



# NEWS RELEASE

Office of the United States Attorney  
Eastern District of Texas

***FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE***

DATE: August 26, 2004

*Contact: Davilyn Brackin*

*Public Affairs Specialist*

*(409) 839-2538*

## **FORMER BEAUMONT DENTIST CONVICTED OF MEDICAID FRAUD**

(Beaumont, TX) A former Beaumont dentist was convicted by a federal jury of healthcare fraud and mail fraud for swindling the Texas Medicaid Program. **MICHAEL L. HEROD**, 63, was found guilty Thursday afternoon of twelve counts of healthcare fraud and six counts of mail fraud after a two and a half day trial before U.S. District Judge Marcia Crone in Beaumont.

According to the indictment, Herod practiced as a dentist in Beaumont from April 1999 to December 2000 without maintaining a current dental license. During that time, he also billed the Texas Medicaid Program \$260,000, of which he collected \$207,000. The Texas Medicaid Program requires that participating dentists be licensed by the Texas State Board of Dental Examiners. The indictment further alleged that during that same time period, Herod billed Medicaid for dental services that had not been provided. Testimony at trial also established that various state and federal narcotics licenses for prescribing medications had also lapsed.

The investigation was initiated by the Texas Attorney General's Medicaid Fraud Control Unit after the local ABC affiliate, Channel 12, did an investigative

--more--

story after receiving reports from former employees of Dr. Herod. A federal grand jury indicted Herod in September, 2003.

Herod will be sentenced in approximately 90 days after completion of a presentence report. Herod faces a maximum penalty of ten years in prison and a \$250,000 fine years on each healthcare fraud count and five years in prison and a \$250,000 fine on each mail fraud count. He remains free on conditions of release pending sentencing.

**United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Texas, Matthew D. Orwig emphasized the importance of prosecuting cases of Medicaid fraud, "We will do everything possible to insure the integrity of the Medicaid system in the Eastern District of Texas. Health Care Fraud is a serious crime which we are committed to vigorously investigating and prosecuting."**

The case was investigated by the Austin office of the Medicaid Fraud Control Unit of the Texas Attorney General's Office, the Texas Department of Public Safety Narcotics Division and prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Robert Rawls.

###