



# Department of Justice

United States Attorney Drew H. Wrigley  
District of North Dakota

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## *Howard O. Kieffer Found Guilty in Fake Lawyer Case*

**BISMARCK** - United States Attorney Drew H. Wrigley announced that on April 15, 2009, **Howard O. Kieffer**, 53, of Duluth, Minnesota, was found guilty by a federal jury on charges of mail fraud and making a false statement to a governmental agency. The case was presided over by United States District Court Senior Judge Patrick A. Conmy.

In March 2007, **Kieffer** applied for admission to practice law before the United States District Court for the District of North Dakota. **Kieffer** falsely claimed that he had a law degree from Antioch School of Law, Washington, D.C., and that he was properly admitted to practice law in the Central District of California and the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals. After **Kieffer** gained admission to the North Dakota Federal Bar, he used that admission to fraudulently gain admission to other federal courts including Minnesota, Colorado and Missouri. In those jurisdictions, he represented clients and obtained money from individuals for legal services.

**Kieffer** has no law degree and, therefore, could not be admitted to practice law in any of the jurisdictions. Once the particular courts became aware of the contention that

**Kieffer** had no law degree, they requested that he substantiate the representations in his admission applications. When he was unable to do so, the courts revoked his admission.

The charge of mail fraud carries a statutory maximum penalty of 20 years of imprisonment and a \$250,000 fine. The charge of making a false statement to a governmental agency carries a statutory maximum penalty of five years of imprisonment and a \$250,000 fine.

The case was investigated by the United States Postal Inspection Service.

Sentencing for **Kieffer** has not been scheduled.

Assistant United States Attorney David Hagler is prosecuting the case.

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