
THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEYS OFFICE
MIDDLE DISTRICT *of* LOUISIANA

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Department of Justice
U.S. Attorney's Office
Middle District of Louisiana

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Monday, February 10, 2014

Former Sorrento Police Chief Convicted Of Making False Statements In Civil Rights Investigation

BATON ROUGE, LA - United States Attorney Walt Green announced that EARL L. THERIOT, age 65, of Sorrento, Louisiana, pled guilty today before Chief U.S. District Judge Brian A. Jackson to making false statements to an FBI Special Agent in connection with a criminal civil rights investigation. THERIOT faces up to five (5) years in prison, three (3) years of supervised release following imprisonment, and a fine of up to \$250,000.

At today's hearing, THERIOT admitted that on November 1, 2013, while serving as the Chief of Police for the Town of Sorrento and following a 911 emergency police dispatch, he contacted an unresponsive individual at a local gas station, placed her in the front seat of his police unit, and, instead of bringing her back to her residence, transported her to his office at the Sorrento Police Department where he engaged in inappropriate sexual contact with her. THERIOT also admitted to later making numerous false statements to an FBI Special Agent and a Deputy with the Ascension Parish Sheriff's Office who were investigating whether THERIOT violated federal civil rights laws, among other things.

On February 7, 2014, THERIOT resigned as Chief of Police as required by the Plea Agreement with the United States Attorney's Office.

United States Attorney Green stated: "This office, along with our federal, state, and local partners, are dedicated to conducting thorough and complete investigations into credible allegations of police corruption and civil rights violations. Those who seek to obstruct such efforts by making false statements to federal investigators will face severe consequences. My special appreciation to Sheriff Jeff Wiley of the Ascension Parish Sheriff's Office, District Attorney Ricky Babin of the 23rd Judicial District, and the FBI who worked seamlessly with my office to ensure justice was done."

This prosecution and investigation were conducted jointly by the United States Attorney's Office, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Ascension Parish Sheriff's Office, and the District Attorney's Office for the 23rd Judicial District.

The case is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Chris Dippel.

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