



Department of Justice

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Southern District of Mississippi

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PASS CHRISTIAN MAN SENTENCED TO PRISON FOR KATRINA FRAUD

GULFPORT, Miss - William C. Breland, Jr., of Pass Christian, Mississippi, was sentenced to 24 months in federal prison in U.S. District Court on Wednesday for fraud against the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), U.S. Attorney Dunn Lampton announced today. Breland who was convicted by a jury in October 2008 of 6 counts of FEMA fraud including false claim, false statement, stealing and mail fraud was sentenced by Senior District Judge Walter J. Gex, III to serve 3 years of post release supervision after his prison term and make restitution to FEMA of \$29,619.66.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Annette Williams was the prosecutor in this case, which was investigated by Special Agent James Grunwald of the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

In September, 2005, then Attorney General Alberto R. Gonzales, created the national 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 Acting Assistant Attorney General for the Criminal Division, Matthew Friedrich, includes members from the Department of Homeland Security, FBI, the Federal Trade Commission, the Department of Labor Office of Inspector General, the Postal Inspector's Office and the Executive Office of United States Attorneys, among others.

Pursuant to the Justice Department initiative, a local Katrina Fraud Task Force, consisting of over 20 Federal and State law enforcement agencies, was formed in the Southern District of Mississippi to pursue and prosecute individuals who engage in fraud associated with the hurricanes.

If anyone has information concerning possible fraud being committed during the post-Katrina recovery effort, please call either the DHS-OIG Fraud Hotline at 1-866-720-5721 or the FBI Fraud Hotline at 1-800-225-5324.

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