



Department of Justice

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LOUISVILLE MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO KATRINA FRAUD

GULFPORT, Miss. – Kendrick T. Combest, of Louisville, Mississippi, pled guilty on Thursday, December 2, to stealing government money from the Federal Emergency Management Agency following Hurricane Katrina, U.S. Attorney Donald R. Burkhalter announced today. Combest claimed a house in Gautier, Mississippi, in which another family lived at the time of Hurricane Katrina, receiving \$5,422.98 in housing and other benefits as a result of the false claim. Yesterday, he admitted that he never lived at the address he claimed. He is scheduled for sentencing before U.S. District Judge Louis Guirola on March 2, 2010.

This case was investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Department of Homeland Security's Office of Inspector General.

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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