

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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*If you would like a copy of the Complaint filed in federal court, Philip Cusumano v Hartland Meadows, L.L.C., Case No. 14-13149, please email [kcuhran@fhcmichigan.org](mailto:kcuhran@fhcmichigan.org).*

**New Discrimination Lawsuit Filed:  
Wheelchair User Demands Sidewalk Access**

Philip Cusumano has filed a disability discrimination lawsuit claiming violations of the federal Fair Housing Act, against the Hartland Meadows mobile home community in Livingston County. Mr. Cusumano is legally blind and uses a wheelchair. He contacted the Fair Housing Center of Southeastern Michigan in April to report that Hartland Meadows' "no parking on sidewalk" rule was not being enforced. This made traveling around the community dangerous and denied him access to common areas, including his mailbox.

Then, in May, Mr. Cusumano reported to Fair Housing Center staff that "the sidewalks were blocked by cars; I couldn't get around the cars on the sidewalk in my wheelchair, so I had to go on the road, where I was nearly hit by a car."

This instance is not unusual. Mr. Cusumano and his wife, Vickie Cusumano, have several photographs of cars parked on sidewalks throughout Hartland Meadows. Fair Housing Center staff investigated the property and witnessed numerous cars on sidewalks throughout the property.

Hartland Meadows has a policy that states residents are to not park on the sidewalks and provides three off-street parking spaces per home site. According to the lawsuit, the policy is not enforced.

"Let Philip Cusumano take his grandchildren to the playground without risking his safety," said Pamela Kisch, Executive Director of the Fair Housing Center of Southeastern Michigan. "Mr. Cusumano and others who use wheelchairs rely on clear paths available to them at all times."

The Fair Housing Center sent multiple letters to Hartland Meadows urging the enforcement of the rule that prevents parking on sidewalks. However, when the rule was still not enforced effectively, the Fair Housing Center referred Mr. Cusumano to Cooperating Attorney, Steve Tomkowiak, for litigation. On August 1, 2014, Mr. Tomkowiak filed suit on behalf of Mr. Cusumano in U.S. Federal District Court. The case is assigned to the Honorable Matthew F. Lietman.

A private non-profit organization, the Fair Housing Center opened in 1992 to provide fair housing investigations, advocacy, education, conciliation, and attorney referrals to those who believe they have been the victims of illegal housing discrimination. The Fair Housing Center serves Washtenaw, Ingham, Monroe, Livingston, Jackson, and Lenawee counties.

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*Please do not park on the sidewalks...*



For the safety of all Community Residents please do not park on the sidewalks...

Motor vehicles should be parked on off-street spaces provided on Resident's own home site. Parking is provided for three vehicles per home site. Any Resident or household with more than three vehicles will have to store them outside of the Community unless you have added extra parking on your site. Parking spaces are to be used for transportation motor vehicles only. Recreational vehicles, trailers or other items may not be parked in parking spaces. It is

the responsibility of the Resident to keep streets and sidewalks clear.

Motorcycles are permitted for transportation purposes only. Storage of motorcycles must either be in a designated parking space or approved shed when not in use.

Mini-bikes, trail bikes, three or four-wheelers, mopeds or snowmobiles are not permitted in the community.

Motor vehicles within the Community shall be operated in a safe manner and in no event shall be driven in excess of the posted speed limit.

Taking walks in the Community is enjoyed by young and old.

Lets all work together in keeping it safe for Everyone...

*Photographs: Philip and Vicki Cusumano; page of Hartland Meadow newsletter. High resolution photographs available upon request.*

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