

**Committee for Purchase From People  
Who Are Blind or Severely Disabled**

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**Andrew Houghton, Committee Chairperson, administers the oath of office to Robert T. Kelly, Jr. today during a Committee meeting.**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **President Reappointed Committee Member**

Washington, DC, July 10, 2008— The President reappointed Robert T. Kelly, Jr., of Winter Haven, Fla., to a second term on the Committee for Purchase From People Who Are Blind or Severely Disabled. Kelly was sworn into office this morning during a Committee meeting by Andrew Houghton, Chairperson, Hollywood, Fla.

The Committee is an independent federal agency responsible for administering the Javits-Wagner-O'Day (JWOD) Act, a public law that directs the federal government to purchase certain products and services furnished by nonprofit agencies employing individuals who are blind or have other severe disabilities through the AbilityOne Program.

Kelly's first appointment to the Committee was in July of 2003 as a Private Citizen representing the interests of persons with severe disabilities.

"I am very happy and honored to serve this worthwhile program and will continue to devote my time productively over the next five years," Kelly said. "The AbilityOne Program provides employment opportunities for people who are blind or severely disabled and I feel the program has done a lot to assist people with disabilities, but we need to do more."

"We are honored to have the vast knowledge and experience that Bob brings to our Committee," Andrew Houghton, Chairperson said. "Bob plays a vital leadership role in the strategic direction of the AbilityOne Program."

Kelly retired in 2005 from his position as a Customer Service Attendant at BellSouth in Miami Springs, Fla., where he had been an employee since 1976. Previous to his appointment to the Committee, Kelly served on a number of disability-related boards and councils including two terms on the U.S. Access Board (appointed in both 1987 and 1990), where he worked on drafting rules for the Americans with Disabilities Act; and a term on the Florida Developmental Disabilities Council (appointed in 2000), which helps plan individual and family-centered supports for persons with disabilities in Florida.

Kelly has devoted much of his time over the years to various civic and charitable organizations, including the U. S. Junior Chamber of Commerce (Jaycees) and the Leukemia Society of

America, and he has participated in numerous local, state and federal political campaigns, most recently holding the position of Disability Coalition National Co-Chairman for Bush-Cheney, 2000.

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The AbilityOne Program provides employment opportunities for people who are blind or have other severe disabilities in the manufacture and delivery of products and services to the federal government. The Committee determines which products and services purchased by the federal government must be procured from AbilityOne-participating nonprofit agencies. It establishes the fair market prices for these products and services, and revises the prices when appropriate. The Committee assists entities of the federal government in expanding their AbilityOne procurement, and designates one or more distributors for AbilityOne products and services.

The Committee is comprised of 15 Presidentially-appointed members, 11 of whom represent governmental agencies and four private citizens knowledgeable about the employment problems of people who are blind or have other severe disabilities.

(end)



Robert T. Kelly, Jr. holds is Presidential appointment certificate given to him by Andrew Houghton, Committee Chairperson.