

NEWS RELEASE



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MISSISSIPPI EVACUEE PLEADS GUILTY TO MAKING TELEPHONE BOMB THREAT TO RED CROSS RESPONSE CENTER

Shreveport, Louisiana . . . A Hurricane Katrina evacuee from Mississippi who called the Red Cross and threatened to blow up targets related to FEMA, the Red Cross, and Keesler Air Force Base in Mississippi pleaded guilty today to making bomb threats over the telephone. BILLY WAYNE LIVINGSTON, age 38, of Gulfport, Mississippi, entered the plea in U.S. District Court in Monroe, Louisiana, United States Attorney Donald W. Washington announced. LIVINGSTON has been detained pending his sentencing which is set for March 6, 2006 at 1:30 p.m.

U.S. Attorney Washington stated: "It is reprehensible for someone to threaten violence against the organizations performing purely humanitarian missions to help the thousands who have suffered from Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. We will bring the full weight of federal law to protect the integrity and safety of those who are bringing comfort to the victims of

these natural disasters."

On September 16, 2005, LIVINGSTON, who had evacuated from Gulfport, Mississippi, after Hurricane Katrina and was staying in a hotel in the Monroe area, telephoned the Red Cross Response Center in Falls Church, Virginia and made the threats. The threats included the use of guns, grenades and mines against both people and property. LIVINGSTON was arrested the next day in Monroe, Louisiana by the FBI.

LIVINGSTON faces a sentence of up to ten years in prison, a fine of \$250,000, or both.

Sentencing in federal court is determined by the discretion of federal judges and the governing statute. United States Sentencing Guidelines established by the United States Congress and the United States Sentencing Commission are only used as guidelines by the judge in determining the appropriate sentence. Parole has been abolished in the federal system.

This case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Robert W. Gillespie, Jr. and was investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

In September 2005, Attorney General Alberto R. Gonzales created the Hurricane Katrina Fraud Task Force, designed to deter, investigate and prosecute disaster-related federal crimes such as charity fraud, identity theft, procurement fraud and insurance fraud. The Hurricane Katrina Fraud Task Force - chaired by Assistant Attorney General Alice S. Fisher of the Criminal Division - includes members from the FBI, the Federal Trade

Commission, the Postal Inspector's Office and the Executive Office of United States Attorneys, among others.

If anyone has information concerning possible fraud being committed during the post-Katrina recovery effort, please call either the DHS-OIG Fraud Hotline at 1-866-720-5721 or the FBI Fraud Hotline at 1-800-225-5324.

For further information, please contact United States Attorney Donald W. Washington at 337-262-6618 or First Assistant U.S. Attorney Bill Flanagan at 318-676-3600.

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