



PRESS RELEASE

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Bright Petroleum Inc. Sued by EEOC for Retaliation

Food Market Terminated Manager Who Filed Discrimination Charge, Federal Agency Charges

INDIANAPOLIS - Bright Petroleum Inc. d/b/a The Bright Market violated federal law by retaliating against a manager who filed and refused to drop a discrimination charge with the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), the agency charged in a lawsuit it filed yesterday. The Bright Market is a food market and gas station located in Lawrenceburg, Ind.

According to the EEOC's lawsuit, The Bright Market retaliated against Deli Manager Michelle Bunte by singling her out for heightened scrutiny after learning that she had filed an EEOC charge and would not drop her charge. The company then disciplined and terminated her.

Taking adverse actions against an employee who complains of discrimination, files an EEOC charge or otherwise exercises her rights under Title VII violates the retaliation provision of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The prohibition against retaliation applies regardless of the outcome of the underlying charge. The EEOC asserts that the company's actions were intentional and demonstrated a reckless indifference to the worker's federally protected rights.

The EEOC filed suit (Case No. 4:13-cv-00205) in U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Indiana, New Albany Division, after first attempting to reach a pre-litigation settlement through its conciliation process. The agency is seeking back wages plus interest and compensatory and punitive damages, as well as other relief, including a permanent injunction to prevent the company from engaging in any future retaliation.

"Employers are simply not entitled to punish employees -- or former employees -- for complaining about discrimination" said Laurie A. Young, regional attorney for the EEOC's Indianapolis District Office. "If they try to do so, they are only making a bad situation worse for themselves."

The EEOC enforces federal laws prohibiting employment discrimination. Further information about the EEOC is available on the agency's web site at www.eeoc.gov.