THE CSTE WASHINGTON REPORT

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The *CSTE Washington Report* is provided as an information resource for members of the Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists on federal legislation and regulation affecting public health and epidemiology in the U.S.

PRESIDENT OBAMA REPLACES WHITE HOUSE CHIEF OF STAFF DALEY WITH OMB DIRECTOR LEW – Reports in the press speculate about the reasons for the replacement of Bill Daley after only one year of service as President Obama's Chief of Staff, but the importance for public health advocates is that he is being replaced by the current OMB Director, Jacob Lew. OMB is a critical entity in the annual budget and appropriations process and so impacts state grant opportunities that support a myriad public health programs and activities at the state and local level. Lew is an experienced budget hand having served as President Clinton's Budget Director from 1998-2001. Speculation on Director Lew's replacement centers on Rob Nabors. Nabors is currently Assistant to the President for Legislative Affairs. He was formerly Deputy Director of OMB and staff Director of the House Appropriations Committee under Chairman Obey. His long affiliation with the House Appropriations Committee makes him a familiar figure among public health advocates in Washington.

TAX EXTENDER BILL IN NEGOTIATIONS -- The tax extender bill, which caused controversy and last minute negotiations before the Christmas holiday Congressional recess, is once again under negotiation between the House Ways and Means Committee and the Senate Finance Committee. The bill extends for two months into 2012 a number of expiring tax provisions, such as the payroll tax holiday instituted last year to battle the recession, as well as extension of federal unemployment benefits. Fiscal conservatives are demanding that any further extension of the bill's benefits be offset with cuts in other areas of the budget. This has placed the Prevention and Public Health Fund (PPHF) in the Affordable Care Act on the cutting block. The Fund supports many important public health programs at CDC, including the Epidemiology and Laboratory Capacity grant program, fellowship training programs, and environmental health tracking. Many members of these Committees would like to extend a number of tax provisions for another two years. But staff are speculating that a 10 month extension is more likely. Public health advocates are watching carefully for any indications that the PPHF is targeted for reductions.