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## FEDS CHARGE ATLANTA WOMAN WITH FILING 2 FALSE CLAIMS FOR FEMA HURRICANE VICTIMS FUNDS

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David E. Nahmias, United States Attorney for the Northern District of Georgia; Gregory Jones, Special Agent in Charge, Federal Bureau of Investigation; Martin Phanco, Inspector in Charge, United States Postal Inspection Service; and Richard L. Skinner, Inspector General of the Department of Homeland Security, today announced the arrest of JOZELL LOIS DICKERSON, 35, of Lawrenceville, Georgia. DICKERSON is charged in a federal indictment with aggravated identity theft, stealing money from the United States government, making false claims, and using a false social security number, in connection with two false claims made to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for \$4,000 in relief funds available to victims of Hurricane Katrina. According to Nahmias, the indictment and information presented in court today:

DICKERSON, who was not a resident of New Orleans at the time of Hurricane Katrina, used two different New Orleans addresses and the social security number of another person within a span of one week to make two false claims for FEMA monies meant for Hurricane Katrina victims. On September 8, 2005, DICKERSON made false statements about her "New Orleans" residence in a call to FEMA, and gave her actual social security number. On September 14, DICKERSON again called in to FEMA making false statements and used a false social security number.

DICKERSON received a \$2,000 electronic funds transfer on September 12 and another \$2,000 electronic funds transfer on September 16. DICKERSON faces a mandatory minimum of two years in prison on the aggravated identity theft charge, in addition to a potential maximum penalty of up to 20 years in federal prison on the additional charges, and a maximum fine of over \$1 million.

U.S. Attorney David Nahmias said of the case: "To date, U.S. Attorneys across the country have brought more than 40 federal prosecutions as part of the Hurricane Katrina Fraud Task Force. This is the second Katrina fraud case filed by this office. This defendant allegedly filed not one but two false claims for hurricane victim funds from FEMA, stealing another person's identity to use in making the second false claim. We will not tolerate this sort of fraud, which steals taxpayer dollars intended to help rebuild the lives of the thousands of real victims of these terrible natural disasters."

Attorney General Alberto R. Gonzales recently created the Hurricane Katrina Fraud Task Force, designed to deter, investigate and prosecute disaster related federal crimes such as charity fraud and insurance. The Hurricane Katrina Fraud Task Force - chaired by Assistant Attorney General Alice S. Fisher of the Criminal Division - includes members from the FBI, the Federal Trade Commission, the Postal Inspector's Office, and the Executive Office of the United States Attorneys, among others.

Members of the public are reminded that the indictment only contains charges. The defendant is presumed innocent of the charges and it will be the government's burden to prove the defendant's guilt beyond a reasonable doubt at trial.

This case is being investigated by Special Agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation with the assistance of Inspectors with the United States Postal Inspection Service and Special Agents with the Department of Homeland Security, Office of the Inspector General.

Assistant United States Attorney Richard M. Langway is prosecuting the case.

For further information please contact David E. Nahmias (pronounced NAH-me-us), United States Attorney or F. Gentry Shelnett, Chief, Criminal Division, through Patrick Crosby, Public Affairs Officer, U.S. Attorney's Office, at (404) 581-6016. The Internet address for the HomePage for the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Northern District of Georgia is [www.usdoj.gov/usao/gan](http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/gan).