

AOEC E-mail News December 2008

As you may have noticed, AOEC has left print medium behind for the less expensive and less labor intensive, on line communication. While some may prefer the old print newsletter, we found too many times the operative word was old. If you have job announcements, conference announcements or other news you would like to share with your fellow members, please e-mail me and I will get it out on a timely a basis as possible without inundating the e-mail in boxes of our members.

Transition Team Soliciting Comments

Members of the Obama transition team have asked for organizations such as AOEC to submit ideas/priorities for what we'd like to see in the new OSHA. The AOEC Board will be working on our suggestions over the next few weeks. If you have ideas you would like them to consider, please send them to me no later than December 31. We are limited to one page total so please keep your comments brief.

CDC Budget Issues

While with the current economic crisis, no one expects increases in public health programs, one ongoing problem for NIOSH, ATDSR and all of CDC is the tap (or tax if you will) that is imposed for the CDC Strategic Business Unit (SBU). This is particularly unfortunate since the Senate budget language has mandated a cut in the business services and support. However, since the FY09 budget hasn't been officially passed, it appears CDC is doing it anyway. I'm told NIOSH is being hit for over \$7 million and other agencies are taking similar hits. The official Senate legislative language is copied below.

BUSINESS SERVICES AND SUPPORT

The Committee provides \$337,906,000 for business services support functions at the CDC. The fiscal year 2008 comparable level was \$371,847,000 and the administration requested \$337,906,000 for fiscal year 2009. These funds will be used to support CDC-wide support functions. The Committee instructs the CDC not to tap programs to make up for the cuts to this function.

I'd strongly recommend that if any of you have contact with your senators or representatives while they are home for the holidays you ask why this is being allowed. A letter or call to their offices might also be a good idea especially since the new budget hasn't been passed and we may finish up FY09 on a continuing resolution.

Jobs

The Cook County Bureau of Human Resources is seeking applicants for a full time staff physician position in the Cook County Medical Division Clinic, located in downtown Chicago. This clinic is part of the Cook County Bureau of Human Resources and provides occupational health and other ambulatory medical services to employees of Cook County. Desirable candidates should have a strong background in clinical occupational medicine, as well as excellent interpersonal, communication and organizational skills. This is a tremendous opportunity to restructure an existing program and implement innovative quality occupational health programs.

This physician position includes administrative/nursing support and an affiliation with ongoing collaboration with the Cook County Health and Hospital System Medical Staff, along with opportunities for personal and professional growth.

Interested candidates should submit at CV via e-mail to the address below. For more information, please contact Dr. Schaider directly.

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Transition Team Gossip (without which DC wouldn't be nearly as much fun)

There is no firm information on who will be Sec. of Labor. The Obama team is being very tight lipped about this one. Today's Congressional Daily reported that the current candidates being put forward for DOL are Gov. Jennifer Granholm of Michigan and labor activist Mary Beth Maxwell of American Rights at Work. However, the rest of my reliable sources say it is anyone's guess.

Several Obama transition staff members have indicated that all cabinet posts will be announced before Christmas. If true, we should have less than two weeks left for gossip and speculation on the top posts. However, this won't stop the guessing games. The OSHA job is dependent on who gets the top spot at DOL so there may be a bit of a wait to learn that outcome. The gossip about OSHA is currently centered on Peg Seminario and John Howard with a few wild cards being floated as well.

All of my reliable sources say that Dr. Julie Gerberding has not been asked to stay on at CDC. The HHS secretary gets to make that appointment so there won't be a new CDC director named until Mr. Daschle is confirmed. A new director at CDC also means we will have to wait until after that appointment goes through to get a new NIOSH director. Fortunately, Christine Branche is doing a great job as acting director and she's happy to be in DC. It looks like she'll be there a while.

Obviously, this is all speculation and the Obama transition team has come up with more than a few surprises already. More could be in the works.