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**U.S. Department of Justice**

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**10/14/05 - PRESS RELEASE**

**Portland Man Charged with Fraudulent Receipt of  
FEMA Hurricane Katrina Disaster Relief Funds**

PORTLAND, OREGON - Karin J. Immergut, the United States Attorney for the District of Oregon, announced today that an indictment was returned on Wednesday October 12, 2005 by a federal grand jury charging Harold Allen Miller, Jr. 41, of Portland, Oregon with Mail Fraud, 18 U.S.C. § 1341, which carries a maximum penalty of 20 years in prison and a \$1,000,000 fine.

The charges stem from a federal investigation by the Postal Inspection Service, the FBI, the Secret Service, and the Department of Homeland Security into allegations that Portland residents are making false statements in order to qualify for disaster relief payments in the amount of \$2,000 by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). In order to qualify, a person must have suffered damage to property as a result of the Hurricane. Applicants are required to identify the specific property which suffered such damage.

The indictment alleges that Miller falsely represented that he suffered such damage to a property located in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. As a result, a FEMA check for \$2,000 was mailed from a government office in Texas to a post office box controlled by Miller in Portland. Investigators are gathering evidence relating to numerous other checks sent to Portland which may also be based on fraud.

A criminal indictment is only an allegation and not evidence of guilt. Defendants are presumed to be innocent unless and until proven guilty. If convicted, Miller could face imprisonment and a fine depending on judicial findings under the federal Sentencing Guidelines. Miller was arrested this morning and is scheduled to appear in federal court in Portland on today at 1:30 PM for arraignment on the charges.

This prosecution is supported by the Hurricane Katrina Fraud Task Force established by the United States Attorney General on September 8, 2005. Task Force members include the Department of Justice, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Federal Trade Commission, the Postal Inspection Service, the Securities & Exchange Commission, and other federal agencies. This national task force, working with state and local agencies, will swiftly bring to justice those who seek to commit fraud in connection with payment of hurricane relief funds.

Questions may be directed to Assistant U.S. Attorney Lance Caldwell, who is handling the prosecution, at (503) 727-1000.