

Testimony of Jeannie McDermott

September 7, 2010

In February of 2007, I opened a small local business with a partner. We were going to work it together, live the American Dream. It didn't work out that way. In July of that same year, he walked away, leaving me on my own. I wanted desperately to make it work. I needed to make it work. Everything I had was in that store, but despite all of my efforts, it ended up closing in August of 2008. By that time I had nothing left, and was behind two months on my house payments.

Having always had excellent credit, I contacted Washington Mutual and explained my situation. They agreed to give me a Special Forbearance, providing me time to get back on my feet. No payment would be due from August through December 2008. In good faith, I sent them a cashier's check for \$2000 in October to cover my two missed payments in June & July.

I started making my payments again in January as agreed, while still looking for full time work. In February I contacted WaMu about trying to have my loan modified. Getting nowhere, I contacted Congressman Kevin McCarthy's office for help. After receiving a phone call from Shelby Hagenhour at Congressman McCarthy's Washington DC office, they decided to talk to me. That was in March of 2009.

In May, they enrolled me in the Modification Trial Period Plan which I was told if I complied with all of their requests, made all of my payments on time for 3 months, my loan would then go to a loan officer for the final workup. Then in August, I received a phone call from Maureen at Chase telling me she was sending me a packet to be filled out with my most current information, and once she received it back, she would be giving it to the underwriter for permanent modification of my loan.

Over the next months, I made numerous attempts to contact what was now JP Morgan Chase to check on the status of my loan. I could get no answers, but was always promised a return phone call that never came.

In January of 2010, I again contacted WaMu/Chase and was told that they had all the documents they needed, my loan officer's name was Karen (he said he wouldn't give me her last name), but said he would have her call me. February came and still no word. I continued making my payments every month, taking them instead to the local Chase bank.

Two months ago in June, I received another letter from Chase, their famous *Your house is your home. We want to keep it that way* letter, the one I'd received many times before. When I called to tell them that I have already gone through their modification program and been approved, they told me that it had been denied. On June 20th! That I had to start the

process all over again. When I asked what it involved, they said I had to call them every seven to ten days, mail or fax my financial statement to them every fifteen to thirty days. I asked for how long this process would take, and I was told **EIGHTEEN MONTHS!**

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I've already been dealing with Chase for over two years now. I have 87 entries in my journal recounting my communications with them, received 36 letters, and had countless phone conversations. I sent them every document they ever requested, sometimes two and three times, all in hopes of getting them to work with me to save my home. Now they tell me my home is in foreclosure.

I always had excellent credit. I'm a product of the economy, and like so many others, just looking for a little help to save my home. Isn't that what the **BILLIONS** in bail out money was for?