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**DEVELOPER OF LUXURY CONDOMINIUMS SUED FOR SELLING
HANDICAP PARKING SPACES TO NONHANDICAPPED RESIDENTS
FOR A PROFIT**

(Chicago, IL April 11, 2011) A federal court lawsuit was filed today by HOPE Fair Housing Center and Fahad Jafri, a 31-year old Chicago man disabled by multiple sclerosis, against the developers of the Chandler Condominiums, a 304 unit luxury condominium building located at 450 Waterside Dr., Chicago, IL. The suit alleges that the developer, Chandler LLC, an affiliate of Magellan Development Group, sold all of its handicap parking spaces to non-disabled residents for premiums of over \$15,000.00 each. These residents were then allowed to park their luxury vehicles in those spaces, benefiting from the spaces' increased size and proximity to the elevator. Mr. Jafri, a tenant who often must use a wheelchair or walker, alleges that because of the developer's violation of the federal Fair Housing Act, no handicap spaces are available for persons who actually need them.

The lawsuit filed today alleges that the developers, part of a development group that has completed 20 projects with over 6,600 units of residential housing in the Chicago area, <http://www.magellanddevelopment.com/company>, violated the law by striping and placing handicap parking signs on 2% of the parking spaces as required by federal law but then selling those spaces, along with condominiums that were priced at between \$300,000 and \$6,000,000, to whomever was willing to pay the extra premium in to be closer to the elevators.

Fahad Jafri has been diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis since he was twenty one years old. In May of 2009, he rented a condominium at the Chandler. At the time, Fahad had been managing his illness for a decade and was able to work, walk without assistance and drive a car. Not long thereafter, Fahad's medication stopped working and he began to lose the ability to walk. By December of 2009, Fahad required an experimental stem cell transplant to prevent complete paraplegia. After a difficult but successful rehabilitation, Fahad was able to return to his condo and resume driving, using a wheelchair and a walker to get around. Unfortunately, it is difficult for him to walk more than short distances without assistance.

Fahad has been attempting to obtain a handicap parking space at The Chandler since May of 2010. Over time, he noticed that not a single handicap parking space was occupied by a vehicle that displayed a handicap parking license plate or placard. Instead, the complaint alleges that residents would park two cars in the extra-wide space or would openly park their large, luxury cars in the spaces supposedly reserved for the disabled – even though the Illinois Vehicle Code at 625 ILCS § 5/11-1303 makes it illegal to park a car in a private handicap parking space unless the car displays handicap registration plates or decal. [See attached pictures] According to the allegations in the lawsuit, when Jafri made inquiry of the Chandler Condominium Association, he was told by the building manager, “It is a private garage and each of the Owners own their space. I have no control over the garage spaces.” (Complaint ¶ 29)

The complaint further alleges that in February of 2011, when Mr. Jafri parked his car in a handicap parking space because he was unable to reach the elevators from his assigned space, the building manager called Jafri and ordered him to move his car or it would be towed, because the parking space owner had complained that he needed to park his Bentley in the space. (Complaint ¶ 25)

After Mr. Jafri complained to HOPE Fair Housing Center, a federally funded not-for-profit organization that assists persons in enforcing their housing rights, HOPE investigated Mr. Jafri’s attempted, unsuccessfully, to obtain an accommodation for Mr. Jafri that would provide him with a handicap parking space. HOPE Director Ed Coleman, said that by selling off the only handicap parking spaces available at the building, Chandler LLC. has thumbed its nose at the thousands of Chicago area residents who are forced to use a wheelchair or other mobility assistance to enjoy their dwellings. “It’s as if they hung a big sign on the building, NO PEOPLE IN WHEELCHAIRS NEED APPLY”, said Mr. Coleman. “Elevating profit over humanity is intolerable. Any one of us could be stricken with an illness like multiple sclerosis. We will pursue this matter for Mr. Jafri and all other persons with disabilities so that they can have equal access to housing.”

HOPE has requested that both the Illinois Attorney General’s office and the United States Department Justice Housing & Civil Enforcement Division, take action against the developer to remedy the situation at the Chandler and to prevent other developments by the Magellan Group from selling off their handicap parking spaces to non-handicapped persons.

The Chandler condominium building is the residence of Chicago Blackhawk Jonathon Toews. <http://www.chicagonow.com/blogs/access-granted/2010/12/inside-look-chicago-blackhawks-captain-jonathan-toews-condo.html>

HOPE and Fahad Jafri are represented by attorney Jeffrey L. Taren, Kinoy, Taren and Geraghty P.C. (312) 663-5210.





