



# Department of Justice

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## **MICHIGAN MAN CHARGED WITH FRAUD**

WASHINGTON — The Department of Justice announced today that a federal grand jury in Detroit returned an indictment against a Michigan man, charging him with criminal mail fraud by defrauding Countrywide Home Loans of a \$120,000 line of credit.

Today's indictment charges that Douglas A. Benit applied for the line of credit while falsely representing his income, and drew funds from the \$120,000 line of credit several times in April, May, and June 2006. According to the indictment, Benit used Federal Express to carry out the scheme from his home. The Department said that Benit drew from the line of credit on at least six occasions, receiving funds of more than \$79,000.

On May 23, 2006, the same federal grand jury returned a nine-count indictment charging Benit, a former Assistant Superintendent at Ecorse Public Schools, together with his wife, for their alleged role in a fraudulent scheme to obtain almost \$7.3 million from Ecorse public schools and the federal E-Rate program. Benit was arrested on May 24, 2006, and is currently under home detention pending his trial.

The charge announced today, a violation of 18 U.S.C. § 1341, carries a maximum fine of \$250,000 or 20 years imprisonment, or both, and forfeiture.

The investigation is being conducted jointly by the Antitrust Division's Cleveland Field Office and the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

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