



Department of Justice

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Middle District of Louisiana

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THREE MORE INDICTED, ANOTHER PLEADS GUILTY IN BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA, ON DISASTER RELIEF FRAUD CHARGES

BATON ROUGE, LA – Three more Louisiana residents were indicted and another pled guilty in federal court on charges of fraud related to hurricane disaster relief programs, United States Attorney David R. Dugas announced today.

IRIS L. DAVIS, age 25, of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, was charged in a two-count indictment by a federal grand jury with making a false and fraudulent claim for disaster assistance benefits and with making false and fraudulent statements to the Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA). The charges resulted from an investigation conducted by the U.S. Postal Service's Office of Inspector General. If convicted, DAVIS faces a maximum sentence of five years imprisonment, a \$250,000 fine, or both, per count.

NADINE A. BUGGAGE, age 35, of Napoleonville, Louisiana, and CORRINE FOSTER, age 52, of Charenton, Louisiana, were each charged today in an indictment by a federal grand jury with two counts of wire fraud in connection with their obtaining disaster unemployment benefits for alleged losses resulting from Hurricane Katrina. The charges resulted from investigations conducted by the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Inspector General. If convicted, BUGGAGE and FOSTER each faces a maximum sentence of twenty years imprisonment, a \$250,000 fine, or both, per count.

Finally, PAMELA D. WHITAKER, age 44, of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, pled guilty today before U.S. District Court Judge James J. Brady to two counts of mail fraud in connection with checks received from FEMA for expedited disaster assistance. The case was investigated by the U.S. Postal Inspection Service. As a result of her guilty plea, WHITAKER faces a maximum sentence of twenty years imprisonment, a \$250,000 fine, or both, per count.

Today's indictments bring the total number of individuals who have been charged in the Middle District of Louisiana with violations related to hurricane disaster relief funds to one hundred twenty-five.

In September 2005, Attorney General Alberto R. Gonzales 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 Assistant Attorney General Alice S. Fisher of the Criminal Division – includes the FBI, the U.S. Inspectors General community, the U.S. Secret Service, the U.S. Postal Inspection Service, the Executive Office for United States Attorneys and others.

For further information, contact David R. Dugas, U.S. Attorney for the Middle District of Louisiana, or Lyman Thornton, First Assistant U.S. Attorney, at (225) 389-0443. Anyone suspecting criminal activity involving disaster assistance programs can make an anonymous report by calling the toll-free Hurricane Relief Fraud Hotline, 1-866-720-5721, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, until further notice. Information can also be emailed to the Hurricane Katrina Fraud Task Force at HKFTF@leo.gov or sent by surface mail, with as many details as possible, to Hurricane Katrina Fraud Task Force, Baton Rouge, LA 70821-4909.

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