

## **INS chief opposes breakup plan;**

### **Some in Congress want law enforcement and benefit distribution to be done separately.**

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## **Body**

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The head of the Immigration and Naturalization Service said yesterday that services could be improved for immigrants without splitting the agency in two.

The INS has been criticized for taking too long - sometimes years - to process applications and for mistreating some of those applying for benefits. Some in Congress are pushing to divide the INS, believing it would be better run if its services were split between two agencies.

Commissioner James Ziglar said he did not think that was necessary.

"I don't think we need massive legislation. ... What we have to demonstrate to the Congress is that we have the will to do this here," Ziglar told reporters.

The new commissioner said he wanted everyone who comes in contact with the INS to be treated with respect and dignity and hopes to improve technology at the agency to cut down on application backlogs.

Ziglar said he hoped to start making changes this fall. He said he did not anticipate layoffs because of the changes, although he said some employees may be relocated. He said he wanted to do away with supervisors in INS field offices who oversee enforcement duties and services.

Ziglar, who has had little experience on immigration issues, took over his post three weeks ago. He toured an INS center last week to get a firsthand look at the long waits that routinely confront people seeking help from the agency.

A former Wall Street executive and a nephew of motivational speaker Zig Ziglar, he was Senate sergeant-at-arms and is a childhood friend of Minority Leader Trent Lott (R., Miss.). His Capitol connections and experience are expected to assist him as he tries to sell his ideas to Congress.

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Besides implementing changes within the INS, the Bush administration is weighing whether to allow about three million Mexican immigrants who are in the country illegally to become legal residents. The administration is also negotiating a guest-worker program with Mexico.

Ziglar has participated in some of the immigration discussions with Mexico, but he gave few details. He said work on the issue should go slowly and "bring the Hill along."

Those who support splitting the duties of immigration law enforcement and benefit distribution say it would eliminate poor service that arises from the conflicting missions of INS.

Detractors fear dividing the agency would lead to more money being spent on enforcement, which historically has been more popular with Congress.

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