

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE DISTRICT OF MARYLAND
SOUTHERN DIVISION**

JOHN O'BANNON, *et al.*,

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Plaintiffs,

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v.

Civil Action No. AW-03-623

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FRIEDMAN'S, INC., *et al.*,

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Defendants.

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ORDER

On October 19, 2007, Plaintiffs and Defendants Friedman's Inc. and Federal Insurance Company notified the Court that the parties have reached a tentative agreement to settle this action in its entirety.¹ However, before settlement was consummated, Defendant Friedman's, Inc. ("Friedman's") sent notice to the Court on February 1, 2008, informing the Court that it filed a voluntary petition under Chapter 11 of the United States Bankruptcy Code in the United States Bankruptcy Court for the District of Delaware. Consequently, this Court must stay all proceedings against Defendant Friedman's, and Defendants Federal Insurance Company and St. Paul Mercury Insurance Company will remain in this action.

On February 25, 2008, the Court held a telephonic status conference with all parties in this action to briefly discuss the pending bankruptcy proceeding and the pending motions before this Court (Doc. Nos. 141, 142, & 144). Based on the Court's discussion with the parties and the tentative settlement agreement, it appears to the Court that it would not be prudent for this action to proceed without Defendant Friedman's, considering that Friedman's is an integral party to this

¹ Defendant St. Paul was not mentioned in this notice of a tentative settlement agreement. However, during the Court's telephonic status conference call with the parties on February 25, 2008, the parties informed the Court that St. Paul will no longer be involved in further litigation if the settlement is approved.

