



Department of Justice

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JUSTICE DEPARTMENT SETTLES SEXUAL HARASSMENT LAWSUIT AGAINST RICHMOND, MISSOURI, LANDLORD

WASHINGTON - The Justice Department announced today that Calvert Properties Inc. has agreed to pay \$250,000 to settle a lawsuit alleging that its former president, Harold Calvert, of Richmond, Mo., sexually harassed female tenants in violation of the Fair Housing Act.

The federal government's lawsuit, filed in August 2006, alleges that Harold Calvert violated the Fair Housing Act by subjecting female tenants at rental properties he managed to severe, pervasive and unwelcome sexual harassment. The United States alleges that Calvert's conduct included unwanted verbal sexual advances, unwanted physical sexual advances, inappropriate statements, and threats to evict female tenants when they refused or objected to his sexual advances. The lawsuit named Calvert Properties Inc., the corporation that owned the properties that Harold Calvert managed, as a defendant and alleges that as the owner it was liable for Calvert's discriminatory conduct.

"This landlord's illegal actions violated the victims' sense of security in their own homes. By holding the key to the victims' front doors, he was able to harass several female tenants who feared eviction if they refused his advances," said Grace Chung Becker, Acting Assistant Attorney General for the Civil Rights Division. "I commend the courageous women who came forward, regardless of the risk to themselves and their family, to assert their rights under the Fair Housing Act."

Under the settlement, which must be approved by the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Missouri, Calvert Properties will pay \$165,000 to six former tenants whom Calvert sexually harassed, and two children of one of the tenants, who observed Calvert's harassment of their mother. In addition, Calvert Properties will establish a \$60,000 fund to compensate any additional victims subsequently identified by the United States. Calvert Properties will also pay \$25,000 in a civil penalty to the United States.

This lawsuit arose as a result of a charge of discrimination issued by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

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. 1, 2001, the Justice Department's Civil Rights Division has filed 244 cases to enforce the Fair Housing Act, including 16 cases alleging sexual harassment. More information about the Civil Rights Division and the laws it enforces is available at <http://www.usdoj.gov/crt>.

Fighting illegal housing discrimination is a top priority of the Justice Department. Individuals who believe that they may have been victims of housing discrimination can call the Housing Discrimination Tip Line (1-800-896-7743), e-mail the Justice Department at fairhousing@usdoj.gov, or contact the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development at 1-800-669-9777.

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