



Department of Justice

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
THURSDAY, JANUARY 29, 2009
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ANOTHER SENTENCED IN BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA, ON DISASTER RELIEF FRAUD CHARGES

BATON ROUGE, LA – United States Attorney David R. Dugas announced today that another Louisiana resident was sentenced on fraud charges related to a hurricane disaster relief program.

ROY JOHNSON, age 52, of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, was convicted after a two-day jury trial on February 13, 2008, of three counts of mail fraud in connection with a fraudulent application for expedited disaster assistance benefits. JOHNSON applied for disaster assistance from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) on September 17, 2005, falsely claiming that he had been living in New Orleans during Hurricane Katrina and that he had evacuated to Denham Springs, Louisiana. In fact, at the time of the storm, and for all of 2005, JOHNSON was in state custody in the Baton Rouge area. Prior to being incarcerated, JOHNSON lived in Baton Rouge. Through his false and fraudulent representations to FEMA, JOHNSON caused FEMA to mail him three checks for disaster assistance totaling over \$14,000. JOHNSON was sentenced today by U.S. District Court Judge James J. Brady to a term of imprisonment of thirty-three months and a term of supervised release of three years following his incarceration. The U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Office of Inspector General conducted the investigation of this matter.

The number of individuals who have been charged in the Middle District of Louisiana with violations related to hurricane disaster relief funds stands at one hundred seventy.

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 the Assistant Attorney General of the U.S. Department of Justice's 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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