



***United States Attorney
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**NEW JERSEY MAN PLEADS GUILTY IN \$1.075 MILLION 9/11
FRAUD, LARGEST EVER AGAINST THE SEPTEMBER 11TH FUND**

MICHAEL J. GARCIA, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, announced that MARIO MASTELLONE pleaded guilty today to a charge of fraudulently obtaining money from the September 11 Victim Compensation Fund. The plea was entered in Manhattan federal court before United States District Judge VICTOR MARRERO. According to the Indictment to which he pleaded guilty and statements made during MASTELLONE's guilty plea proceeding:

MASTELLONE received approximately \$1,076,789 from the United States Department of Justice September 11 Victim Compensation Fund of 2001 ("September 11th Fund") based on false claims that he had not worked since September 11, 2001, and that he was totally and permanently disabled by that day's attacks on the United States. Measured by the total amount of money he obtained, MASTELLONE's is the largest fraud ever perpetrated against the September 11th Fund.

The September 11th Fund was set up in the wake of the terrorist attacks of 9/11 to compensate people who were injured in the attacks, and was administered by the United States Department of Justice.

MASTELLONE 41, of East Windsor, New Jersey, pleaded guilty to one count of illegally obtaining public money. He faces a maximum term of 10 years in prison when he is sentenced by Judge MARRERO on May 16, 2008.

Mr. GARCIA thanked the Department of Justice Office of the Inspector General for their work in the investigation of this case.

Assistant United States Attorneys MICHAEL FARBIARZ and
JENNA DABBS are in charge of the prosecution.

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