



Department of Justice

United States Attorney David R. Dugas
Middle District of Louisiana

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
FRIDAY, MAY 26, 2006
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CONTACT: DAVID R. DUGAS
(225) 389-0443
FAX: (225) 389-0561

FOUR MORE INDICTED IN BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA, ON FEDERAL FEMA FRAUD CHARGES

BATON ROUGE, LA – United States Attorney David R. Dugas announced that a federal grand jury returned indictments yesterday against four more Louisiana residents on federal FEMA fraud charges.

LEONARD JACKSON, age 54, MARY JOHNSON, age 51, ANTHONY PARKER, age 21, and EDWARD PARKER, age 20, all residents of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, were each charged in two-count indictments with making a false and fraudulent claim for disaster assistance benefits (Count One) and illegal conversion of government property, that is, a check from FEMA for expedited disaster assistance (Count Two). The charges resulted from an investigation conducted by the U.S. Secret Service; the Federal Bureau of Investigation; and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Office of the Inspector General. If convicted on Count One, these defendants face maximum sentences of five years imprisonment and a \$250,000 fine. If convicted on Count Two, these defendants face maximum sentences of ten years imprisonment and a \$250,000 fine.

These individuals bring the total number of defendants who have been charged in the Middle District of Louisiana with violations related to Hurricane Katrina relief funds to fifty-eight.

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 from the FBI, the Federal Trade Commission, the Postal Inspector's Office, and the Executive Office for United States Attorneys, among others.

For further information, contact David R. Dugas, U.S. Attorney for the Middle District of Louisiana, or Lyman Thornton, First Assistant U.S. Attorney, at (225) 389-0443.

NOTE: An indictment is a determination by a grand jury that there is probable cause to believe that offenses have been committed by the defendants. The defendants, of course, are presumed innocent until and unless he or she is proven guilty at trial.

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