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# Press Release

## **DHS ANNOUNCES FIRST PRINCIPAL LEGAL ADVISOR FOR USCIS**

Washington, DC – U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) and the Office of the General Counsel (OGC) within the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) announces the agency’s first Principal Legal Advisor at USCIS, Robert Divine. Mr. Divine has been appointed by President George W. Bush to this key leadership position.

“I am proud to welcome Mr. Divine as a member of the USCIS family. He brings with him 17 years of business immigration law experience and will serve our agency and its customers as part of my Senior Executive Staff,” said Eduardo Aguirre, Director of USCIS.

“We are fortunate to have a person of Mr. Divine’s caliber become a part of the DHS General Counsel’s Office,” said General Counsel Joe Whitley. He adds, “Mr. Divine’s many years of immigration practice will serve the Department well in this critical new position.”

Mr. Divine has been the leader of a team of immigration lawyers and paralegals at Baker, Donelson, Bearman, Caldwell & Berkowitz, which is one of the 200 largest law firms in the country.

“I am eager to join the USCIS team led by Director Aguirre. The Director’s determination to transform the way USCIS administers immigration benefits is a great challenge, but one that can be accomplished through his leadership,” said Divine.

Mr. Divine has been the sole author of “Immigration Practice,” a 1,300 page practical treatise addressing all aspects of U.S. immigration law. The law book is now in its 10<sup>th</sup> edition. He earned his law degree at Vanderbilt University School of Law and his Bachelor of Arts degree at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

He was recently highlighted in the 2003-2004 publication, Best Lawyers in America, and has been given an “A/V” rating by the Martindale Hubbell law directory. Mr. Divine has been a member of the American Immigration Lawyers Association (AILA) since 1986 and served as elected Chair for AILA’s Mid-South Chapter from 2001-2003. Until his appointment, he had served as an expert on behalf of the U.S. Commission on Religious Freedom in its congressionally mandated study of the “expedited removal” process used at U.S. ports of entry.

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