

109TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 4356

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JUNE 21, 2006

Received; read twice and referred to the Committee on the Judiciary

AN ACT

To amend title 18, United States Code, with respect to fraud in connection with major disaster or emergency funds.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

1 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

2 This Act may be cited as the “Emergency and Dis-
3 aster Assistance Fraud Penalty Enhancement Act of
4 2005”.

5 **SEC. 2. FRAUD IN CONNECTION WITH MAJOR DISASTER OR**
6 **EMERGENCY BENEFITS.**

7 (a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 47 of title 18, United
8 States Code, is amended by adding at the end the fol-
9 lowing:

10 **“§ 1039. Fraud in connection with major disaster or**
11 **emergency benefits**

12 “(a) Whoever, in a circumstance described in sub-
13 section (b) of this section, knowingly—

14 “(1) falsifies, conceals, or covers up by any
15 trick, scheme, or device any material fact; or

16 “(2) makes any materially false, fictitious, or
17 fraudulent statement or representation, or makes or
18 uses any false writing or document knowing the
19 same to contain any materially false, fictitious, or
20 fraudulent statement or representation,

21 in any matter involving any benefit authorized, trans-
22 ported, transmitted, transferred, disbursed, or paid in con-
23 nection with a major disaster declaration under section
24 401 of the Disaster Relief Act of 1974, or an emergency
25 declaration under section 501 of the Disaster Relief Act
26 of 1974, or in connection with any procurement of prop-

erty or services related to any emergency or disaster declaration as a prime contractor with the United States or as a subcontractor or supplier on a contract in which there is a prime contract with the United States, shall be fined under this title, imprisoned for not more than 30 years, or both.

“(b) The circumstance to which subsection (a) of this section refers is that—

“(1) the authorization, transportation, transmission, transfer, disbursement, or payment of the benefit is in or affects interstate or foreign commerce;

“(2) the benefit is transported in the mail at any point in the authorization, transportation, transmission, transfer, disbursement, or payment of that benefit; or

“(3) the benefit is a record, voucher, payment, money, or thing of value of the United States, or of any department or agency thereof.

“(c) In this section, the term ‘benefit’ means any record, voucher, payment, money or thing of value, good, service, right, or privilege provided by the United States, State or local government, or other entity.”.

1 (b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections
 2 for chapter 47 of title 18, United States Code, is amended
 3 by inserting at the end the following new item:

“1039. Fraud in connection with major disaster or emergency benefits”.

4 **SEC. 3. INCREASED CRIMINAL PENALTIES FOR ENGAGING**
 5 **IN WIRE, RADIO, AND TELEVISION FRAUD**
 6 **DURING AND RELATION TO A PRESI-**
 7 **DENTIALLY DECLARED MAJOR DISASTER OR**
 8 **EMERGENCY.**

9 Section 1343 of title 18, United States Code, is
 10 amended by inserting: “occurs in relation to, or involving
 11 any benefit authorized, transported, transmitted, trans-
 12 ferred, disbursed, or paid in connection with, a presi-
 13 dentially declared major disaster or emergency, or” after
 14 “If the violation”.

15 **SEC. 4. INCREASED CRIMINAL PENALTIES FOR ENGAGING**
 16 **IN MAIL FRAUD DURING AND RELATION TO A**
 17 **PRESIDENTIALLY DECLARED MAJOR DIS-**
 18 **ASTER OR EMERGENCY.**

19 Section 1341 of title 18, United States Code, is
 20 amended by inserting: “occurs in relation to, or involving
 21 any benefit authorized, transported, transmitted, trans-
 22 ferred, disbursed, or paid in connection with, a presi-
 23 dentially declared major disaster or emergency, or” after
 24 “If the violation”.

1 **SEC. 5. DIRECTIVE TO SENTENCING COMMISSION.**

2 (a) IN GENERAL.—Pursuant to its authority under
3 section 994(p) of title 28, United States Code, and in ac-
4 cordance with this section, the United States Sentencing
5 Commission forthwith shall—

6 (1) promulgate sentencing guidelines or amend
7 existing sentencing guidelines to provide for in-
8 creased penalties for persons convicted of fraud or
9 theft offenses in connection with a major disaster
10 declaration under section 5170 of title 42, United
11 States Code, or an emergency declaration under sec-
12 tion 5191 of title 42, United States Code; and

13 (2) submit to the Committees on the Judiciary
14 of the United States Congress an explanation of ac-
15 tions taken by the Commission pursuant to para-
16 graph (1) and any additional policy recommenda-
17 tions the Commission may have for combating of-
18 fenses described in that paragraph.

19 (b) REQUIREMENTS.—In carrying out this section,
20 the Sentencing Commission shall—

21 (1) ensure that the sentencing guidelines and
22 policy statements reflect the serious nature of the of-
23 fenses described in subsection (a) and the need for
24 aggressive and appropriate law enforcement action
25 to prevent such offenses;

1 (2) assure reasonable consistency with other
2 relevant directives and with other guidelines;

3 (3) account for any aggravating or mitigating
4 circumstances that might justify exceptions, includ-
5 ing circumstances for which the sentencing guide-
6 lines currently provide sentencing enhancements;

7 (4) make any necessary conforming changes to
8 the sentencing guidelines; and

9 (5) assure that the guidelines adequately meet
10 the purposes of sentencing as set forth in section
11 3553(a)(2) of title 18, United States Code.

12 (c) EMERGENCY AUTHORITY AND DEADLINE FOR
13 COMMISSION ACTION.—The Commission shall promulgate
14 the guidelines or amendments provided for under this sec-
15 tion as soon as practicable, and in any event not later than
16 the 30 days after the date of the enactment of this Act,
17 in accordance with the procedures set forth in section
18 21(a) of the Sentencing Reform Act of 1987, as though
19 the authority under that Act had not expired.

Passed the House of Representatives June 20, 2006.

Attest:

KAREN L. HAAS,

Clerk.