



# Department of Justice

United States Attorney Donald R. Burkhalter  
Southern District of Mississippi

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## **ATLANTA WOMAN PLEADS GUILTY TO STEALING MONEY FROM FEMA**

Gulfport, Miss. – Zhioukellia Brown of Atlanta, Georgia, pled guilty in U.S. District Court today to stealing money and benefits from the Federal Emergency Management Agency, U.S. Attorney Donald R. Burkhalter announced. Brown admitted to fraudulently applying for and receiving disaster assistance funds from the Federal Emergency Management Agency by falsely claiming she resided in a Bayou View apartment in Gulfport at the time of Hurricane Katrina. In total, she received \$10, 650.90 in cash or corporate lodging benefits in the months following Katrina. Brown admitted that she resided in Georgia at the time of Hurricane Katrina. Brown faces a maximum penalty of twenty years in prison and fines of up to \$250,000.00. She is scheduled for sentencing before U.S. District Judge Halil S. Ozerden on April 8, 2010.

This case was investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

In September, 2005, former Attorney General Alberto R. Gonzales created the national 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 for the Criminal Division, Lanny A. Breuer, includes members from the FBI, Department of Homeland Security Office of Inspector General, the Federal Trade Commission, the Department of Labor Office of Inspector General, the Postal Inspector's Office and the Executive Office of United States Attorneys, among others.

Pursuant to the Justice Department initiative, a local Katrina Fraud Task Force, consisting of over 20 Federal and State law enforcement agencies, was formed in the Southern District of Mississippi to pursue and prosecute individuals who engage in fraud associated with the hurricanes.

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.

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