



# UNITED STATES ATTORNEY'S OFFICE

## *United States Attorney Donald W. Washington Western District of Louisiana*

United States Courthouse • 300 Fannin Street, Suite 3201 • Shreveport, Louisiana 71101-3068 • (318) 676-3600  
United States Courthouse • 800 Lafayette Street, Suite 2200 • Lafayette, Louisiana 70501-7206 • (337) 262-6618

For Immediate Release  
February 15, 2006  
[www.usdoj.gov/usao/law](http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/law)

Contact: Donald W. Washington (337-262-6618)  
William J. Flanagan (318-676-3600)

### **DEFENDANT FOUND GUILTY IN FEMA FRAUD TRIAL**

#### *Isaac Carloss convicted by a federal jury*

**Alexandria, Louisiana** . . . The trial of two individuals who were charged with FEMA fraud concluded today. The jury returned a guilty verdict against **ISAAC H. CARLOSS, JR.**, age 26, of Wildsville, Louisiana, on one count of conspiracy, one count of theft of mail, and two counts of theft of public money, United States Attorney Donald W. Washington announced. **MARY E. THOMAS** was acquitted by the jury.

U.S. Attorney Washington stated: "Mr. Carloss and his wife stole FEMA funds that were intended to help relieve some of the sufferings of the victims of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. Mr. Carloss is now convicted of his crimes. The message is clear. Our intent is to find, investigate, prosecute, and convict each and every one of these criminals."

CARLOSS's wife and co-defendant, **DEBBIE ANDERSON**, pleaded guilty in January to one count of conspiracy. Testimony at trial revealed that ANDERSON met an evacuee at a rescue shelter following Hurricane Katrina and gave that individual permission to use ANDERSON's address to receive their mail. When an express mail package arrived at ANDERSON's residence addressed to the evacuee, ANDERSON signed for the mail with a fictitious name and opened the mail, which contained two FEMA disaster assistance checks which were intended for the evacuee. CARLOSS and ANDERSON took the checks and went to a local car dealership and persuaded the salesman to allow them to use one of the checks to purchase a car. CARLOSS and ANDERSON took the other check to a bank in Jonesville, Louisiana and persuaded the teller to cash the check for them because they were victims of the hurricane. The total amount of the checks was \$4,358.

CARLOSS faces a sentence of up to five years in prison, a \$250,000 fine, or both, on each count. Sentencing in federal court is determined by the discretion of federal judges and the governing statute. United States Sentencing Guidelines established by the United States Congress and the United States Sentencing Commission are only used as guidelines by the judge in determining the appropriate sentence. Parole has been abolished in the federal system.

To date, 19 defendants have been charged with violations related to FEMA relief funds, and more than 100 FEMA fraud investigations are on-going in the Western District of Louisiana.

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.

The CARLOSS case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Alexander C. Van Hook and was a joint investigation by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Alexandria Resident Agency.

###