



# UNITED STATES ATTORNEY'S OFFICE

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

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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

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For Immediate Release  
June 3, 2008

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

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## **JUDGES DETAINED PENDING SENTENCING AFTER RACKETEERING CONVICTION**

**Shreveport, Louisiana . . . MICHAEL WALKER**, age 58, and **VERNON CLAVILLE**, age 57, both residents of Shreveport, were detained by United States District Judge S. Maurice Hicks, Jr., after a detention hearing following their conviction of racketeering, United States Attorney Donald W. Washington announced.

After two weeks of trial and a day and a half of deliberation, a jury returned guilty verdicts against two sitting state judges for accepting bribes from a bail bond company in exchange for lowering bonds and lifting probation and juvenile court holds against pre-trial detainees. The first RICO (Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act) prosecution brought in this district was built on FBI wiretaps on two telephones and secretly recorded surveillance videotape. After the verdict on Saturday, Judge Hicks immediately revoked the bond on both defendants and ordered them to be taken into custody pending a detention hearing, which was held today. Sentencing will be September 4, 2008.

Acting Special Agent In Charge Mark Gant stated: "Public Corruption is the FBI's number one criminal priority and anyone who undermines the integrity of federal, state or local governmental operations

will be pursued aggressively. The public is reminded that rarely is an investigation successful without the cooperation of the public. Any allegations of Public Corruption can be reported to the Northwest Louisiana Public Corruption Task Force at 318-864-2608.

U. S. Attorney Donald Washington stated: “Courts, along with their judges and staffs, are the cornerstone of the judicial system. When judges engage in acts of corruption, the entire justice system suffers a mighty blow. Our investigation and prosecution of these judges squarely targeted judges committing corrupt acts, and the jury agreed.”

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 U. S. Attorney Donald W. Washington, First Assistant U. S. Attorney William J. Flanagan, and Assistant U.S. Attorney Alexander C. Van Hook.

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