



**U.S. Department of Justice**

**Stephen J. Murphy  
United States Attorney  
Eastern District of Michigan**

*Suite 2001  
211 West Fort Street  
Detroit, Michigan 48226-3277*

**For Immediate Release:**

**Contact:** Gina Balaya (313) 226-9758

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**EVENT: Convicted**

**Defendant: Mary Kennedy Howard**

**DETROIT WOMAN GUILTY OF MAIL FRAUD  
FOR “SELLING LIES” AND FALSE DOCUMENTS**

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A Detroit woman was convicted on Wednesday, July 23, 2008 of eight counts of mail fraud for creating and selling false documentation for Chrysler hourly employees used to obtain hardship withdrawals from their deferred compensation/401K plans, United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy announced today.

Mary Kennedy Howard, age 64, of Detroit, Michigan, was found guilty by a federal jury in Detroit after a trial before the Honorable Gerald E. Rosen, United States District Judge.

At the trial beginning July 15, 2008, the jury heard evidence that the defendant, a self-proclaimed tax preparer, prepared and submitted for her non-tax clients, mainly hourly workers from the Warren Stamping Plant, 46 hardship withdrawal requests totaling over \$590,000, based on false representations and fraudulent supporting documentation purporting to demonstrate a need for the funds recognized by the 401K plan as a legitimate basis for such withdrawals. The defendant sold these services for a fee of 10% of the proceeds obtained by the false applications, prompting the trial prosecutor to argue that the defendant was “in the business of selling lies.”

“The integrity and stability of the financial institutions in this country depend upon honesty at all levels. Making false statements and submitting fraudulent documents to such institutions has been and will continue to be addressed by this office when brought to our attention. We cannot permit the commercialization of such practices in any case,” Murphy said.

Murphy commended the work of the Special Agents from the Federal Bureau of Investigation and Department of Labor, Office of Inspector General, whose investigation resulted in this successful prosecution. The defendant will be sentenced by Judge Rosen on October 30, 2008.