



Department of Justice

U.S. Attorney's Office

Southern District of Texas

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MAN CHARGED WITH RUNNING FRAUD SCAM INVOLVING SUPPOSED FEMA TRAILERS

(HOUSTON, Texas) – A federal grand jury has returned an indictment charging Christopher Brian McPherson, 30, with wire fraud in connection with his alleged operation of a fraudulent investment scheme, United States Attorney Don DeGabrielle announced today. McPherson allegedly falsely told investors he was using their money to purchase and refurbish FEMA trailers.

McPherson is scheduled to make his initial appearance in federal court Feb. 19, 2008, at 10:00 a.m. before United States Magistrate Judge Calvin Botley pursuant to a writ directing his transfer into federal custody from Harris County Jail, where he is currently in custody on an unrelated state case.

According to the indictment, beginning in December 2006, McPherson took out classified advertisements in the *Houston Chronicle* referring to a real estate investment opportunity. When readers contacted McPherson in response to the ad, he told them he was seeking money he would use to buy FEMA trailers, refurbish them and then sell them back to the government for a

significant profit. Some of these individuals then entered into contracts with McPherson and provided funds for the purchase of trailers. The indictment alleges McPherson falsified vehicle identification numbers for the trailers listed in the contract, failed to ever purchase the trailers and failed to return the investors' money.

The indictment charges two specific counts of wire fraud based on two alleged wire transfers of \$36,000 each to McPherson from an investor in December 2006. Each wire fraud count carries a maximum prison term of 20 years and a fine of up to \$250,000.

The case was investigated by the Office of Inspector General of the Department of Housing and Urban Development, the Department of Homeland Security and the Friendswood Police Department.

The case is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Gregg Costa.

An indictment is a formal accusation of criminal conduct, not evidence. The defendant is presumed innocent unless and until convicted through due process of law.

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