



NEWS RELEASE

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SIX CHARGED IN BATON ROUGE ON FEDERAL FEMA FRAUD CHARGES

United States Attorney David R. Dugas announced that on October 19, 2005, a federal grand jury returned indictments against five Louisiana residents and a bill of information was filed against a sixth Louisiana resident who applied for FEMA relief funds.

- JOHN PHILLIP DUGAN, age 19, a resident of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, was charged in a two count indictment with making a false and fraudulent claim for disaster assistance benefits and with making false and fraudulent statements to FEMA.
- RUBY D. LOLLIS, age 37, a resident of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, was charged in a two count indictment with making a false and fraudulent claim for disaster assistance benefits and with using a false social security number to apply for disaster assistance benefits.
- URSULA R. JOHNSON, age 33, a resident of Baker, Louisiana, was charged in a bill of information with making a false and fraudulent claim for disaster assistance benefits.

These three individuals were previously arrested pursuant to Complaints issued by a Magistrate Judge in the Middle District of Louisiana. In addition:

- MELVIN R. SANDERS, age 44, a resident of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, was charged in a one count indictment with making a false and fraudulent claim for disaster assistance benefits.
- KIM MORRISON, age 21, a resident of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, was charged in a two count indictment with making a false and fraudulent claim for disaster assistance benefits and with making false and fraudulent statements to the Department of Homeland Security, Office of Inspector General.
- HERMAN SHROPSHIRE, age 52, a resident of Baton Rouge, Louisiana was charged in a two count indictment with making a false and fraudulent claim for disaster assistance benefits and with making false and fraudulent statements to FEMA.

The charges resulted from investigations conducted by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Office of the Inspector General; the FBI; the Social Security Administration, Office of the Inspector General; and the United States Attorney's Office for the Middle District of Louisiana.

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 the United States Attorneys, among others.

If convicted, each defendant faces a maximum of five years imprisonment and a \$250,000 fine on each count.

NOTE: An indictment is a determination by a grand jury that there is probable cause to believe that offenses have been committed by the defendants. A bill of information is merely an accusation by the United States Attorney that offenses have been committed by the defendant. The defendants, of course, are presumed innocent until and unless they are proven guilty at trial.

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