



Department of Justice

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ROCHESTER MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO FEMA FRAUD

ROCHESTER, N.Y.-- U.S. Attorney William J. Hochul, Jr. announced today that Anthony J. Gibson, 28, of Rochester, NY, pleaded guilty before U.S. District Judge Charles J. Siragusa, to a felony charge of theft of government funds. The charge carries a maximum penalty of 10 years in prison, a fine of 250,000 or both.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Marisa J. Miller, who is handling the case, stated that the defendant applied for and received disaster assistance benefits from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Gibson claimed he was living in New Orleans, Louisiana and was affected by Hurricane Katrina in August 2005 when in fact he was in jail on unrelated charges at the time the hurricane made landfall. Together, Gibson and co-defendant Torrasha M. Smith prepared and submitted false paperwork, including rental receipts, to FEMA in support of their claim. As a result of the false submissions, the defendants received approximately \$15,800, to which they were not entitled. Torrasha M. Smith, 26, pleaded guilty to theft of government funds on March 3, 2011.

The plea is the culmination of an investigation on the part of Special Agents of the Department of Homeland Security, Office of Inspector General, under the direction of Greg Null, Special Agent in Charge.

Sentencing of Torrasha M. Smith is scheduled for June 14, 2011, at 3:45 p.m. EST, in Rochester, N.Y., before Judge Siragusa. Anthony J. Gibson is scheduled to be sentenced by Judge Siragusa on July 5, 2011 at 10 a.m.