



U.S. Department of Justice

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

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For Immediate Release:

Contact: Gina Balaya (313) 226-9758

November 1, 2005

EVENT: Guilty Plea

Defendant: Mohamad H. Younes

DEARBORN MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO CREDIT CARD & BANKRUPTCY FRAUD

A 56-year-old Dearborn man pleaded guilty today to one count of an Information charging him with a scheme to defraud a number of credit card companies and filing a bankruptcy petition in furtherance of that scheme, United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy announced today.

Pleading guilty before U.S. District Judge Victoria A. Roberts was Mohamad Hassan Younes, of Dearborn, Michigan.

The fraud stems from Younes obtaining approximately 22 credit cards from credit card companies, banks and retail stores. Between February and June 2002, Younes used the credit cards to purchase electronic equipment, household furniture, clothes, and jewelry as well as cash advances. Younes sold many of the goods he acquired to others for 50% of their value. He also would use checks on a closed business checking account to pay some of the credit card accounts which would serve to temporarily increase his credit line. All told, Younes obtained about \$172,000 in goods and cash. On March 14, 2003, he filed a petition in bankruptcy in order to discharge all the debt he had fraudulently incurred.

There is no plea agreement between the government and Younes. The count to which he pleaded guilty, carries a maximum sentence of 5 years imprisonment and a \$250,000 fine.

Younes sentencing is scheduled for March 2, 2006 at 2 p.m.

The investigation of this case has been conducted by the Federal Bureau of Investigation with the support of the U.S. Trustees Office which administers bankruptcy cases. The case has been prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Ross I. MacKenzie



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November 23, 2005

EVENT: Sentencing

Defendant: Joseph Hudson

**WYANDOTTE CONTRACTOR SENTENCED TO
38 MONTHS FOR DEFRAUDING RIVER ROUGE SCHOOL DISTRICT**

A 50-year-old Wyandotte contractor, who used his position as an independent contractor with the River Rouge Schools to fraudulently bill the school district for goods and services that were never provided, was sentenced to 38 months in federal prison United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy announced today. Daniel D. Roberts, Special Agent in Charge of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, joined in the announcement.

Joseph Hudson, a Wyandotte resident, was found guilty following a jury trial in June of three counts of using his position to defraud the River Rouge Schools.

The evidence presented at trial established that the River Rouge School District retained Hudson to work in its local television studio, and its document production studio. While working on behalf of the district, Hudson conspired with two outside vendors to create

and submit fraudulent invoices for goods – such as audio/video equipment, cameras, lumber and construction materials -- and services that were never provided. On many occasions, Hudson would fraudulently sign on behalf of the district for receipt of phantom products and initiate the payment process on the fake invoices. Through various similar schemes, Hudson fraudulently converted approximately \$200,000 of the district's funds to his own use over a two period.

United States Attorney Murphy said, "This case represents one of the worst possible violations of the public trust, when individuals divert funds from the schooling of young children to their own personal benefit. This sort of prosecution underscores my office's commitment to the principle that individuals who violate the public trust will be prosecuted to the fullest extent possible. We will not yield in our efforts to enforce the law that benefits the rights of the public."

In sentencing Hudson, U.S. District Judge Victoria Roberts noted that Hudson "utterly failed in acting in the best interests" of the River Rouge students. Responding to numerous letters of support written on behalf of Hudson, Judge Roberts surmised that Hudson must live a "chameleon life."

In addition to the prison sentence, Judge Roberts also ordered Hudson to pay restitution of \$204,279 to the River Rouge Schools.

U.S. Attorney Murphy thanked the FBI for its assistance in the successful investigation of the case along with Assistant United States Attorney John Engstrom who prosecuted this case.



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Vera Fedorak, ATF (313) 259-7917

November 22, 2005

EVENT: Guilty Verdict

Defendant: Joel Laird and Michael Wright

DEFENDANTS CONVICTED BY JURY IN PORT HURON OF DRUG AND GUN CHARGES

On November 18, 2004, a jury sitting in Port Huron, convicted two Defendants of serious criminal charges including Possession with Intent to Distribute Crack Cocaine, Possession of a Firearm by a Convicted Felon and Possession of a Firearm in Furtherance of a Drug trafficking Crime, United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy announced today. Mr. Murphy was joined in the announcement by Special Agent in Charge Valerie J. Goddard, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF). The case was prosecuted under the Project Safe Neighborhoods Initiative.

