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**Red Cross Volunteer and His Sister
Charged with Stealing More Than 100 Red Cross Debit Cards
Intended for Hurricane Evacuees**

United States Attorney Richard B. Roper announced that Brian Oneal Hines and his sister, Charmaine Denise Hines, surrendered to federal authorities today and appeared before United States Magistrate Judge Wm. F. Sanderson, Jr., on charges outlined in a federal criminal complaints filed yesterday in the Northern District of Texas. Each complaint charges each with using stolen Red Cross debit cards to fraudulently obtain goods and services, in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 1029(a)(2). Judge Sanderson detained each of the defendants.

The affidavit filed with the federal criminal complaint states that on November 2, 2005, federal law enforcement agents received information from the Red Cross office located at 4800 Harry Hines Boulevard in Dallas that a Red Cross volunteer/temporary worker, Brian Hines, was committing fraud with stolen Red Cross debit cards intended for hurricane evacuees.

A Red Cross employee stated while he was researching missing Red Cross debit cards on September 27, 2005, Hines came into the office offering to volunteer. While the employee was working, he noticed that Hines had a small piece of paper in his hand and that every time he came around, Hines would crumple up the piece of paper in a suspicious manner. The employee was able to read numbers on Hines' paper and identified the numbers on this list as being consistent with a series of missing debit cards. The employee was able to determine that one of the missing debit account numbers had been activated with \$4,695 loaded as the value of the card. The employee found that there were at least 100 debit cards missing. The national office of the Red Cross notified the employee that half of the missing one hundred cards had been activated, most of which with a value of \$4,695 each, an unusual amount according to the Red Cross employee.

Prior to November 2, 2005, the Red Cross employee had discussed his suspicions about Hines with another Red Cross employee, who thought it was probable that Hines might leave the Red Cross office and conduct a fraudulent ATM transaction using one or more stolen Red Cross debit cards. On the afternoon of November 2, 2005, the employee observed Hines exit the Red Cross parking lot and drive to a Frost Bank branch located on Harwood in Dallas, where Hines pulled into the ATM lane of the bank. A few days later, a U.S. Postal Inspector and a U.S. Secret Service agent interviewed Hines who eventually admitted repeatedly using stolen Red Cross debit cards to fraudulently obtain large amounts of cash from Dallas area ATMs. Hines stated he gave 20-25 cards to his sister, Charmaine Denise Hines and her boyfriend. When asked what he bought with the proceeds from the debit cards, Hines stated that he bought jewelry for himself and his girlfriend and vehicles for both family members and friends. Hines also gave gifts of cash, clothing, shoes and jewelry to his family and friends

Hines also admitted that in October of 2005, he stole at least one hundred Red Cross debit cards or "client assistance cards" from various locations. Hines stated that he was able to steal Red Cross debit cards from the Reunion Arena location with the help of security guard personnel. Hines confessed to activating and loading (values) on approximately 100 stolen debit cards.

When law enforcement interviewed Charmaine Denise Hines, she admitted that her brother had given her several stolen Red Cross debit cards and that she had fraudulently used the cards to obtain large amounts of cash.

While the investigation is ongoing to determine the scope of the fraudulent activity and the total dollar loss, Red Cross records reflect a loss of more than \$230,000 at this time.

U.S. Attorney Roper praised the investigative efforts of the U.S. Secret Service and the U.S. Postal Inspection Service. The case is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney David Jarvis.