

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Thomas D. Robinson and Robert T. Kelly, Jr., Elected to Lead U.S. AbilityOne Commission; Jan R. Frye and Rear Admiral Jonathan A. Yuen Retire

ARLINGTON, Va. – At the July 2, 2018, meeting of the U.S. AbilityOne Commission, Thomas D. Robinson and Robert T. Kelly, Jr., were elected to the respective leadership positions of Chairperson and Vice Chairperson.

Robinson, the Department of the Air Force representative to the Commission, had served as Vice Chairperson since 2017. Kelly has served on the Commission since 2003 as a private citizen representing the interests of nonprofit agency employees with significant disabilities. The Commission's 15 members are appointed by the President of the United States.

“I am honored to serve as the next Chairperson of the U.S. AbilityOne Commission and am delighted that Bob Kelly joins me as Vice Chairperson,” Robinson said. “I am committed to working with the other Commission members as we look to the future for opportunities to move faster and grow employment for people who are blind or have significant disabilities.”

Robinson is the Director of Contracting, Air Force Life Cycle Management Center, at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio, and is responsible for programs valued at more than \$215 billion in active contracts. President Barack H. Obama appointed him as the Air Force representative to the Commission in 2013.

In his Air Force position, Robinson guides contracting policy for seven operating locations, ensures workforce development for more than 2,000 contracting professionals, and manages a support and contract execution staff of more than 200. He guides more than \$40 billion in annual obligations for 11 Program Executive Officers and two Direct Report Divisions. He is also responsible for more than 550 Air Force, joint and allied warfighting programs, including F-22 and F-16 fighter aircraft; C-17 and C-5 cargo aircraft; Presidential Airlift Recapitalization; KC-46 tanker aircraft; B-1 and B-2 bomber aircraft; and Predator, Global Hawk and Reaper remotely piloted aircraft.

Over the course of his career, Kelly has served on a number of disability-related boards and councils. He was appointed by President Ronald Reagan to the U.S. Access Board, where he served two terms and worked on drafting rules for the Americans with Disabilities Act. He also served one term on the Florida Developmental Disabilities Council, which helps plan individual and family-centered supports for persons with disabilities in Florida. He retired in 2005 from BellSouth after a career spanning almost 30 years. President George W. Bush appointed Kelly to one of four private-citizen positions on the Commission.

The Commission's outgoing Chairperson, James M. Kesteloot, was elected to that position in 2015. Acknowledged nationwide as a leading figure in the blindness community and a pioneer in fighting for jobs for people who are blind or visually impaired, Kesteloot will remain a Commission member, holding one of the private-citizen positions. He was appointed to the Commission by President Obama in 2010.

The Commission meeting also marked the departures of Department of Veterans Affairs representative Jan R. Frye and Navy Rear Admiral Jonathan A. Yuen. Frye is retiring as the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Acquisition and Logistics at the VA. He served 30 years in the Army, retiring as a colonel, before joining the Commission in 2011 as the VA member. Rear Adm. Yuen, who will soon retire as Commander, Naval Supply Systems Command and 47th Chief of Supply Corps, joined the Commission in 2014 as the Navy representative. Both Frye and Yuen were appointed to the Commission by President Obama.

About the U.S. AbilityOne Commission and AbilityOne Program

The AbilityOne Program is a source of employment for approximately 45,000 people who are blind or have significant disabilities, including approximately 3,000 veterans, at more than 550 nonprofit agencies from Guam to Maine. AbilityOne provides more than \$3.3 billion of products and services to the federal government annually. The program operates at more than 1,000 locations representing 40 government agencies, including 150 Base Supply Centers at military and government installations. AbilityOne's largest customer is the Department of Defense, which procures more than \$1.7 billion of AbilityOne products and services annually.

The program is administered by the U.S. AbilityOne Commission, the operating name of the Committee for Purchase From People Who Are Blind or Severely Disabled. The Commission is a federal agency. It is comprised of 15 Presidential appointees, with 11 representing federal agencies and four serving as private citizens who are knowledgeable about the obstacles to employment of people who are blind or have significant disabilities. The Commission administers the AbilityOne Program with the assistance of two central nonprofit agencies, National Industries for the Blind and SourceAmerica.

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