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**For Immediate Release**

**PRESS RELEASE**

**Federal Lawsuit Filed for Housing Discrimination Based on Race**

Housing Opportunities Project for Excellence, Inc. (“HOPE”) today filed a federal lawsuit against Elite River View Apartments, Inc., and its manager, Roberto “Doe,” for violating the federal Fair Housing Act by refusing to make housing units available to African-Americans. HOPE, represented by attorneys from the nonprofit civil rights law firm the Florida Justice Institute, discovered by a series of tests that the apartment complex was prohibiting African-Americans from renting apartments.

Representatives from HOPE contacted the apartment manager, Roberto “Doe,” and agent for the apartment complex and posed as would-be renters. However, those who were Black were denied rentals and given disparate information on availability, whereas those who were Hispanic were allowed entrance, shown apartments, and otherwise informed they could rent the apartments.

Keenya Robertson, HOPE President & CEO, said, “It’s appalling that, in 2014, housing providers are refusing to make housing available to Black applicants in blatant violation of the Fair Housing Act.” HOPE, a private fair housing enforcement agency funded in part by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, provides fair housing education, outreach, and investigations. It also operates a Housing Discrimination Help-Line at (305) 651-HOPE & (954) 567-0545.

The lawsuits seek injunctive and declaratory relief, as well as damages to compensate HOPE for the work it did in discovering the discriminatory practices and to compensate HOPE’s representatives for the emotional insult they suffered, along with attorneys’ fees and expenses.

The lawsuit was filed by civil rights attorneys at the Florida Justice Institute in Miami. Randall C. Berg, Jr., Executive Director, and Dante Trevisani. “Our clients fully intend to send a message to housing providers in South Florida that discrimination on the basis of race is illegal and must be stopped,” said Mr. Berg.

Copies of the lawsuit are available.

For further information contact: Keenya Robertson of HOPE at 305-651-4673 or Randall C. Berg, Jr. of FJI at 786-342-6907.

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