



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
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BROOKLYN REAL ESTATE BROKER AND BUILDER REFUSED TO SELL NEW CONDO TO AFRICAN AMERICAN ATTORNEY

Today Natali Todd, an African American attorney in New York City, filed a lawsuit in federal district court alleging that a Brooklyn real estate company and a builder refused to sell her a luxury condominium unit at 2569 Ocean Avenue in Brooklyn, New York. In July 2007, despite offering the asking price, and later, an amount above the asking price for an apartment, Ms. Todd's purchase offers were refused by the broker, Jack Potak Real Estate, and builder, Nicholas Cammarato. The lawsuit alleges that after Ms. Todd's efforts to purchase an apartment were rebuffed, a white friend visited the building later in July and submitted a lower offer on the same apartment. His lower offer was allegedly accepted by the defendants.

Ms. Todd filed a discrimination complaint with the Fair Housing Justice Center (FHJC), a nonprofit civil rights organization based in New York City. A white tester was sent by the FHJC to inquire about purchasing a condo apartment in the Ocean Avenue building visited by Ms. Todd. The white tester was informed that prices for the units were negotiable and that he could expect an 8-10% discount off the list prices, amounts significantly lower than the rejected offer to purchase made by Ms. Todd.

The 27-unit Ocean Avenue building is located in the Sheepshead Bay neighborhood of Brooklyn. According to 2000 Census data, the condominium building is located in a census tract that is 97% white and less than 1% African American. See the attached map showing the racial composition of this Brooklyn neighborhood.

"Sadly, racial discrimination continues to reduce the housing choices available to African Americans regardless of occupation, education, or economic status," stated Diane L. Houk, FHJC Executive Director. She added, "We are all diminished when any individual in our community is harmed by a discriminatory act and empowered when action is taken to correct the injustice."

Marian Meier Wang, attorney for Ms. Todd, stated, "Nearly a century and a half since the passage of post-Civil War civil rights statutes and more than forty years after enactment of the federal Fair Housing Act, this invidious racism and segregationist approach must stop."

Ms Todd's lawsuit alleges violations of federal, state, and local fair housing laws that prohibit discrimination based on race in the sale of housing. The lawsuit seeks an injunction to stop the discrimination, relief to prevent future discriminatory acts, and compensatory and punitive damages.

The mission of the FHJC, opened in April 2005, is to challenge systemic housing discrimination, promote open and inclusive communities, and strengthen fair housing enforcement. The FHJC assists individuals who encounter illegal housing discrimination by providing counseling on fair housing rights, investigative assistance (including testing), and referrals to administrative agencies and cooperating attorneys.

Individuals who believe they may have encountered illegal housing discrimination are encouraged to call the FHJC at (212) 400-8201.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

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