
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.

CONTINUING RESOLUTION TAKEN UP WHEN CONGRESS RETURNS FROM RECESS – House and Senate leadership have agreed to take up a pre-negotiated Continuing Resolution as soon as Congress returns in September from its current recess. The bill is necessary since none of the 12 FY 2013 Appropriations bills has been enacted. The federal fiscal year ends September 30th. Basic provisions of the bill are to fund government agencies at current levels for six months. This would take funding through to February 2013, well beyond the beginning of the calendar year. The negotiators wanted a clean CR, but many very senior appropriators, such as Rep. Bill Young (R-FL), are protesting and want to offer amendments on the floor to address defense needs and other funding priorities.

SEQUESTRATION UPDATE: CBO RELEASES REPORT, OMB REPORT EXPECTED IN SEPTEMBER, ADVOCACY EFFORTS BUILD -- Looming over any and all budget and appropriations matters is the January 2nd sequestration deadline which was enacted last summer as part of legislation to lift the debt ceiling. Most federal agencies, including CDC, expect to be cut 8-10 percent in FY 2013 if nothing is done to avert the automatic implementation of the cuts. The Congressional Budget Office just

released a report which states that if Congress does not act to prevent sequestration, it is likely to seriously deepen the current, on-going recession. You can read the report [here](#).

The White House Office of Management and Budget is expected to release its report on implementing the sequestration in mid-September, a requirement of the recently enacted Sequestration Transparency Act.

Meanwhile, those advocating against sequestration are working hard through their grassroots networks over the August recess and beyond to try and stop the march over the fiscal cliff. The public health community is working through a non-defense discretionary group called NDD United which urges a “balanced” approach to achieving fiscal constraint, a euphemism for incorporating tax revenues. Led by the Coalition for Health Funding, the group sent a letter to Congress with 3,000 organizations signed on, including CSTE, in July (See July 23rd Washington Report). They also held a rally on Capitol Hill on July 25th entitled, Rally to Restore Balance, which received coverage by PBS via its Nightly Business Report (NBR). NBR stressed the impact of the automatic cuts on a variety of domestic programs, including an NIH laboratory, police, Head Start and energy cost subsidies for low-income households. The next NDD United event is a Town Hall at the National Education Association on September 11. Speakers from OMB and the White House will discuss sequestration implementation.

WHITE HOUSE RELEASES NEW BIOSURVEILLANCE STRATEGY – On July 31, President Obama released his [National Strategy for Biosurveillance](#). Here is an excerpt from the front page of the document that describes the strategy in the President’s words:

“This first-ever *National Strategy for Biosurveillance* builds on the capabilities already in place and further institutionalizes our efforts to ensure that we are doing everything possible to identify and understand threats as early as possible. Its goal is to provide the critical information and ongoing situational awareness that enables better decisionmaking at all levels. It calls for a coordinated approach that brings together Federal, State, local, and tribal governments; the private sector; nongovernmental organizations; and international partners. It challenges us to take full advantage of the advanced technologies, new vaccines, the latest science, and social media that can help keep our citizens safe. It describes the core functions and critical capabilities we need to succeed.

“As a next step, I am directing that a strategic implementation plan be completed within 120 days to lay out the specific actions that are required and the responsibilities of all partners in this mission. In the event of a biological outbreak or incident, the threat will move rapidly and transcend boundaries and borders. So must our response. Guided by this *Strategy*, I am confident that we can meet our shared responsibility and deepen the collaboration we need to keep our country safe and secure.”