



Statement by Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff on the Resignation of the Assistant Secretary of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement

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Assistant Secretary Julie Myers has announced that she will depart the department on Nov. 15. Julie has been an extraordinary Assistant Secretary for Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), and when she approached me in mid-September to discuss her departure, I knew this would be a loss for the department. Julie has been a major force in transforming ICE into a 21st century law enforcement agency.

Under Julie's leadership, ICE has undertaken exceptional law enforcement operations with unprecedented results. She has instituted and overseen several key law enforcement programs that have dramatically enhanced the department's efforts to curb illegal immigration and ensure strong enforcement of customs laws. ICE has set enforcement records for three consecutive fiscal years in criminal alien and fugitive arrests, worksite enforcement, and overall alien removals. She has implemented programs that have transformed how federal, state and local law enforcement work together, share information and enhance public safety. As a result, ICE has had a five-fold increase in the arrest of gang members and associates since 2005, as well as a four-fold increase in fugitive operations teams. These teams have arrested twice the number of fugitives as in fiscal year 2006, resulting in the first ever decline of the fugitive alien population.

Julie also led efforts to identify and charge criminal aliens incarcerated in our nation's prisons and jails, modernize the removal process and provide enhanced oversight for detention operations. She has focused significant attention on counter-proliferation investigations, resulting in a dramatic increase in convictions. She also instituted strong management practices within the agency, resulting in ICE receiving a clean financial audit opinion at the department level. ICE is performing the way that Congress envisioned when it was created over five years ago, in large part due to Julie Myers' service and leadership. These results speak volumes.

I am grateful for Julie's many contributions to the safety and security of our homeland, and I look forward to our continued friendship.

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