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## **DHS Names Kelley-Siel to Lead Children, Adults and Families Division**

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Oregon Department of Human Services Director Bruce Goldberg, M.D., announced today that he has named Erinn Kelley-Siel as the Assistant Director of the Children, Adults and Families Division after a year-long open process. Kelley-Siel has been serving as the Interim Assistant Director of the division since July 2008.

The Children, Adults and Families Division includes self-sufficiency programs, such as food stamps and TANF cash assistance, vocational rehabilitation for people with disabilities and Oregon's child welfare system.

Goldberg pointed to Kelley-Siel's success in overseeing the agency's response during the state's economic downturn. Demand for services has skyrocketed, and one in six Oregonians currently receives food stamps.

"Over the past year Erinn has overseen improvements in customer service for our clients that have actually reduced the time people have to wait to receive services," Goldberg said. "Today in most places people receive same-day service. That is an incredible accomplishment during a time when the economy has created record need."

Kelley-Siel has also put together an aggressive agenda to help reduce child abuse and neglect in Oregon by stabilizing families and reaching out to local communities for support. The overall goal is to safely reduce the number of children entering the foster care system. Other improvements center on increasing placements of children with relatives when they cannot remain safely with their parents, reducing racial disparity in foster care and adoptions, improving safety for children in foster care and better meeting the behavioral health needs of children in foster care.

In 2008, state officials received more than 65,000 reports of abuse and neglect, involving 10,421 victims. On any given day last year, 8,775 Oregon children were in

foster care, a ten percent reduction from the year before. Importantly, that reduction occurred as the number of child abuse victims being re-abused also was reduced, illustrating that the state's effort to safely reduce foster care was getting results.

“Erinn does not accept the status quo and will strive for all of Oregon’s children to be safe,” said Goldberg. “She has spent her career working to make things better for families, and I am delighted she will continue that work here at DHS.”

Prior to joining DHS, Kelley-Siel served as Advisor on Health and Human Services to Governor Kulongoski. In that capacity, she advised the Governor on issues ranging from reducing Oregon's hunger rate, strengthening protection for children in Oregon's child welfare system, transforming Oregon's public mental health system for children and adults, redesigning Oregon's Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program and making healthcare more affordable for all Oregonians.

Kelley-Siel has also served as an associate attorney in the Energy and Telecommunications practice group at the Portland-based law firm Stoel Rives LLP, and she served as law clerk to then-Justice Kulongoski at the Oregon Supreme Court.

Kelley-Siel came to Oregon from Texas where she helped to represent that state's interests in child protection proceedings and advocated for children and adult victims of abuse. She received her law degree from the University of Texas at Austin and holds a degree in psychology from Texas A&M University.