

PRESS RELEASE - FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: December 27, 2007

RE: JANITORIAL WORKER AT UNICCO JANITORIAL SERVICES COMPANY FILES SEXUAL HARASSMENT COMPLAINT AFTER THE COMPANY ENCOURAGED HARASSMENT OF HER AND TERMINATED HER EMPLOYMENT WHEN SHE FILED A FORMAL SEXUAL HARASSMENT COMPLAINT.

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Washington, D.C., December 27 – A janitorial worker at UNICO Service Company filed a sex harassment lawsuit in the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia on Friday, December 21, 2007 against her former employer, alleging that the company encouraged sexual harassment against her and terminated her after she filed a formal complaint. UNICCO is currently subject to a conciliation agreement with the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) under which it paid \$1.0 million in compensatory damages and was compelled to develop and post anti-discrimination policies and complaint procedures.

Blanca Zelaya, who worked at the 1200 K Street office building, which houses the Pension Benefit Guarantee Corporation, alleged that a UNICCO manager sexually harassed her, including when she was four months pregnant, leading to the premature birth of her son and severe emotional distress. She also alleges that UNICCO retaliated against her when she complained about her supervisor's sexual advances and assault by cutting off her health insurance during the last trimester of her pregnancy, fabricating false disciplinary charges against her, and ultimately transferring her to a building where UNICCO was losing the contract to terminate her employment. Ms. Zelaya requests \$1.0 million in compensatory and punitive damages.

Ms. Zelaya also alleges that contrary to the conciliation agreement, UNICCO did not

post required information about the protections of sexual harassment victims under state and federal law.

“UNICCO is a lawless company, which fosters a culture of sexual harassment and disrespect. Ms. Zelaya’s willingness to stand up for her rights, and that of her co-workers who support her, sent a signal to UNICCO that its behavior has to stop. This is a company whose top management and Human Resources personnel are actively engaged in retaliation against employees such as Ms. Zelaya who raise serious, unresolved sexual harassment complaints,” said Lynne Bernabei, who represents Ms. Zelaya.

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