



Department of Justice

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ATLANTA WOMAN INDICTED FOR HURRICANE KATRINA FRAUD

ATLANTA, GA - YOLANDA CLAY, 33, of Atlanta, Georgia has been indicted by a federal grand jury on felony charges for fraudulently obtaining FEMA assistance funds intended for the victims of Hurricane Katrina. CLAY was arraigned today before a United States Magistrate Judge.

United States Attorney David E. Nahmias said, "This defendant allegedly stole thousands of dollars in disaster relief funds that were intended to benefit those who truly suffered from the devastation of Hurricane Katrina. We remain committed to prosecuting criminals who would take advantage of a terrible national tragedy to enrich themselves."

According to United States Attorney Nahmias, the charges and information presented in court: CLAY falsely represented to FEMA that she was a resident of New Orleans, Louisiana at the time Hurricane Katrina made landfall, when in fact she was residing in College Park, Georgia. To perpetuate the fraud, CLAY allegedly provided a Louisiana address where she did not live and falsely claimed that her residence was damaged by the hurricane. Based on her misrepresentations, CLAY received \$2,000 in emergency housing assistance, \$2,358 in rental assistance, and \$10,391.51 for personal property damage from FEMA.

The indictment charges CLAY with eight counts of mail and wire fraud, false statements, and theft of government funds. The indictment also contains a forfeiture count in which the United States seeks the forfeiture of all proceeds from her alleged criminal scheme. The charges carry each a maximum sentence of 20 years in prison and a fine of up to \$250,000.

This case is being investigated by Special Agents of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Office of Inspector General.

Assistant United States Attorney Stephen H. McClain is prosecuting the case.

Members of the public are reminded that the indictment contains only allegations. A defendant is presumed innocent of the charges and it will be the government's burden

to prove a defendant's guilt beyond a reasonable doubt at trial.

In September 2005, the Justice Department 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 Acting Assistant Attorney General Matthew W. Friedrich 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. <http://www.projectsafefchildhood.gov>.

For further information please contact David E. Nahmias (pronounced NAH-me-us), United States Attorney, or Charysse L. Alexander, Executive Assistant United States Attorney, through Patrick Crosby, Public Affairs Officer, U.S. Attorney's Office, at (404) 581-6016. The Internet address for the HomePage for the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Northern District of Georgia is www.usdoj.gov/usao/gan.