



Department of Justice

United States Attorney David R. Dugas
Middle District of Louisiana

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CONTACT: DAVID R. DUGAS
(225) 389-0443
FAX: (225) 389-0561

INDICTMENT IN BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA, ON CHARGES OF OBSTRUCTION OF JUSTICE AND MAKING FALSE STATEMENTS

BATON ROUGE, LA – United States Attorney David R. Dugas announced today that on November 15, 2007, a federal grand jury in the Middle District of Louisiana returned a two count indictment against LONNIE FETTER, age 51, of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, on charges of obstruction of justice and making false statements.

Count One of the indictment alleges that on or about June 22, 2007, FETTER did knowingly destroy and mutilate a forged U.S. Small Business Administration Mortgage Loan Commitment with the intent to impede, obstruct, and influence the investigation of a matter within the jurisdiction of the United States Secret Service, a department and agency of the United States.

Count Two of the indictment alleges that on or about August 16, 2007, in a matter within the jurisdiction of the Executive Branch of the United States, FETTER knowingly and willfully did make false and fraudulent material statements and representations to an agent of the United States Secret Service when in a written statement he falsely stated: 1) "I have no knowledge of any documentation pertaining to Key Point / American Gateway / S.B.A. Being hidden or Destroyed;" and 2) "I in addition Did Not Destroy any Evidence or Documents pertaining to the above mentioned crimes."

If convicted, FETTER faces a maximum sentence of twenty years imprisonment and a \$250,000 fine on Count One and a maximum sentence of five years imprisonment and a \$250,000 fine on Count Two.

The case was investigated by the U.S. Small Business Administration's Office of Inspector General and the U.S. Secret Service, and is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Richard L. Bourgeois, Jr.

U.S. Small Business Administration, Office of Inspector General, Special Agent in Charge Matthew L. Issman stated that today's indictment culminates an eleven-month joint investigation with the U.S. Secret Service, and highlights the results of seamless working relationships with other Federal law enforcement agencies and the United States Attorney's Office and the commitment of the Small Business Administration Office of Inspector General to "follow the money" and to take fraud investigations wherever they may lead.

This is yet another success story of government law enforcement agencies and prosecutors working together with a common mission. We hope this resulting indictment sends a strong message to those who would attempt to conceal evidence and obstruct investigative efforts by extraordinary means that they cannot use subterfuge to evade detection.

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 the FBI, the U.S. Inspectors General community, the U.S. Secret Service, the U.S. Postal Inspection Service, the Executive Office for United States Attorneys and 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. Anyone suspecting criminal activity involving disaster assistance programs can make an anonymous report by calling the toll-free Hurricane Relief Fraud Hotline, 1-866-720-5721, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, until further notice. Information can also be emailed to the Hurricane Katrina Fraud Task Force at HKFTF@leo.gov or sent by surface mail, with as many details as possible, to Hurricane Katrina Fraud Task Force, Baton Rouge, LA 70821-4909.

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

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