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## WilmerHale Attorneys Transition to High-Ranking Government Positions

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The Obama Administration has certainly delivered on its promise to alter the face of government, and nowhere can that be felt more than at WilmerHale. Every week, it seems another attorney (or two) is leaving the firm to take a position within the new administration. The list of former WilmerHale lawyers working for the government now totals more than 20.

It was announced recently that WilmerHale Litigation Partner Jonathan Cedarbaum will join the Justice Department's Office of Legal Counsel (OLC), which provides legal advice to the president and all executive branch agencies. The OLC has become better known by the American public after its involvement in issuing and then retracting the so-called "torture memos."

Cedarbaum will join former Litigation Partner Jeannie Rhee, who recently left the firm to become deputy assistant attorney general at the OLC.

Two other partners are also in the process of transitioning to important government roles. Stephen Preston has been nominated to become the Central Intelligence Agency's next general counsel, and Bill Wilkins has been nominated as chief counsel to the Internal Revenue Service and assistant general counsel in the Treasury Department. Both Preston and Wilkins will complete the confirmation process within the next few weeks.

Although a number of agencies have drawn lawyers from the firm, the Justice Department (DOJ) has attracted the largest number. In March 2009, former Litigation Partner David Ogden was confirmed as deputy attorney general, the number two spot at the DOJ, with overall responsibility for the department's day-to-day operations. Ogden brought with him to the Justice Department former WilmerHale Partner Stuart Delery as his chief of staff. Former WilmerHale Counsel Eric Columbus and Associates Daphna Renan and Chad Golder have also taken up residence in the deputy attorney general's office, with Columbus as senior counsel and Renan and Golder as counsel. Davis Oliver, a counsel in the firm's Litigation Department, joined the DOJ's commercial litigation division as a trial attorney.

The Obama Administration has also recruited WilmerHale partners to key positions at the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC). Former Corporate and Securities Partner Meredith Cross has assumed her new role as director of the SEC's Division of Corporation Finance. Waiting for her at the SEC was former WilmerHale Partner Mark Cahn, who joined the commission in March as deputy general counsel for litigation and adjudication (a position previously occupied by our former and now returned Securities Partner [Andrew Vollmer](#)). Cahn oversees SEC enforcement matters and appellate cases.

Former WilmerHale Partner Todd Stern moved to the State Department as special envoy for climate change. Stern's work has already caught the attention of the *Washington Post*, which featured him in a profile. Stern has lead responsibility for representing the United States in negotiations for a global agreement to replace the 1997 Kyoto Protocol, which he helped negotiate as a member of the Clinton Administration. Since he started at the State Department in February, Stern has met with a parade of foreign officials to discuss the parameters of an agreement scheduled for unveiling in Copenhagen in December 2009.

The Treasury Department also has claimed its share of WilmerHale lawyers. In April, after an exhaustive search, President Obama nominated former WilmerHale lawyer Neal Wolin as deputy treasury secretary. Joining Wolin at the Treasury Department is former WilmerHale Litigation Partner David Cohen, who is serving as assistant secretary of the Treasury for terrorist financing.

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) also has looked to WilmerHale for talent. Former Communications Partner Bill Lake is serving as the Digital TV coordinator at the FCC. Lake's job is to ensure that the entire country makes the transition to digital television smoothly this month.

And former Intellectual Property Partner Henry Wixon joined the National Institute of Standards and Technology at the Department of Commerce as its chief counsel.

Of course, the federal government's talent search has gone beyond partners and into the counsel and associate ranks. For example, the firm has contributed several associate counsel to the White House Counsel's office, including Roberto Gonzalez, Michael Gottlieb, Trevor Morrison and Alison Nathan. In February, Katherine Oyama, a Litigation associate, moved to the Office of the Vice President to work as an associate counsel. Thaya Brook, a Securities associate, is now counsel to the Senate's TARP oversight panel.

Capitol Hill has also welcomed a number of WilmerHale lawyers to its halls in recent months. The Senate itself now includes a WilmerHale alum. Former Associate Michael Bennet was appointed to serve as a senator from Colorado, replacing Senator Ken Salazar, who is now secretary of the Department of the Interior. Bennet had been superintendent of schools in Denver and previously worked for WilmerHale Regulatory and Litigation Partner Jamie Gorelick when she was deputy attorney general in the Clinton Administration.

The transitions of these high-quality lawyers are a natural and critical feature of our core practice

and we are fortunate to have attorneys who are committed to public service, leading the new administration to look to us at this critical time.