



Department of Justice

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TEXARKANA, TX MAN INDICTED FOR HURRICANE RELATED FRAUD

Federal Charges Filed Alleging Defendant Filed Over A Dozen FEMA Applications

TYLER TX – United States Attorney Matthew D. Orwig announced today that a federal grand jury has indicted a 36-year-old Texarkana man for fraud related to hurricane relief in the Eastern District of Texas.

“Hurricane related fraud remains a priority of the Department of Justice,” said Orwig. “Applications for assistance are continuing to be reviewed and any appearances of fraud will be thoroughly investigated.”

GARY WILLIAMS TRICE is charged with mail fraud.

In a joint investigation involving the United States Department of Labor - Office of Inspector General, the United States Postal Inspector’s Office, and the Department of Homeland Security, it was determined that Trice defrauded the Federal Emergency Management Agency of approximately \$36,000 in hurricane assistance. Trice is alleged to have submitted as many as fourteen fraudulent applicants for assistance based on Hurricanes Katrina, Rita and Wilma by using different names, addresses, and social security numbers.

If convicted, Trice faces up to 20 years in federal prison and a fine of up to \$250,000 at sentencing.

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 members of the FBI, the Federal Trade Commission, the U.S. Postal Inspection Service, and the Executive Office for United States Attorney, among others.

This case is being investigated by the United States Department of Labor Office of Inspector General, the United States Postal Inspector’s Office, and the Department of Homeland Security. This case is being prosecuted by Special Assistant United States Attorney Denise Simpson.

It is important to note that an indictment should not be considered as evidence of guilt and that all persons charged with a crime are presumed innocent until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt.

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