



FAIR HOUSING LAWSUIT ALLEGING DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION FILED AGAINST SENIOR LIVING COMMUNITY IN INDIANAPOLIS

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INDIANAPOLIS – The Fair Housing Center of Central Indiana (FHCCI), Indiana Protection and Advocacy Services (IPAS), and four people with disabilities announce the filing of a federal lawsuit against United Church Residences of Indianapolis, Indiana, Inc., and United Church Homes, Inc., owners of Capitol Station apartments in Indianapolis, Indiana. The complaint alleges that the defendants did not take timely action to repair the only elevator in an apartment building which housed residents age 62 years or older. Many residents of Capitol Station had mobility issues which were readily apparent, for whom taking the stairs was dangerous or impossible. This suit alleges that Capitol Station was without a working elevator for five and a half weeks in August and September 2015 resulting in harm to residents with disabilities.

After being contacted by residents about the elevator outage, the FHCCI conducted an investigation. The investigation shows that Capitol Station is a building with 48 apartments on three floors serviced by one elevator and a staircase with 62 steps. The lawsuit alleges that owners and management failed to make repairs in a timely fashion, refused to provide reasonable accommodations to residents with disabilities, resulting in the apartments becoming inaccessible, and caused the residents “physical harm, humiliation and emotional stress.”

“It is disappointing that it took media coverage and public pressure to remedy this situation. We understand that elevators can break but what we are unable to understand is why there were no other alternative options put in place so residents could safely leave their homes. Some residents with disabilities were left stranded in their apartments for over five weeks,” said Dawn Adams, Executive Director of IPAS. “The residents of Capitol Station repeatedly requested assistance from management and corporate but were provided none. This is absolutely unacceptable.”

"It is inconceivable to imagine that for 5 ½ weeks the independence of these residents was taken away from them," stated Amy Nelson, Executive Director of the FHCCI. "These retired residents had to beg for help from family members and strangers for the most basic of necessities, unable to enjoy fresh air, or visit friends and family. It is unconscionable that accommodations were not made and assistance timely provided."

The case has been filed in the U.S. District Court, Southern District of Indiana. The Plaintiffs are represented by Attorneys Thomas E. Crishon and Melissa L. Keyes of Indiana Protection and Advocacy Services and Diane E. Citrino and Kathleen A. Nitschke of Giffen & Kaminski, LLC.

A copy of the filed complaint can be found at <http://www.in.gov/ipas>.

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The mission of Indiana Protection & Advocacy Services is to protect and promote the rights of individuals with disabilities through empowerment and advocacy.

For more information go to <http://www.in.gov/ipas>