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TELEPHONE THREATS SENDS CALLER TO FEDERAL PRISON

*Caller threatens females in Calcasieu Parish with rape and murder
Gets maximum 5 year sentence*

Lake Charles, Louisiana . . . TIMOTHY THIGPEN, age 38, a resident of Conroe, Texas, was sentenced this week by United States District Judge Rebecca F. Doherty to five years for threatening telephone calls to female victims in Calcasieu Parish, United States Attorney Donald W. Washington announced.

A federal indictment was filed in September 2006, charging THIGPEN with seven counts of transmitting threatening communications in interstate commerce. THIGPEN pleaded guilty to one count of threatening communications and was sentenced April 22, 2008. In addition to the five-year sentence imposed by Judge Doherty, THIGPEN will be on supervised release for three years after serving his prison sentence.

Since 2002 multiple Texas law enforcement agencies received reports from female victims in which they related receiving a collect call from an unknown person named "Mike" or "Mike Irwin" out of Houston, Texas. The victims stated that once they accepted the collect call, "Mike" would tell the victim that if they did not do as he said, he would rape and murder them. Many of the victims were terrified and fled their

residences. The caller also used similar methods of operation, claiming to be a doctor or coach, and even called children asking sexually-oriented questions.

In June 2006, officers received information that “Mike” was calling women in Calcasieu Parish from a pay telephone number in Houston, Texas. Officers began to call businesses located near the pay telephone’s address, and an employee of a nearby restaurant advised that she had seen a male in a blue Chevrolet truck at the payphone and gave the officer the license plate number of the vehicle. The license plate for the 2003 Chevrolet truck was registered to THIGPEN’s common law wife of Conroe, Texas, who subsequently identified THIGPEN’S voice in the recorded telephone calls.

U. S. Attorney Washington stated: “The recipients of terroristic threats made over a telephone should be reported to law enforcement authorities. The kinds of threats made by this defendant on multiple occasions can never be tolerated. When these kinds of threats are reported, they should be aggressively investigated and prosecuted.”

Sentencing in federal court is determined by the discretion of federal judges and the governing statute. Parole has been abolished in the federal system.

This case was investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Richard A. Willis.

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