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RUSTON, LOUISIANA MAN SENTENCED FOR FEDERAL HATE CRIME

Hangman's Noose Leads to Prison Time

MONROE, La. – United States Attorney Stephanie A. Finley and Assistant Attorney General Thomas E. Perez announced today that Robert Jackson, 37, of Ruston, Louisiana, was sentenced to 12 months in federal prison for placing a hangman's noose under the carport of the home of a Honduran immigrant who moved to Ruston from New Orleans in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. Jackson was also sentenced to one year of supervised release upon his release from prison and ordered to attend anger management and culture diversity programs. Today's sentence was handed down by U. S. Magistrate Judge Karen L. Hayes in Monroe.

Jackson entered a plea of guilty on June 24, 2010, to violating the Fair Housing Act by intimidating and interfering with another's housing rights because of race. According to court testimony, the victim and her children arrived home on June 13, 2008, and found a hangman's noose suspended from a bird-feeder underneath the carport of her home. Jackson admitted that he hung the noose in order "to send a message" to African-American males who visited the victim's home.

"A noose is an unmistakable symbol of hate in our country, and using this symbol to intimidate a family will not be tolerated," said Thomas E. Perez, Assistant Attorney General of the Civil Rights Division. "The Justice Department will vigorously prosecute those who resort to violent acts motivated by hate."

"When a noose is used to interfere with federally protected rights, it is a crime which will be prosecuted by this office" said United States Attorney Finley. "The victim and her family sought nothing more than to live in their home peacefully. Everyone should feel safe in their homes without being subjected to hateful acts."

The case was investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Monroe Resident Agency, and was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Mary Mudrick and Trial Attorney Myesha Braden of the Civil Right Division of the United States Department of Justice.

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