Joel Laird, 31, of Detroit, and Michael Wright, 34, of Detroit, were convicted after a 5 day jury trial, United States District Judge Lawrence P. Zatkoff, presiding.

Laird and Wright were arrested following the execution of a search warrant on

September 14, 2004, by Detroit Police officers, Narcotics Enforcement Unit, at a location in Detroit, MI. The dwelling was known as a narcotics trafficking location. At the time of the search Laird was found sitting at a table in the living room area of the house. Recovered from on top of the table was a Bryco Arms semi-automatic handgun, obliterated serial number, loaded with 4 live rounds, 6.48 grams of cocaine base, narcotics packaging, a digital scale and a laptop computer. Wright was detained by the police officers as he ran from the southwest bedroom of the house. While running, Wright was observed throwing a tin can into the southwest bedroom. Recovered from the southwest bedroom was the tin can, which contained 16 ziplocks of crack cocaine totaling 5.58 grams, and a Ruger. .44 caliber firearm, loaded with 6 live rounds.

Both Laird and Wright have prior felony criminal convictions. Laird was previously convicted of Bank Robbery in 1996. Wright has prior felony convictions for Armed Robbery, 1990; Possession of Cocaine, less than 50 grams, 1990, and Breaking and Entering Occupied Dwelling with Intent, 1990. Both Laird and Wright face a mandatory minimum sentence of 10 years. Wright will be sentenced as a career offender, with potential sentencing guidelines of 262-327 months.

United States Attorney Murphy stated, "This case is another example of the excellent team-work among local and federal agencies to take guns and drugs off our streets. In particular, I would like to commend the officers of the Detroit Police Department and agents of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives."

Special Agent in Charge Goddard said, "Working closely with our state and local partners, the Project Safe Neighborhood initiative helps make our neighborhoods safer by

getting armed drug dealers and other violent criminals with firearms off our streets. ATF is proud to be a partner in this important initiative.”

The case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Susan Gillooly and ATF Task Force Agent Steve Hassler.



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November 15, 2005

EVENT: Indictment

Defendant: Alonzo Bates et al

**DETROIT CITY COUNCILMAN INDICTED FOR THEFT,
FRAUD AND FAILURE TO FILE TAX RETURNS**

Detroit City Councilman Alonzo Bates, 65, of Detroit, was indicted today by a federal grand jury and charged with four counts of mail fraud, four counts of theft from the City of Detroit, one count of bank fraud and four counts of failing to file federal tax returns, United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy announced today. A second defendant, Verenda Arnold 46, of Detroit, was charged with one count of theft from the City of Detroit.

Murphy was joined in the announcement by Daniel D. Roberts, Special Agent In Charge of the Detroit Field Office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation and Maurice Aouate, Special Agent In Charge of the Detroit Field Office of the Internal Revenue Service, Criminal Investigations Division.

The theft and fraud charges stem from Councilman Bates' placing ghost employees on the City's payroll between 2002 and 2004. The alleged ghost employees include the daughter of defendant's girlfriend, the defendant's brother-in-law, and Arnold, the mother of one of defendant's children. It is also alleged that defendant placed an individual on the City's payroll

who cut defendant's lawn and did odd jobs at defendant's home and rental property. The theft involved over \$91,000 in unearned wages.

The tax charges are based on defendant's failure to file federal tax returns for tax years 2001 through 2004, as he was required to do under federal law.

"These charges underscore the seriousness with which my office, the FBI and the IRS view allegations of corruption by public officials as well as our strong commitment to investigating and prosecuting these types of cases", stated U.S. Attorney Murphy. "The U.S. Attorney's Office is committed to the principle that no one is above the law and we will work aggressively to hold public officials to the high standards of the law."

"Public corruption continues to remain a problem and the FBI is committed to aggressively investigating these cases", said FBI Special Agent in Charge Roberts. "As reflected by the indictment today, the FBI will investigate public officials who abuse their elected office for personal gain and this will continue to remain one of the highest priorities of the FBI."

Maurice Aouate, Special Agent in Charge, Internal Revenue Service Criminal Investigation said, "Public officials must comply with the same tax obligations as the citizens they were elected to serve. No one is above the law."

Each mail fraud charge carries a maximum penalty of 20 years in prison and a fine of \$250,000, each theft conviction a penalty of 10 years and fine of \$250,000, each bank fraud conviction a penalty of 30 years and \$1,000,000, and each tax charge a penalty of one year and \$100,000.

