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For Immediate Release

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Court Slaps Record Companies With \$68,000 in Attorney's Fees

Plaintiffs to Pay for Suing Wrong Person--Ruling Could Affect Pending Cases in Tampa

TAMPA, FL (JULY 18, 2007) --A fresh ruling in a federal lawsuit in Oklahoma could have far-reaching implications for several Tampa-area residents targeted by record-industry copyright lawsuits, said area attorney Michael Alex Wasylik today.

“For the first time, it looks like the tide is turning,” said Wasylik, who represents several Bay Area clients targeted by the record industry. “The record companies rely on virtually unlimited resources to scare people, even innocent people, into settling. This ruling puts a high cost on that kind of tactic.”

The order in question awarded defendant Debbie Foster over \$68,000.00 in attorney's fees for defending the copyright suit brought against her by several record companies, who claimed that she was illegally sharing music files over the Internet. After Foster countersued, claiming they had sued the wrong person, the record companies dropped their lawsuit. Federal copyright laws allow the winner of a copyright lawsuit to recover their attorney's fees, Wasylik said.

That case, Capitol Records v. Foster, could affect several cases pending here in Tampa. The record industry has recently shifted its focus to the University of South Florida, claiming that its students are a high priority on their enforcement agenda. The prospect of having to pay defendants' attorney fees could make the record companies think twice before filing suit in shaky cases, Wasylik said.

“There is absolutely no way to tell who's at the other end of that Internet connection,” said Wasylik, “and in case after case, the record companies have been suing the wrong person.”

In the Foster case, continued Wasylik, “the plaintiffs refused to drop their suit even after they knew they had the wrong person. It used to be that the innocent defendant had to foot the bill for their sloppy litigation. Other courts should do just like this court did, and hold the record companies responsible for their mistakes.”

Attorney Michael Alex Wasylik, of Dade City, Florida, represents defendants in file-sharing litigation in federal court in Tampa. For more information, please contact Ricardo & Wasylik at (352) 567-3173 or (813) 774-8509 or visit www.ricardolaw.com.

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