahrenkopf, Jr., and Michael D. McCurry, co-chairmen of the non-partisan, non-profit Commission on Presidential Debates (“CPD”) today announced sites and dates for three presidential and one vice presidential debates during the 2012 general election. The dates and sites are:

First presidential debate:

Wednesday, October 3

University of Denver, Denver, CO

Vice presidential debate:

Thursday, October 11

Centre College, Danville, KY

Second presidential debate (town meeting format):

Tuesday, October 16

Hofstra University, Hempstead, NY

Third presidential debate:

Monday, October 22

Lynn University, Boca Raton, FL

Washington University in St. Louis, MO will serve as the backup site.

The Commission also released the 2012 Candidate Selection Criteria, which will be used to determine who is invited to participate in the general election debates. In addition to being Constitutionally eligible, candidates must appear on a sufficient number of state ballots to have a mathematical chance of winning a majority vote in the Electoral College, and have a level of support of at least 15% (fifteen percent) of the national electorate as determined by five selected national public opinion polling organizations, using the average of those organizations’ most recent publicly-reported results at the time of the determination. The Gallup Organization will advise the CPD in the application of its Criteria to polling data as it did in 2000, 2004, and 2008. A copy of the Criteria is attached.

The CPD will announce formats for the four debates in the first part of 2012, as well as plans for Internet-based initiatives. Moderators for the debates will be chosen in the summer of 2012.

The CPD was established in 1987 and sponsored all presidential and vice presidential general election debates since 1988. More information can be found at www.debates.org.

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