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DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & SOCIAL SERVICES

Sarah Palin, Governor

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NEWS RELEASE



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Behavioral Health and Juvenile Justice directors named

(Juneau, Alaska) — Today Health and Social Services Commissioner Karleen Jackson announced the appointment of Melissa Witzler-Stone as Behavioral Health director and Steve McComb as Juvenile Justice director.

“Melissa Witzler-Stone comes to us with substantial experience in behavioral health services, in both rural and urban settings, and in public and nonprofit sectors” Jackson said. “The Division of Behavioral Health has undergone quite a transformation as a result of the 2003 reorganization, and Melissa has the vision and experience needed to complete the system reforms necessary to better serve Alaskans in this critical area.”

Witzler-Stone has a Master’s in Social Work and a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology; she has served as the Executive Director of SeaView Community Services in Seward since 1994. She will join the DHSS leadership team on May 1, 2007.

The appointment of Steve McComb as the director of Juvenile Justice is effective immediately; he has served as acting division director since June 2006.

“Steve’s entire career has focused on youth and youth issues,” Jackson said. “I am pleased to have him continue to share his wealth of knowledge and experience regarding Juvenile Justice issues in the director’s role.”

McComb has a broad range of experience in Juvenile Justice. Prior to serving as acting director, McComb served as deputy director and Social Services Program Administrator for Juvenile Justice from Jan. 2002 to May 2006. McComb has worked for the department in Juvenile Justice since 1981, serving as probation officer, regional administrator, and facility superintendent. McComb has a Masters in Applied Behavioral Sciences, a Bachelor of Science in U.S. History, and has also earned a teaching certificate.