



Department of Justice

United States Attorney's Office

Northern District of Florida

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For more information contact:
Supervisory AUSA Karen E. Rhew
(850) 942-8430

**FORMER DIXIE COUNTY BUILDING AND ZONING INSPECTOR
CONVICTED OF FEDERAL PROGRAM FRAUD**

TALLAHASSEE -- Thomas F. Kirwin, United States Attorney for the Northern District of Florida, today announced the conviction of former Dixie County Building and Zoning Inspector, Willie "Billy" Keen, Jr. (60), for federal program fraud in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 666.

Keen was convicted following a two-day trial in the United States District Court in Gainesville. At trial, the government introduced evidence that between March and October 2003, Keen, who was then employed as the building and zoning inspector for Dixie County, fraudulently applied for Community Development Block Grant and State Housing Initiative Program funds to renovate his personal home. Because Keen did not financially qualify for these funds and was otherwise prohibited by virtue of his position from receiving the funds, Keen applied for the funds in his girlfriend's name, falsely representing that she was the owner of his home. During the course of 2003, Keen obtained approximately \$32,000 in grant funds, which he used to renovate his home.

Keen faces a maximum sentence of ten years' imprisonment, a \$250,000 fine, and a three-year term of supervised release. Keen also faces forfeiture of his home based upon the jury's finding that the home, which was renovated with the fraudulently obtained grant funds, constituted proceeds of the fraud. Sentencing will be held on June 2, 2009, in United States District Court in Gainesville, before the Honorable Stephan P. Mickle.

United States Attorney Kirwin commended the diligent efforts of the Federal Bureau of Investigation in investigating the case. The case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorneys Gregory P. McMahon and Brett Meltzer.

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