



State of Louisiana
Office of the Governor
Office of State Inspector General

June 7, 2010

**Inspector General Investigation Results in Arrest of
Ex-Convict Posing as Pardon Board Chairman**

Scheme defrauds inmate's mother out of nearly \$7,000

BATON ROUGE – Today, Louisiana Inspector General Stephen Street announced that an investigation by his office has resulted in the arrest of Nathaniel Stewart (D.O.B. 6/15/1957) on charges of Felony Theft, Exploitation of the Infirm and False Personation.

According to Street, Port Fourchon Harbor Police boarded a crew boat on which Stewart was employed and arrested him June 7 after Inspector General Criminal Investigator Larry Hayes notified Harbor Police of Stewart's location and of the warrant for his arrest. Stewart was booked into the Lafourche Parish Prison in Galliano.

Street said that Stewart had approached the elderly mother of an inmate incarcerated at Avoyelles Correctional Center and identified himself as Larry Clark, the Chairman of the State Pardon Board, offering to secure her son's early release in exchange for money.

In truth, Stewart himself had served time at Avoyelles Correctional Center for felony theft and forgery, and had just been released on parole. Stewart met with the victim

several times and persuaded her to withdraw money from her retirement annuity so that her son could participate in a new “early release” program for non-violent offenders.

The victim paid Stewart \$6890.00, but eventually became suspicious and called the Pardon Board. Pardon Board officials called the Governor’s Office, which immediately referred the matter to Street.

Inspector General Street said: “Mr. Stewart first met with the victim after being released from prison on parole. His story about an early release program was nothing but pure fiction crafted for the sole purpose of stealing money from a vulnerable elderly woman. It’s appalling, but hopefully this will prevent him from victimizing anyone else.”

Once Inspector General Criminal Investigators identified the man posing as “Clark” as Nathaniel Stewart, they obtained a warrant for his arrest in St. John the Baptist Parish, where the payments took place.

Street emphasized that there had been absolutely no wrongdoing on the part of any Pardon Board member or employee. “In fact, they were just as much victims as the mother” Street said. “When they learned of the scheme, they immediately notified us and cooperated fully with our investigation.”

Street also expressed his appreciation to the Port Fourchon Harbor Police. “They acted on our information very quickly.”

The mission of the Louisiana Inspector General’s Office is to investigate fraud and corruption in government. Any citizen wishing to alert the Inspector General of such activity may do so by calling the fraud hotline at 866-801-2549, or visiting the OIG website at www.oig.louisiana.gov.

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