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Date: 12/15/2015 1:08:43 PM
Subject: Bob Williams to Join ACL as Deputy Commissioner, Administration on Disabilities and Director, Independent Living Administration

December 15, 2015

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At the time Jamie Kendall passed away unexpectedly, ACL was within weeks of announcing her selection to serve as deputy commissioner for the Administration on Disabilities and director of the Independent Living Administration. Jamie had been serving as the acting director of the ILA since June.

With her extensive experience and tremendous talents, Jamie was an outstanding selection, and the ILA, AOD, ACL, and the people we serve would have benefitted greatly from her leadership in that role. Jamie's absence is felt every day, in many ways, and this is one more reason we miss her.

One of the best ways we can honor Jamie's memory is to continue her work, and ACL is fortunate to have found another exceptionally qualified senior leader to help us do that. Bob Williams will join ACL in January to serve in the dual roles.

Active in disability rights since high school, Bob came to Washington, DC to go to college and has lived and worked here for over three decades. Currently, he is the senior advisor to the deputy commissioner for retirement and disability policy at the Social Security Administration and a key leader of several interagency initiatives to create greater opportunities in career paths, employment, and economic mobility for people with significant disabilities.

In earlier roles, Bob headed SSA's Office of Employment Support Programs and has advised the Kaiser Foundation, the Commonwealth Fund, and other organizations on policy issues affecting the health, independence and economic well-being of people of all ages with disabilities. He also served as the Commissioner on Developmental Disabilities and then as the deputy assistant secretary for disability, aging and long-term care policy at HHS. He also helped gain the passage of the ADA and to create community living services and supports to children and adults once consigned to Forest Haven, the District of Columbia's institution for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

“I had known Jamie since she started as a Presidential Management Fellow in 1997, and I regarded her as a great friend, colleague, mentee and mentor.” Bob said.
“Although it is with sadness, I am proud to join and help lead the team that she helped create and took so much pride in.”

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