



Department of Justice

United States Attorney Dunn Lampton

Southern District of Mississippi

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ANOTHER GUILTY PLEA TO KATRINA FRAUD

JACKSON, Miss. – Dianne M. Dean of Picayune, Miss., pleaded guilty to making a false claim and a false statement to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to fraudulently obtain Hurricane Katrina disaster benefits, U.S. Attorney Dunn Lampton of the Southern District of Mississippi announced today. Dean also pleaded guilty to making false statements to the Department of Agriculture's Rural Development Agency in order to fraudulently obtain rural housing service payment subsidies. Dean admitted in her guilty plea that on Sept. 11, 2005, she submitted a application for disaster assistance with FEMA using a false address in Picayune. Dean received \$2,000 from FEMA. Her sentencing hearing is set before U.S. District Judge Walter J. Gex III in Gulfport, Miss. on Jan. 16, 2007. Dean faces a maximum sentence of 20 years in prison and a \$1 million fine, plus restitution to both FEMA and the Department of Agriculture.

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 U.S. Attorneys and others.

Pursuant to the Department of Justice 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 file false and fraudulent claims.

If anyone has information concerning possible fraud being committed during the post-Katrina recovery effort, please call either the Department of Homeland Security-Office of the Inspector General Fraud Hotline at 1-866-720-5721 or the FBI Fraud Hotline at 1-800-225-5324.

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