The investigation leading up to the indictment was conducted by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Internal Revenue Service, Criminal Investigations Division and the Detroit Police Department. The case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney R. Michael Bullotta.



Department of Justice

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 2005
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JUSTICE DEPARTMENT SETTLES LAWSUIT ALLEGING DISCRIMINATION THE DETROIT DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The Department of Justice today announced a settlement agreement with the City of Detroit, resolving a lawsuit that alleged discrimination by the Detroit Department of Transportation (DDOT) under the Americans with Disabilities Act.

The Department of Justice’s complaint, which was filed in March 2005 in a case that had been filed by private individuals, alleged that DDOT engaged in discriminatory practices by using buses with inoperable wheelchair lifts and failing to have maintenance and repair programs to ensure that buses with working lifts would be available. As a result, many individuals who use wheelchairs waited for long periods of time until they were able to board a bus with a functioning wheelchair lift, and in some cases, had to seek alternate methods of transportation or abandon their trips.

“Many individuals with disabilities depend on accessible public transportation for everyday activities like commuting to work, buying groceries, and visiting friends and family,” said Bradley J. Schlozman, Acting Assistant Attorney General for the Civil Rights Division. “This agreement is a positive step forward in improving access to public transportation and we are pleased with the City of Detroit’s willingness to work with the Department to ensure that these improvements become permanent.”

“Detroit residents who use wheelchairs should not have to wait as buses pass them by because the bus lifts are inoperable. This Settlement Order represents a significant step toward ensuring that individuals with disabilities can participate fully in our community,” said Stephen J. Murphy, U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of Michigan.

Since the litigation began, DDOT has taken steps to retire buses with non-functioning wheelchair lifts, repair and maintain lifts, and acquire new buses. Under the terms of the Settlement Order, which must be approved by Judge Robert H. Cleland of the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan, DDOT will continue and expand these programs. DDOT will also re-train its drivers and mechanics in the proper ways to deploy wheelchair lifts, assist passengers with disabilities, and maintain the lifts.

The Americans with Disabilities Act requires that all new buses have wheelchair lifts. It further requires that Detroit and other municipalities maintain and repair the wheelchair lifts, and refrain from dispatching a bus with a non-functioning lift. Bus drivers must know how to operate the lifts, and must treat passengers with disabilities with courtesy and respect.

Additional information about the Civil Rights Division of the Department of Justice is available on its website at www.usdoj.gov/crt.

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05-590



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November 8, 2005

EVENT: Sentence

Defendant: Tavaras Demmings et al

CRACK COCAINE DISTRIBUTORS SENTENCED

Six members of a cocaine distribution ring known as the "Joy Boys" were sentenced in federal court yesterday, based on their guilty pleas to engaging in a cocaine trafficking conspiracy. The indictment alleged, and the defendants admitted in their guilty pleas, that they acted as sellers in a "mobile crack house" organization that operated 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, using the telephone to arrange meetings with drug users on the streets of Detroit and the near western suburbs of Detroit. During the peak operating times, between October of 2002 and December, 2003, the organization generated approximately \$30,000 daily in narcotics proceeds. United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy, along with Special Agent in Charge Valerie J. Goddard, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives announced that the following sentences were imposed by Senior United States District Judge Lawrence P. Zatkoff:

Tavaras Demmings, age 28, of Detroit, 78 months

Galvin Bowden, age 28, of Detroit, 64 months

Herman Burch, age 24, of Westland, 57 months

Edward Hubbert, age 23, of Westland, 46 months

Khalid Ashburn, age 26, of Detroit, 36 months

Kelly Dawe, age 21, of Westland, 9 months

Three more defendants have also pleaded guilty and are waiting sentencing. Three additional defendants, including the top two defendants named in the Indictment, Cornell Smith and Contrell Smith, are scheduled to either plead guilty on December 5, 2005, or else proceed to trial on December 12, 2005.

United States Attorney Murphy said, "These so-called 'Joy Boys' brought the pain and destruction of crack cocaine to our community, and now they face serious time in prison. I applaud the joint ATF, DEA, Wayne County and Detroit Police cooperation and hard work that led to this result."

Special Agent in Charge Valerie J. Goddard, ATF said, "As a result of the cooperative efforts among all levels of law enforcement we were able to effectively shut down one of Detroit's most lucrative cocaine distribution rings."

The case was the result of a multi-agency investigation conducted by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) and the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), in cooperation with local police departments, including the Detroit Police Department and the Wayne County Sheriff's Department. The case is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorneys Wayne Pratt and Michael Riordan.



