



**U.S. Department of Justice  
U.S. Attorney's Office  
Western District of Texas**

**Johnny Sutton, U.S. Attorney**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**FORMER HOUSTON DOCTOR SENTENCED FOR MAKING VERBAL THREAT  
TO MURDER A FEDERAL PROSECUTOR**

**United States Attorney Johnny Sutton** announced today that 62-year-old Ira Klein, a former gastroenterologist, was sentenced this afternoon in Houston to 30 months in federal prison for making a verbal threat to murder an Assistant United States Attorney who was prosecuting him for healthcare and mail fraud violations.

United States District Judge Sim Lake ordered that 18 of the 30 months be served concurrently and the remaining 12 months be served consecutively to the 135-month federal prison sentence imposed on August 2, 2007, for healthcare fraud and mail fraud violations. In total, Klein will serve 147 months in federal prison for healthcare fraud, mail fraud and attempt to murder an Assistant United States Attorney.

Appearing before Judge Lake last Thursday afternoon, Klein pleaded guilty to one count of threatening to murder a law enforcement officer. By pleading guilty, Klein admitted that while in federal custody in May 2006, he solicited a fellow inmate to arrange to have federal prosecutor Sam Louis run over by an 18-wheeler and "make him like a pancake." Klein further admitted that he solicited the inmate to arrange to have acid thrown in the face of the FBI special agent Jayme Poteet, who investigated the health care fraud case, as well as the shooting death of his now ex-wife, Gabrielle Puccini, who Klein was convinced helped authorities secure his conviction. Klein agreed to pay the inmate \$550,000 for arranging to have these acts carried out.

During his plea hearing, Klein also agreed to the criminal forfeiture of \$250,000 cash seized by federal authorities from a Houston bank account.

"Be warned. Those who threaten the lives and safety of American prosecutors and agents will soon find themselves in federal prison where they belong," stated United States Attorney Johnny Sutton.

This case was investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Assistant United States Attorney Sharon Pierce prosecuted this case on behalf of the government.

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