



For Immediate Release

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**Fair Housing Centers Settle Housing Accessibility Lawsuit in
Washington and Idaho against Rudeen Development and Several Co-Defendants**

WASHINGTON, DC – The National Fair Housing Alliance (NFHA), Intermountain Fair Housing Council, and Northwest Fair Housing Alliance have settled a housing accessibility lawsuit against Rudeen Development, LLC and several co-defendants. The lawsuit alleged violations of accessibility requirements at River View Apartments (Coeur d'Alene, ID), Villas at River View Apartments (Coeur d'Alene, ID), Mountain View Apartments (Ponderay, ID), Bentley Apartments (Spokane, WA), and Mirabolante Apartments (Spokane Valley, WA).

The agreement settles claims that Rudeen and other Defendants designed or constructed multifamily dwellings, and common- and public-use areas, without the accessibility features required under the federal Fair Housing Act. The Defendants have agreed to make improvements and modifications at the five apartment complexes identified above which will enhance the accessibility of apartments and common areas for persons with disabilities. The Defendants also have agreed to pay the fair housing centers \$225,000 in damages, costs, and attorneys' fees.

"We appreciate the cooperation of Rudeen Development in achieving an efficient resolution of this dispute. The Defendant's commitment to make its apartments more accessible to people with disabilities is an important victory for residents of Idaho and Washington," said Shanna L. Smith, President and CEO of the National Fair Housing Alliance.

Since 1991, architects, builders, and developers of multifamily properties have been required to comply with accessible design and construction requirements of the Fair Housing Act.

"The lawsuit and settlement underscore the importance and need for accessible housing for persons with disabilities in new multifamily housing throughout the northwest. In order for persons with disabilities to have an equal opportunity to use and enjoy their homes, they need

to have paths free of steps; kitchens and bathrooms with sufficient maneuvering space for wheelchair users at sinks and toilets; wide doorways; lowered thermostats; and accessible parking with access aisles, to name a few of the required accessible features,” said Marley Hochendoner, Executive Director of the Northwest Fair Housing Alliance.

“We are pleased that changes will be made at the apartment complexes involved in the lawsuit to create more accessible units,” said Zoe Ann Olson, Executive Director of the Intermountain Fair Housing Council.

The National Fair Housing Alliance, Northwest Fair Housing Alliance, and the Intermountain Fair Housing Council were represented by Steve Dane and Yiyang Wu of Relman, Dane & Colfax, PLLC. No determinations on the merits of the claims were made because of the settlement, and the Defendants deny liability.

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About the National Fair Housing Alliance (www.nationalfairhousing.org)

Founded in 1988, the National Fair Housing Alliance is a consortium of more than 220 private non-profit fair housing organizations, state and local civil rights groups, and individuals from 37 states and the District of Columbia. Headquartered in Washington, D.C., NFHA, through comprehensive education, advocacy and enforcement programs, provides equal access to apartments, houses, mortgage loans and insurance policies for millions of people.

About the Northwest Fair Housing Alliance (www.nwfairhouse.org)

The mission of the Northwest Fair Housing Alliance (NWFHA) is to eliminate housing discrimination and to ensure equal housing opportunity for the people of Washington State through education, counseling and advocacy. Founded in 1994, NWFHA is based in Spokane and serves 17 counties in Eastern and Central Washington. NWFHA assists people who have been discriminated against in housing because of race, color, national origin, disability, familial status, religion, gender, marital status, creed, sexual orientation, and military status with the investigation and filing of fair housing complaints.

About the Intermountain Fair Housing Council, Inc. (www.ifhcidaho.org)

Founded in 1996, the Intermountain Fair Housing Council, Inc. (IFHC) is a nonprofit organization located in Boise, Idaho and serving the whole State. IFHC’s mission is to ensure open and inclusive housing for all people. The IFHC’s organizational purpose is to advance equal access to housing for all persons without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, sex, familial status, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, or source of income. The IFHC attempts to eradicate discrimination through education on fair housing laws, housing information and referrals, housing counseling, and enforcement including testing and filing complaints under the Fair Housing Act.