



Hartline Dacus Barger Dreyer LLP Successfully Defends American Honda Finance Corporation in Employment Gender Discrimination Trial

*Hartline Dacus Barger Dreyer LLP successfully defends American Honda Finance Corp., proving employment law compliance
(Cause No: 3:2010cv02484.)*

Dallas, TX, May 29, 2012 – American Honda Finance received a complete defense verdict following a jury trial involving allegations that the company blocked a former employee’s promotions and did not provide equal pay because of her gender. Jeff Patterson, Managing Partner at Hartline Dacus Barger Dreyer LLP, along with Cathlynn Cannon of Wilson Elser’s Dallas office, represented Honda Finance in the case of Melissa Metcalf v. American Honda Finance Corporation. Company representatives in the case included David Peim, corporate counsel for American Honda Finance Co. and Katy Parato, Manager of Human Resources and Administration for the company. According to court documents, the plaintiff sued under the Equal Pay Act as well as Title VII and the Texas Labor Act, alleging that she was paid less than similarly situated men, did not receive a pay-grade promotion given to men in her position, and suffered retaliation in the form of lower evaluations and an expense report investigation. The plaintiff dropped her retaliation claims just before trial and moved to exclude any reference to the expense report. This effort was unsuccessful.

Honda Finance had the burden of proving the pay disparity was justified by a structured merit-compensation system, as well as other gender-neutral factors, including industry experience, starting salaries, market forces, the recession and performance. Three female managers from Honda Finance testified for the company against allegations of a gender-bias culture and in defense of the Vice President of the company. An associate of American Honda Motor Co.’s compensation department also testified about the structured-compensation system and the reason for the disparities.

“American Honda Finance is an excellent employer, makes good business decisions without regard to gender, and cares for its people. We had no doubt the jury would find the plaintiff’s claims had no merit,” says Jeff Patterson. “We are very pleased with the jury’s speedy deliberation and clear verdict as it recognizes Honda as a responsible, equal-opportunity employer.”

The trial was conducted in the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Texas, and presided over by District Judge Ed Kinkeade. After two and a half hours of deliberation, the seven-person jury returned a complete defense verdict.

Hartline Dacus Barger Dreyer LLP is a Texas-based law firm specializing in civil litigation and trials, with offices in Dallas, Corpus Christi and Houston. The firm's attorneys pride themselves on providing uncompromising excellence to their clients in a variety of areas, including products liability, commercial litigation, class action and multidistrict litigation, intellectual property, personal-injury defense, premises liability, labor and employment, insurance coverage, health-care, construction, and dealer/franchise litigation. For more information about HDBD, visit <http://www.hdbdlaw.com>.

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SOURCE: Court documents, trial transcript, defense counsel (Hartline Dacus Barger Dreyer LLP)

Cause No: 3:2010cv02484

Court: United States District Court for the Northern District of Texas

Judge: The Honorable Ed Kinkeade

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