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ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE
UNITED STATES COURTS

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WASHINGTON, D.C. 20544

Office of Court Administration

August 14, 2008

MEMORANDUM

To: Clerks, United States Bankruptcy Courts

From: Glen K. Palman *Glen K. Palman*

RE: NOTICE OF FRAUDULENT SCHEME (ACTION REQUESTED)

United States Courts
Southern District of Texas
RECEIVED

AUG 14 2008

Michael N. Milby, Clerk

On August 4, 2008, the Administrative Office was notified by the bankruptcy clerk in Utah of a fraudulent scheme that might be affecting victims throughout the country. We are writing to alert you to be on the lookout for activity possibly related to this scheme, and to request your assistance in gathering information that can assist in investigating it.

Over the past two weeks, the Utah bankruptcy court has had three different individuals appear at the clerk's office because they had been contacted by phone claiming that they owe money (\$150-\$450) to pay the debt of another person. The three individuals speak Spanish as their primary language.

In each instance, when the individuals refused to provide a credit card number to the caller, they were told that they must report to court for a hearing and that if they did not pay they would be arrested. In each case, the caller provided the Utah bankruptcy court address (including a room number) and a date/time for a fictitious hearing. In at least one case, the caller identified himself as a police officer.

In all cases, the caller provided the same toll-free number for the individuals to call if they decided to pay instead of reporting for the hearing.

Based on the information gathered to date, it is likely that this is occurring in other parts of the country, and the three Utah individuals represent a very small sample of the total number of individuals contacted. Although the individuals that came forward in Utah speak Spanish as their primary language, there is no indication that Spanish speaking individuals are the only group being targeted.

The United States Marshals Service and United States Postal Inspectors are coordinating the investigation into this matter. They ask that you contact them immediately if this has occurred (or does occur) in your district. Please provide the names and contact information of the individuals and any additional details you have.

The point of contact is:

Jim Phelps, Supervisory Deputy U.S. Marshal
U.S. Marshals Service
350 S. Main St.
Salt Lake City, UT 84101

Direct Dial: (801) 524-3285
Email: Jim.Phelps@usdoj.gov

You may also wish to consider posting a notice regarding this potential fraudulent activity on your court's website to alert the public to be aware of any such activity. If you have questions, please call your regional administrator in BCAD at (202) 502-1540.

cc: Edward Templeman, Chief, Court Security Office, AOUSC
Jim Phelps, Supervisory Deputy U.S. Marshal, U.S. Marshals Service