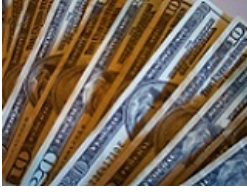


KIDS R US CHILDCARE COMPANY SETTLES PREGNANCY DISCRIMINATION LAWSUIT



Kids R Us, LLC, is known by its association with Toys R Us, the popular company that specializes in child and baby products. But it's the childcare facilities owned by Kids R Us that have been facing legal obstacles. The company owns and operates several facilities in Oklahoma that will be paying \$75,000 and furnishing other relief to settle a pregnancy discrimination and retaliation lawsuit. The suit was filed on behalf of three former employees by the EEOC (Equal Employment Opportunity Commission). According to the lawsuit, a woman, who was hired by Kids R Us in July 2009, informed the company owners that she was pregnant in March 2010. That same month, one of the owners held a meeting, where he allegedly told the employee that a new administrator was being hired for the facility and that she was being demoted from the full-time position of assistant facility director to a part-time cook – all because she had “decided to get pregnant.” The woman responded by filing a discrimination charge with the EEOC. Her cousin, who also worked for Kids R Us, protested to the owners the woman's demotion, believing that it was discriminatory. Shortly thereafter, the pregnant employee was transferred from the company's facility in Choctaw, OK, which is near her home, to a facility in Shawnee, OK. According to the EEOC, the transfer forced the woman to resign. The company also terminated the woman's cousin and another employee-relative, her sister, without any stated reason. Kids R Us' alleged conduct – pregnancy discrimination, retaliation for opposing it and retaliation for simply being associated with someone opposing it – are all violations of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act, as amended by the Pregnancy Discrimination Act. The EEOC filed the suit in the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Oklahoma after first trying to reach a settlement prior to litigation. The lawsuit was seeking back pay, compensatory and punitive damages and front pay for



all three of the former employees, as well as injunctive relief.

In addition to the monetary payment, the consent decree that was agreed upon requires that the company post notifications to all employees; revise and distribute its anti-discrimination policies; and provide training to all Kids R Us employees regarding specific anti-discrimination laws, including ones that prohibit pregnancy discrimination and retaliation. “Pregnancy does not equal inability to work, and no employee should be punished for complaining about illegal treatment of a co-worker, or worse yet, simply being related to or closely associated with a co-worker who complains,” EEOC trial attorney Patrick J. Holman said in a press release. “Thankfully, last year... the U.S. Supreme Court specifically expanded retaliation protection to include this last category of victim with those entitled to a remedy.” Barbara Seely, Regional Attorney for the EEOC St. Louis District Office, said that the agency hoped the agreement would “serve as an example to all employers that [the EEOC] takes seriously the right of people to complain about illegal job discrimination and that [it] will vigorously enforce the prohibitions against pregnancy discrimination.”