



# Department of Justice

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
MONDAY, AUGUST 17, 2006  
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## **JUSTICE DEPARTMENT SETTLES ALLEGATIONS OF RACE DISCRIMINATION AGAINST MINNEAPOLIS LANDLORD**

WASHINGTON — The Justice Department announced an agreement today with the owners and managers of two rental properties in Minneapolis, Minn., to resolve allegations of systemic discrimination against African-American tenants. Under the settlement, which must still be approved by the U.S. District Court in Minneapolis, the defendants must pay \$525,000 to the affected households, hire an independent management company to operate the rental properties, post and publish non-discriminatory policy, and take steps to clear up the records of several persons who the United States alleges Kreisler attempted to evict for discriminatory reasons, so that the housing court records do not reflect adversely on their rental history. The defendants will also pay a \$50,000 civil penalty.

“It is offensive and illegal to deny equal access to housing based on the color of one's skin,” said Wan J. Kim, Assistant Attorney General for the Civil Rights Division. “The Justice Department is committed to aggressively enforcing our civil rights laws that protect our most fundamental rights and values from such discriminatory practices.”

The U.S. Attorney for the District of Minnesota, Rachel K. Paulose said, “All Minnesotans have the right to expect fair and lawful treatment when searching for a home for themselves and their children. This office will continue to fight vigorously against discrimination in housing.”

The lawsuit alleged that Robert Kreisler Jr. and his affiliated companies violated the Fair Housing Act when they discriminated against African-American tenants at two apartment complexes located at 2500 Blaisdell and 2421 Pillsbury in Minneapolis. Specifically, the government's complaint alleged that defendants sought to evict African-American tenants, required them permanently to vacate their apartments due to renovations, failed to provide them necessary and requested maintenance, and denied that apartments were available to rent when, in fact, they were available.

Fighting illegal housing discrimination is a top priority of the Justice Department. In February, Attorney General Alberto R. Gonzales announced Operation Home Sweet Home, a concentrated

initiative to expose and eliminate housing discrimination in America. This initiative was inspired by the plight of displaced victims of Hurricane Katrina who were suddenly forced to find new places to live. Operation Home Sweet Home is not limited to the areas affected by Hurricane Katrina and targets housing discrimination all over the country.

More information about Operation Home Sweet Home, can be found at [www.usdoj.gov/fairhousing](http://www.usdoj.gov/fairhousing). Individuals who believe that they may have been victims of housing discrimination can call the Housing Discrimination Tip Line at 1-800-896-7743, email [fairhousing@usdoj.gov](mailto:fairhousing@usdoj.gov), or contact the Department of Housing and Urban Development at 1-800-669-9777.

The federal Fair Housing Act prohibits discrimination in housing on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, familial status, national origin and disability. Since Jan. 21, 2001, the Justice Department's Civil Rights Division has filed 200 cases to enforce the Fair Housing Act, including 59 based on race. For more information about the Civil Rights Division and the laws it enforces, visit [www.usdoj.gov/crt](http://www.usdoj.gov/crt).

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