



Department of Justice

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Southern District of Mississippi

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 29, 2008
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BAY ST. LOUIS WOMAN GETS PRISON TERM FOR KATRINA FRAUD

GULFPORT, Miss. – Doris H. Wilkerson, of Bay St. Louis, was sentenced on Friday, September 26, to serve 7 months in federal prison for Katrina Fraud, U.S. Attorney Dunn Lampton announced today. The prison term will be followed by 3 years of supervised release with 7 months of home confinement. Wilkerson was also ordered to make restitution of \$17,133.48 to FEMA, pay a fine of \$25,000, and complete 100 hours of community service.

Wilkerson pled guilty in April to charges of stealing government funds from FEMA and making false statements to the Small Business Administration and the Mississippi Development Authority for a U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development home grant for a house she owned, but did not live in, at the time of Katrina.

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 Acting Assistant Attorney General for the Criminal Division, Matthew Friedrich, includes members from the Department of Homeland Security, Office of the Inspector General, the FBI, 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. The Mississippi State Auditor Fraud Prevention and Protection Unit investigates allegations of fraud in the Homeowner Grant Program as part of the local task force.

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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