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# Top Obama Adviser on Economics to Step Down

By **JACKIE CALMES**

WASHINGTON — **Christina D. Romer** is resigning as the chairwoman of **President Obama's Council of Economic Advisers**, the White House announced on Thursday night. She will be the second member this summer to leave an economic team that has steered the administration through the worst **recession** since the Depression.

Ms. Romer, the only woman in the inner circle of Mr. Obama's economic advisers, early on had tense relations with **Lawrence H. Summers**, who, as director of his National Economic Council, coordinates the advice that goes to the president.

But according to the announcement, Ms. Romer wanted to return to her tenured position as an economics professor at the **University of California, Berkeley**, in time for her son to begin high school in California this fall. Her resignation is effective Sept. 3.

**Peter R. Orszag** left last week as Mr. **Obama's budget** director, citing personal reasons, and Ms. Romer's announcement had been rumored for weeks.

It has been common in administrations for either budget directors or heads of the Council of Economic Advisers to serve less than two years, and those in the Obama administration have been under uncommon pressures.

Ms. Romer had a bigger role than many predecessors in her job but was said to express frustration that she did not have more direct access to the president, or more influence.

At some cost to her credibility, Ms. Romer was perhaps best known publicly for her early projection that unemployment would not top 8 percent if Mr. Obama's \$787 billion **stimulus package** became law; the spending was approved a month after his

inauguration, but by year's end the jobless rate hit 10 percent.

“Christy Romer has provided extraordinary service to me and our country during a time of economic crisis and recovery,” Mr. Obama said in the White House statement. “The challenges we faced demanded more of Christy than any of her predecessors, and I greatly valued and appreciated her skill, commitment and wise counsel.

“While Christy’s family commitments require that she return home, I’m gratified that she will continue to offer her insights and advice as a member of my Economic Recovery Advisory Board.”

Ms. Romer called it the “honor of a lifetime” to serve in the administration.