



UNITED STATES ATTORNEY'S OFFICE

*United States Attorney Donald W. Washington
Western District of Louisiana*

United States Courthouse • 300 Fannin Street, Suite 3201 • Shreveport, Louisiana 71101-3068 • (318) 676-3600
United States Courthouse • 800 Lafayette Street, Suite 2200 • Lafayette, Louisiana 70501-7206 • (337) 262-6618

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Contact: Donald W. Washington (337-262-6618)
William J. Flanagan (318-676-3600)

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FORMER EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF POVERTY POINT RESERVOIR DISTRICT INDICTED

Defendant used money from Poverty Point for his own benefit

Monroe, Louisiana . . . United States Attorney Donald W. Washington announced that the federal grand jury has returned an indictment charging **MICHAEL L. THOMPSON**, age 58, of Delhi, Louisiana, with one count of violating Title 18, United States Code, Section 1951, commonly referred to as the Hobbs Act.

The indictment alleges that between September 26, 1997 and June 20, 2002, THOMPSON served as the Executive Director of the Poverty Point Reservoir District. It is further alleged in the indictment that during that time period THOMPSON obtained funds of Poverty Point Reservoir District to which he was not entitled while acting under color of official right, that is, in his official capacity as Executive Director.

An arraignment has been set for June 29 at 10 a.m. in U.S. District Court in Monroe, Louisiana.

An indictment is merely an accusation and a defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty. Defendants are entitled to a presumption of innocence under the law, and the government has the burden of proving every element of the charges beyond a reasonable doubt.

If convicted, THOMPSON faces a sentence of up to 20 years in prison, a \$250,000.00 fine, or both. The court will fix a date for his initial appearance and arraignment. Sentencing in federal court is determined by the discretion of federal judges and the governing statute. Parole has been abolished in the federal system.

This case was investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Monroe Resident Agency, and is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney C. Mignonne Griffing.

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