



Department of Justice

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FOUR MORE INDICTED IN BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA, ON FRAUD CHARGES RELATED TO A HURRICANE DISASTER RELIEF PROGRAM

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

KIM MAJOR, age 48, of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, was charged in an indictment by a federal grand jury with four counts of mail fraud. The indictment alleges that from on or about September 23, 2005, through on or about April 4, 2006, MAJOR, under materially false and fraudulent pretenses and representations, received more than \$25,000 in expedited disaster assistance. The charges resulted from an investigation conducted by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Office of Inspector General. If convicted, MAJOR faces a maximum sentence of thirty years imprisonment, a \$1,000,000 fine, or both, per count.

ROY JOHNSON, age 51, of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, was charged in an indictment with three counts of mail fraud, also in connection with receipt of expedited disaster assistance benefits. The indictment alleges that from on or about September 17, 2005, through on or about November 23, 2005, JOHNSON, under false and fraudulent pretenses and representations, received more than \$14,000 in expedited disaster assistance. The case was investigated by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Office of Inspector General. The maximum sentence for each of the three counts is thirty years imprisonment, a \$1,000,000 fine, or both.

LAWANDA S. CLARK, age 24, of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, was charged in a two-count indictment with mail fraud (Count One) and with making a false and fraudulent claim for disaster assistance benefits (Count Two). The charges resulted from an investigation conducted by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Office of Inspector General. If convicted on Count One, CLARK faces a maximum sentence of thirty years imprisonment, a \$1,000,000 fine, or both. If convicted on Count Two, CLARK faces a maximum sentence of five years imprisonment, a \$250,000 fine, or both.

Finally, LESLIE A. SMITH, age 31, of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, was charged in a two-count indictment with mail fraud (Count One) and with illegal conversion of government property, that is, a check from the Federal Emergency Management Agency for expedited disaster assistance (Count Two). The case was investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation. If convicted on Count One, SMITH is faced with a maximum sentence of thirty years imprisonment, a \$1,000,000 fine, or both. If convicted on Count Two, SMITH faces a maximum term of imprisonment of ten years, a \$250,000 fine, or both.

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.

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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