



Statement by Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff on the Resignation of the Director of U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

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Emilio Gonzalez has informed me of his intention to resign as Director of U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), effective April 18. Emilio has been an extraordinary director who is leaving an indelible mark on the transformation and modernization of USCIS operations.

Emilio is an American by choice and he has brought that unique experience to his leadership of this critical agency, and more importantly to our nation's unparalleled efforts to welcome immigrants and foster their integration into our society. During his tenure, Emilio oversaw important efforts to improve customer service and modernize the agency's operations to further strengthen the security and integrity of the immigration system well into the 21st century. He has led efforts to ensure the reliability of processes for international adoptions. Emilio also undertook great steps to expedite the naturalization of immigrant servicemen and women defending and protecting our nation from harm. I had the special opportunity of traveling with him to Iraq as part of a naturalization ceremony for more than 170 of those brave members of the armed services.

Prior to joining the department in 2005, Emilio served as the Director for Western Hemisphere Affairs at the National Security Council. He also had a distinguished 26-year career in the U.S. Army.

I am grateful for Emilio's contributions to America's rich tradition of welcoming newcomers and to his deep commitment of service to the American public. I look forward to our continued friendship.

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