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## Practice Advisor

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legislative counsel.

Sep. 14, 2022



By Nancy Cook and Laura Davison, Bloomberg News (TNS)

President Joe Biden is likely to nominate Beth Kaufman, a partner at the law firm Caplin & Drysdale, to be the top lawyer at the Internal Revenue Service as the White House prepares to overhaul the agency's leadership, according to people familiar with the matter.

The IRS chief counsel position oversees the interpretation and enforcement of tax

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spokesperson declined to comment.

The White House has also vetted a shortlist of candidates to succeed IRS Commissioner Charles Rettig, a Donald Trump appointee who took on the job in 2018 and whose term expires November 12. A decision has not yet been made public, but the White House is planning an announcement about the future of IRS leadership in the coming weeks.

The commissioner post has a five-year term and is subject to Senate approval.

Recently, White House aides informally asked Senate Democrats for their thoughts on the hiring criteria. The shortlist of candidates for both the chief counsel and IRS commissioner has been a closely held secret among top White House and Treasury aides.

The eventual nominees will take over the IRS at a critical time, with the agency on the cusp of overhauling its customer service operations and enacting a large expansion of its audit and enforcement capabilities. As part of the Inflation Reduction Act, Congress approved \$80 billion in additional funding for the IRS over the next decade to rebuild an agency depleted in recent years from budget cuts and hiring freezes.

The White House has sought someone with deep management and business experience to helm the agency, as opposed to a tax attorney, while the chief counsel's job will go to someone more familiar with tax policy.

The confirmation hearings and votes for both jobs have traditionally stayed out of the political limelight, but that is likely to change with the IRS becoming a target for Republican campaign-season attacks. Republican say they oppose giving the IRS additional money for enforcement and

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