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November 9, 2005

EVENT: Guilty Plea

Defendant: Harris James Barnett

DEARBORN MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO BANK FRAUD

A 41-year-old Dearborn man pleaded guilty today to bank fraud, United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy announced today. Mr. Murphy was joined in the announcement by Daniel D. Roberts, Special Agent in Charge of the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

Harris James Barnett entered the guilty plea in U.S. District Court before Judge Marianne O. Battani.

The fraud stems from a credit card scheme that resulted in a loss to multiple victims of approximately \$90,000. On the count of conviction, Barnett incurred charges on a Chase Bank Visa card, and then submitted payment with a non-sufficient funds check. Barnett then incurred additional charges before the check was returned for non-sufficient funds. By the time the bank became aware that the check worthless, Barnett had incurred \$11,897 in unpaid charges. Barnett had used a false Social Security number to obtain the credit card.

It is expected that the court will order restitution to this and other victims of approximately \$90,000.

The plea agreement entered into by the parties which, if accepted by the court, would limit Barnett's sentence to 21-27 months. Barnett's sentencing is scheduled for February 16, 2005.

Murphy, the United States Attorney, said, "Credit card fraud harms all of our citizens who work hard to pay their credit card bills. My office will aggressively prosecute those who commit fraud on our banking and credit card system."

The investigation of this case has been conducted by the FBI and the Social Security Administration, Office of Inspector General



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November 8, 2005

EVENT: Sentence

Defendant: Danny L. Duis

Prison Sentence Imposed In Child Pornography Case

Danny L. Duis, 53, formerly of Saginaw, Michigan, was sentenced on November 8, 2005, by United States District Court Judge David M. Lawson.

Duis pled guilty and agreed to the forfeiture of his house and two computers on November 16, 2004. Though Duis stipulated to facts in his plea agreement that gave rise to a sentence range under the federal sentencing guidelines of 70 to 78 months, Judge Lawson imposed a sentence of 30 months followed by 3 years of supervised release. The government also obtained \$30,000 in forfeiture proceeds.

Duis, a veteran of the U.S. Marine Corps. and retired air traffic controller for the Federal Aviation Administration, had collected approximately 40,000 images and video clips containing child pornography between at least April of 1999 and August of 2004. Images of a minor female being subjected to sadomasochistic conduct were found in the collection of child pornography compiled by Duis.

United States Attorney Steven J. Murphy commended the cyber crimes unit in Bay City,

Michigan for its work on the investigation and prosecution of Danny L. Duis. The Bay City cyber crimes unit is composed of law enforcement officers from the Saginaw County Sheriff's Department, Michigan State Police, the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the United States Secret Service. That unit may be reached at 989-891-1070 by people with tips on crimes involving computers.



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November 8, 2005

EVENT: Guilty Plea

Defendant: Ali Hussein Dakroub

DEARBORN MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO COUNTERFEIT CREDIT CARD FRAUD

A 24 year-old Dearborn man pleaded guilty today to two counts of an Information charging him with producing, using and possessing counterfeit credit cards, United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy announced today.

Pleading guilty before U.S. District Judge Denise Page Hood was Ali Hussein Dakroub, of Dearborn, Michigan.

The fraud stems from a scheme which took place during May and June 2004. Dakroub and an accomplice placed a phony ATM card swiping device on various bank ATM machines. The phony device would record customer's ATM card information when they swiped their cards through it. In addition, Dakroub and his accomplice placed a camera in a nearby envelope box and could observe and record the ATM customer punching in his or her PIN number. With this information, Dakroub and his accomplice were able to make counterfeit credit cards, which they then could use to withdraw monies from customer's bank accounts. All told, Dakroub and his accomplice obtained nearly \$80,000 from various ATM machines. In

addition, Dakroub was arrested a second time in June of 2005 in possession of more than 15 counterfeit credit cards which he was going to sell to others for their fraudulent use.

The counts to which Dakroub pled guilty carry a maximum sentence of 10 years imprisonment and a \$250,000 fine. There is a plea agreement entered into by the parties which if accepted by the court would limit defendant's sentence to 12-18 months imprisonment.

Dakroub's sentence is scheduled for March 9, 2006 at 2 p.m. before the Honorable Denise Page Hood.

