

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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A copy of the filed complaint is available upon request.

Allegation of Sexual Harassment leads to Fair Housing Lawsuit

Ypsilanti -

Jennifer L. Daugherty contacted the Fair Housing Center in August 2016 to file a sexual harassment complaint against her Ypsilanti Township landlord, Michael Carpenter. Ms. Daugherty stated that she had been receiving unwelcome texts at all times of the day and night, unannounced visits, and other unwanted attention from her landlord for over a year. The defendant harassed and intimidated her, repeatedly asking her to go out with him, spend time with him, and even going as far as to leave a present under her pillow while she was away.

Ms. Daugherty's text responses varied from "no" to "stop this" to several months of ignoring his constant demands and sexual innuendos. According to the lawsuit, "Defendant twice initiated eviction proceedings against Daugherty in retaliation for Daugherty's refusals to enter into a relationship with Defendant, and thus grant him sexual favors." Ms. Daugherty wanted to continue to live in the apartment only because she needed to help care for her grandmother, who lived next door and was afflicted with Alzheimer's.

The lawsuit states that Mr. Carpenter most recently gave her a notice to vacate on September 5, 2016, after watching her leave her apartment with another man and texting her that he would no longer rent to her. Worried about her safety, Ms. Daugherty filed a police report at that time. Ms. Daugherty was forced to incur moving costs and a much higher rent to stay near her grandmother. After the FHC advised her of her rights, Ms. Daugherty chose to take her case to litigation. FHC Cooperating Attorney Steve Tomkowiak filed the fair housing complaint based on the protected class of sex in Federal Court on July 14, 2017. The case has been assigned to Judge Linda Parker.

The Fair Housing Center of Southeast and Mid Michigan, founded in 1992, actively protects the civil rights of those who are discriminated against in the rental, sale, or financing of housing through investigation, education, advocacy, and legal action. The FHC takes an average of 150 complaints each year from its eight-county service area – Clinton, Eaton, Ingham, Jackson, Lenawee, Livingston, Monroe, and Washtenaw counties.

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