

NEWS RELEASE

Alabama Department of Public Safety

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Alabama State Troopers Arrest Man Posing as Hurricane Evacuee *Driver License Application Results in Theft Arrest*

MONTGOMERY — Alabama state troopers arrested a man posing as a hurricane evacuee from New Orleans after the man applied for an Alabama driver license in Huntsville using a Louisiana driver license number belonging to another individual. Timothy Robert Doby, 23, was charged with theft by deception Wednesday, and troopers said additional charges are pending.

Col. W.M. Coppage, director of the Alabama Department of Public Safety, said Doby initially claimed to be a resident of New Orleans who had “lost everything” in Hurricane Katrina. Doby told driver license staff in Huntsville he had a valid Louisiana driver license, and presented a Social Security card and Alabama birth certificate as identification, according to Coppage.

Coppage said DPS employees ran a routine background check and learned Doby had outstanding warrants for receiving stolen property in South Carolina and littering in Georgia. They also discovered Doby did not match the data and photo on the Louisiana license whose number he had presented as his own.

Coppage said DPS has established a special protocol to assist displaced victims of Katrina in replacing driver license and identification cards. “We want to expedite assistance to evacuees, but not at the expense of security. A secure driver license system protects commercial institutions from fraud, it protects individuals from identity theft, and it protects society from illegal acts that victimize us all.

“That is why Alabama goes the extra mile to detect and curtail driver license fraud,” said Coppage.

Doby told investigators he and his girlfriend were homeless and in need of assistance, according to Coppage. “They viewed hurricane victim assistance programs as an opportunity ‘to get back on their feet,’” he said. Doby also had applied for and received an American Red Cross debit card issued to hurricane victims.

Doby and his girlfriend had been staying with a Huntsville family who had offered their home to evacuees. The couple since has been evicted from the family’s home.

Coppage said the investigation is continuing.

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