The investigation of this case has been conducted by the U.S. Secret Service. The case has been prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Ross I. MacKenzie



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November 8, 2005

EVENT: Civil Judgement

Defendant: Elena Szilvagy

**JUDGE ORDERS CLARKSTON HOME HEALTH CARE OWNERS
TO PAY U.S. \$2.5 MILLION IN DAMAGES FOR FALSELY BILLING
MEDICARE FOR COST OF BUILDING 10,000-SQUARE FOOT HOME**

A Clarkston couple that falsely billed Medicare for the cost of building a 10,000-square foot home on a golf course near Pine Knob have been ordered to pay more than \$2.5 million in civil damages by a federal judge, United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy announced today.

Joined in the announcement were FBI Special Agent in Charge Daniel Roberts and Thomas Spokaeski, Assistant Special Agent in Charge, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Inspector General.

Elena Szilvagy, 54, and her husband David Szilvagy, 53, and their now defunct home health care company, Prime Care Services Inc., were found liable for \$2,528,972 in damages and civil penalties in an opinion issued October 27, 2005 by United States District Judge Lawrence P. Zatkoff.

"Individuals who defraud Medicare are profiteering at the expense of our nation's elderly patients and put the entire system at risk. This kind of fraud makes everyone a victim," said

U.S. Attorney Stephen J. Murphy. "Health care fraud is among the highest priorities of the Justice Department and the U.S. Attorney's Office. This result demonstrates my office's determination to recover funds inappropriately billed to Medicare and to punish those who cheat the system."

The award, which included treble damages and civil penalties, followed a civil complaint filed in June 2004 and motion for summary judgment brought against the couple and their company by the U.S. Attorney's Office alleging the defendants violated the Federal False Claims Act. The Act allows the government to collect treble damages for fraud against the United States. The opinion and order will allow the United States to garnish future earnings of the Szilvagyis until the debt is repaid.

Elena Szilvagyis, the former president of Prime Care, is currently serving a 48-month federal prison sentence. She pleaded guilty in February 2004 in the Western District of Michigan to conspiracy to commit health care fraud and mail fraud. Her husband David Szilvagyis, who served as Prime Care's director of computer services, is serving a 30-month prison sentence, after pleading guilty to the same offense.

As part of their convictions in the criminal case, the Szilvagyis were ordered in June 2004 by United States District Judge Robert Holmes Bell in Grand Rapids to pay restitution to Medicare of \$836,324 and an additional \$29,321 to Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan for filing annual reports that falsely claimed the costs of building their new home as legitimate home health care expenses. Among other things, the Szilvagyis were found guilty of putting the salaries of the home's builder, architect, painter, mason, carpenter and plumber on Prime Care's payroll and then obtaining reimbursement from Medicare for those expenses.

In his opinion, Judge Zatkoff ordered the Szilvagyis and Prime Care, a Southfield-based company which once employed more than 400 employees, to pay \$2,508,972 (three times the loss to Medicare) and an additional \$40,000, or \$10,000 for each of four false claims the couple's company filed with the government.

Judge Zatkoff rejected the argument, offered by the Szilvagyis' attorney, that the award in the civil case should be stayed while the Szilvagyis appeal their criminal convictions.

The United States civil complaint against Elena Szilvagyí's parents, who served as employees of Prime Care and lived in the lavish home for free after it was constructed, is pending before Judge Zatkoff.

The Szilvagyis also face mandatory five-year exclusions from billing Medicare and Medicaid as a result of their health care fraud conviction.

The case was investigated by the Detroit offices of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Office of Inspector General and the Federal Bureau of Investigation. The government's civil case against the defendants was handled by Assistant United States Attorneys Leslie Wizner and James Mitzelfeld.

The lawsuit is filed as U.S. v. Elena Szilvagyí et al, CV-04-72197 (E.D. Mich.).

Copies of Judge Zatkoff's opinion may be obtained from the U.S. Attorney's Office.



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Stephen Moore - IRS (313) 234-2410
Dawn Clenney - FBI (313) 237-4206

November 8, 2005

EVENT: Sentence

Defendant: William Koskos

FORMER INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE AGENT SENTENCED

A former Revenue Agent for the Internal Revenue Service was sentenced today to three years probation, with six months of home confinement, after pleading guilty to illegally receiving gifts, United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy announced today.

William Koskos, 58, of St. Clair Shores, was sentenced by United States District Judge Patrick Duggan.

