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Fair Housing Center of Greater Madison

For Immediate Release

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

Attorney David R. Sparer
Herrick & Kasdorf, L.L.P.
608-257-1369

Discriminatory Eviction of Mother and Two-Month-Old Child Costly
for Fort Atkinson Apartment Owner

Apartment owner Cecilia Pope of Fort Atkinson has paid \$15,650 to settle a fair housing complaint filed by Darci Frederick with the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Frederick alleged that Pope violated the Federal Fair Housing Act by evicting Frederick and her 2-month-old child on the basis of familial status. According to the Federal Fair Housing Act, a housing provider cannot discriminate on the basis of the presence of children in a household.

Darci Frederick moved into her one-bedroom apartment at 218 Edwards Street in Fort Atkinson in May of 2002. The following January, Frederick had a baby. Two months after the birth of her son, Frederick's landlord, Pope, came to her apartment and inquired if she was pregnant. Frederick said "no," and explained to Pope that she had her baby in January. Claiming that the apartment was not for children, Pope informed Frederick that she was going to have to move. Nine days later, Frederick received notice that she and her infant son needed to vacate the building by the end of the month.

"When someone tells you that you can't live at a place anymore because of your child it is just a complete shock," stated complainant Darci Frederick. "I had just moved to the area and it was my first apartment in Wisconsin. I am extremely thankful that I received the assistance that I needed."

The Metropolitan Milwaukee Milwaukee Fair Housing Council (MMFHC) conducted intake of Frederick's complaint and counseled her on the rights and remedies available to her under the Wisconsin Open Housing Law and the Federal Fair Housing Act. After conducting an investigation through its satellite office, the Fair Housing Center of Greater Madison (FHCGM), MMFHC referred Frederick to Madison Attorney David Sparer of Herrick & Kasdorf, L.L.P. The complaint was subsequently settled through HUD.

As part of the settlement, Darci Frederick has received \$15,650 in damages. In addition, affirmative relief was part of the settlement, including attendance by Cecilia Pope at a fair housing training seminar conducted by MMFHC.