Department of Justice

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ATTORNEY GENERAL ASHCROFT APPOINTS KEVIN D. ROONEY AS ACTING COMMISSIONER OF THE IMMIGRATION AND NATURALIZATION SERVICE (INS)

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- Attorney General John Ashcroft announced today that Kevin D. Rooney will serve as Acting Commissioner of the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS), effective on April 2. Rooney, currently the Director of the Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR), will serve until a permanent INS Commissioner is appointed.

"Kevin's broad-based management experience within Justice and his knowledge of immigration issues at the helm of the EOIR will help make the interim transition virtually seamless," said Ashcroft.

Rooney has served as the Director of the EOIR since January 1999. EOIR oversees the immigration court system, including the Board of Immigration Appeals and 52 immigration courts nationwide. Rooney previously served as Deputy Director of EOIR from 1995 - 1997.

As the Assistant Attorney General for Administration from 1977 - 1984, Rooney served as the Department of Justice's senior career official and chief management and financial officer under three Attorneys General during the Carter and Reagan Administrations. He was Assistant Director of the Bureau of Prisons from 1997 - 1999, and practiced law in Washington, D.C. from 1984 - 1995.

"I have a great appreciation for the work of INS and the dedication of its employees. I look forward to this outstanding opportunity to lead the agency in the coming months," Rooney said.

Rooney replaces Acting Commissioner, Mary Ann Wyrsch, who was recently appointed United Nations Deputy High Commissioner for Refugees. Her selection was announced on February 28 to be effective early April.

Rooney is a native of Palmer, Massachusetts and a graduate of St. Mary's Seminary and University and George Washington University School of Law. He and his wife, Annette, live in McLean, Virginia and have two daughters: Katie, 25, and Mary Beth, 18. Rooney is a U.S. Army veteran.

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