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*The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission*

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## CARMIKE CINEMAS TO PAY \$765,000 TO SETTLE RARE CASE OF MALE-ON-MALE TEEN HARASSMENT

### ***EEOC Says Male Supervisor Groped Young Men, Made Advances and Requested Sexual Favors***

RALEIGH, N.C. – Carmike Cinemas, Inc. (Carmike), a large movie theater chain operating 312 theaters in 36 states, will pay \$765,000 to resolve an employment discrimination lawsuit by the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) charging that a group of young men were sexually harassed by their male supervisor, a convicted sex offender, at Carmike's theater located at 5501 Atlantic Springs Road in Raleigh.

EEOC filed the suit one year ago asserting that 14 young men working in various positions at Carmike were subjected to unwelcome sexual touching, egregious sexual comments, sexual advances and requests for sexual favors from their male supervisor between February and October 2003. The suit was filed under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 in U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of North Carolina, Western Division (*EEOC et. al v. Carmike Cinemas, Inc.*; Civil Action No. 5:04-CV-673-BO(1), after the EEOC first attempted to reach a voluntary pre-litigation settlement.

"Employers must heighten their awareness to harassment of teenage workers – one of the most vulnerable segments of the labor force – and actively take steps to prevent it," said Reuben Daniels, Jr., Director of the EEOC's Charlotte District Office. "This settlement sends a message to all employers that if you hire teens, you must be especially vigilant to protect them from discrimination on the job."

The monetary payment of more than three quarters of a million dollars is the largest damages amount in an EEOC teen harassment lawsuit since the agency began tracking the issue in 2001. In addition to the monetary payout, the court-filed consent decree settling the suit requires Carmike to take the following other actions at its theaters in North Carolina and Virginia that comprise Carmike's "District 4" (including the Atlantic Springs Road theater):

- Distribute its sexual harassment policy to all new hires in District 4;
- Post a revised summary of its sexual harassment policy at those same theaters;
- Provide annual training concerning sexual harassment and unlawful retaliation to all its managers, supervisors and new hires within District 4; and
- Carmike must post an Employee Notice at its District 4 theaters concerning the lawsuit and employees' rights under federal anti-discrimination laws.

Lynette A. Barnes, EEOC's Acting Regional Attorney in Charlotte, said: "Although we are filing more litigation involving teen harassment, this case is unique because we rarely receive reports of men sexually harassing other men – especially when the victim is a teenager."

Barnes added: "The EEOC applauds these young men for standing up and asserting their rights. For a teenager to openly oppose sexual harassment by an older male supervisor takes a great deal of strength and courage. Hopefully, this settlement will encourage other teens to come forward if they experience discrimination at work."

In September 2004, the EEOC launched its national Youth@Work initiative. Youth@Work is a comprehensive outreach and education campaign designed to inform teens about their employment rights and responsibilities and to help employers create positive first work experiences for young adults. Further information about the Youth@Work campaign is available on the agency's web site at [www.eeoc.gov](http://www.eeoc.gov). Specific EEOC-related information for teens is available on the Youth@Work web site at [www.youth.eeoc.gov](http://www.youth.eeoc.gov).

The EEOC enforces Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibits employment discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex or national origin; the Age Discrimination in Employment Act; the Equal Pay Act; prohibitions against discrimination affecting individuals with disabilities in the federal sector; sections of the Civil Rights Act of 1991; and Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act which prohibits discrimination against people with disabilities in the private sector and state and local governments.

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