Koskos pleaded guilty in July 2005 to one count of Unlawful Acts of a Revenue Officer. The offense arose from Kosko's role in collecting an outstanding tax debt owed by Hudson Construction, Inc. At the time of his plea, Koskos admitted to the Court that while collecting the debt, he became friends with William Hudson, Jr., the owner of Hudson Construction. Between 1997 and 2000, Koskos admitted that he accepted gifts of free golf at Indianwood Country Club and Wyndgate Country Club, and dined at Hudson's expense on many occasions. In addition, Hudson gave Koskos a cashiers check for \$14,900.00, which he used toward the purchase of a automobile. Koskos acknowledged that the gifts adversely affected

his collection activities relative to Hudson Construction's delinquent tax liabilities.

United States Attorney Murphy said, "Due to the nature of the work performed by the Internal Revenue Service the integrity of its agents is of utmost importance. Our office will aggressively fight corruption in government even if it involves a federal agent. Federal agents must be held to the highest standard."

This case was investigated by agents of the U.S. Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration, Internal Revenue Service and the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney John Engstrom.



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“Many individuals with disabilities depend on accessible public transportation for everyday activities like commuting to work, buying groceries, and visiting friends and family,” said Bradley J. Schlozman, Acting Assistant Attorney General for the Civil Rights Division. “This agreement is a positive step forward in improving access to public transportation and we are pleased with the City of Detroit’s willingness to work with the Department to ensure that these improvements become permanent.”

“Detroit residents who use wheelchairs should not have to wait as buses pass them by because the bus lifts are inoperable. This Settlement Order represents a significant step toward ensuring that individuals with disabilities can participate fully in our community,” said Stephen J. Murphy, U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of Michigan.

Since the litigation began, DDOT has taken steps to retire buses with non-functioning wheelchair lifts, repair and maintain lifts, and acquire new buses. Under the terms of the Settlement Order, which must be approved by Judge Robert H. Cleland of the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan, DDOT will continue and expand these programs. DDOT will also re-train its drivers and mechanics in the proper ways to deploy wheelchair lifts, assist passengers with disabilities, and maintain the lifts.

The Americans with Disabilities Act requires that all new buses have wheelchair lifts. It further requires that Detroit and other municipalities maintain and repair the wheelchair lifts, and refrain from dispatching a bus with a non-functioning lift. Bus drivers must know how to operate the lifts, and must treat passengers with disabilities with courtesy and respect.

Additional information about the Civil Rights Division of the Department of Justice is available on its website at www.usdoj.gov/crt.

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05-590



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November 15, 2005

EVENT: Guilty Verdict

Defendant: Clarence H. Brown

**MAN CONVICTED ON FEDERAL KIDNAPING AND SEX TRAFFICKING CHARGES
INVOLVING A 14 YEAR OLD MINOR**

A 32-year-old Inkster man was found guilty yesterday by a federal jury in Detroit on charges of kidnaping, transportation of a minor with intent to engage in criminal sexual activity and sex trafficking offenses, United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy announced today.

Murphy was joined in the announcement by FBI Special Agent in Charge Daniel D. Roberts, of the Detroit Division, and Col. Tadarial J. Sturdivant, Michigan State Police.

Found guilty was Clarence Howard Brown. Kidnaping and Sex Trafficking carry maximum sentences of life imprisonment. Transportation of a Minor with Intent to Engage in Criminal Sexual Activity carries an maximum sentence of 15 years imprisonment and a \$250,000 fine.

The jury deliberated for a little more than an hour before returning the verdict, concluding a four day trial before United States District Judge Arthur J. Tarnow.

The evidence presented at trial showed that Brown and his girlfriend Holly Marie Hollis, under the pretenses of transporting a then 14 year old minor to her home, abducted the victim and, instead transported her to Fort Wayne, Indiana, forcing her into prostitution at a truck stop. During his efforts to instill fear in the child, Brown raped the victim twice and otherwise physically abused her. The victim eventually escaped after a female truck driver befriended her and agreed to take her home. Hollis pleaded guilty on August 26, 2005.

“This is an incredibly serious case and the charges of conviction reflect the revolting manner in which criminals are capable of treating innocent minors. The result in this case demonstrates my office’s clear and continuing commitment to aggressively prosecute any individuals engaged in abusing and exploiting children in the Eastern District of Michigan. As federal law enforcement officers, we will do anything and everything we can to derail this sort of pernicious behavior.” United States Attorney Murphy said.

Murphy commended the work of the agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigations and the Michigan State Police in the investigation.

Sentencing of Brown is scheduled for February 17, 2006. Hollis will be sentenced on December 5, 2005. The case was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Dawn Ison.