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**BRIBERY CHARGES FILED
FOR KATRINA DEBRIS REMOVAL**

United States Attorney Dunn Lampton announced today the filing of a Criminal Complaint against Mitchell Glen Kendrix of Memphis, Tennessee and Paul Darrell Nelson of Libson, Maine charging them with Conspiracy to Commit Bribery of a Federal Official. The charges state that Kendrix was working as a Quality Assurance Representative for the U.S. Army, Corp of Engineers at the Hintonville dumpsite in Perry County, Mississippi. Nelson, a subcontractor involved in debris removal following Hurricane Katrina, is charged with paying Kendrix the multiple bribes to create false load tickets for debris that Nelson never dumped at the Hintonville site. The maximum penalty for Conspiracy to Commit Bribery is up to 5 years in prison and a \$250,000 fine.

The joint investigation by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Department of Defense, Defense Criminal Investigative Service, and the United States Army Criminal Investigation Division resulted in the Criminal Complaint.

United States Attorney Lampton also announced today the Indictment of the following three individuals for making false claims to the Federal Emergency Management Agency ("FEMA") for hurricane relief funds: Richard T. Roberts of Jackson, Jackie L. Taylor or Florence, and Elizabeth Crochet of Gulfport.

These indictments are the result of joint investigations conducted by the U.S.

Department of Homeland Security Office of Inspector General, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the U.S. Postal Inspection Service, and the United States Department of Agriculture, Office of Inspector General. According to the indictments, Roberts and Crochet each submitted a false claim for disaster relief following Hurricane Katrina. Taylor is charged with submitting two false claims for disaster relief following Hurricane Katrina. The maximum penalty for making fraudulent claims for relief funds is 5 years in prison and a \$250,000 fine. Taylor faces up to 10 years in prison and a \$500,000 fine.

United States Attorney Dunn Lampton said, "The bribery charge relating to debris removal is among the first corruption charges nationally following Katrina. It is despicable, particularly in the aftermath of our nation's greatest national disaster, for public officials, at any level, to breach the public trust by accepting bribes. Those who pay bribes in order to perform the work they have been contracted to do are equally repugnant. This type of criminal conduct cannot and will not be permitted." Lampton also said, "The Katrina Fraud Task Force is going to continue investigating the allegations of fraud and corruption that have been received. The 15 federal criminal charges brought to date relating to Katrina recovery in South Mississippi represent just the beginning of what is expected to be a long running effort to find and punish those responsible for stealing from the public's pocket. When we uncover the fraud or corruption, we will prosecute the crime."

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 members from the FBI, the Federal Trade Commission, 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 was formed. Recognizing the significance of this event, nineteen federal and state law enforcement agencies have come together to jointly pursue and prosecute individuals who file false and fraudulent claims. The joint task force has also been working with county and local law enforcement in this effort.

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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