



OFFICE OF THE CHAIRPERSON

FROM: Robert D. Hogue

TO: AbilityOne Program Stakeholders

SUBJECT: Chairperson's Intent

I take the reins of the U.S. AbilityOne Commission from Chairperson Jeff Koses at a time of great change for government agencies and operations. We must meet this moment in history with the urgency, responsiveness, and commitment it demands.

It is natural for there to be questions across the AbilityOne Program concerning how the Commission's new leadership – myself and Vice Chairperson Christina Brandt – will navigate the changes sweeping across government. I want to take this opportunity to introduce myself and address these questions to the extent that I can.

My four decades practicing law in the public and private sectors include serving nearly 20 years in the Pentagon as the Counsel for the Commandant of the Marine Corps, and as Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Navy (Manpower and Reserve Affairs). I was appointed to the Senior Executive Service in September 2000 as the Deputy Counsel for the Commandant of the Marine Corps.

I am a survivor of the September 11 terrorist attacks on the Pentagon, and bear two significant disabilities from that event. My experience as an executive, attorney, and survivor have manifested within me a strong desire to serve. I hope that motivation, combined with my long experience as a senior executive managing large, complex programs, will serve me well in the position of Chairperson. I am grateful to Chairperson Koses for his outstanding service in this post, and his active support and encouragement during the transition, as well as the support and service of my Commission colleagues and staff.

The Commission has an important mission. That has not changed. Ultimately, we work with our Federal contractor community and Federal customers to create quality employment opportunities for people who are blind or have significant disabilities. Today we must do so as the Federal Government transitions into a new era of accountability.

While our mission is statutory, the Commission will adapt to the leadership priorities of the President. It is clear the Administration is currently reviewing the efficacy of Executive Branch agencies with an emphasis on identifying and eradicating waste, fraud and abuse. Over the last decade, the Commission has made significant progress in this area. Going forward, the Commission will follow the Administration's lead by increasing its focus on accountability and efficiency throughout the Program.

To that end, the Commission will engage the Federal contractor community to prioritize accountability and efficiency while concurrently seeking the ideas, innovation, and execution that are so essential to the future success of the Program.

Additionally, I have asked the Commission staff for their input on how to streamline operations and intensify the Program's focus on American-made products. Our work with Program colleagues will address these and other areas, including a relentless pursuit of where and how we can improve the Commission and the Program.

As always, we will continue our outreach and communication with the disability community.

More broadly, our public engagement with a wide range of stakeholders will continue to ensure the transparency and dialogue required for mutual understanding of Commission and Program activities and actions.

I look forward to working together to execute our important mission in a spirit of shared purpose.