

## Over \$100 Million Global Settlement for Chicago Loop Office High-Rise Fire Victims

April 28, 2008

Judge William Maddux of the Circuit Court of Cook County, Illinois, approved a global settlement of over \$100 million on April 28, 2008 on behalf of the 22 victims of the Chicago Loop office high-rise building fire in Chicago on October 17, 2003. Several victims were represented by attorney Daniel Kotin, a partner at the law firm of Corboy & Demetrio.

One of the victims, Felice Lichaw, died in the stairwell of the building during the fire. Her family was the first to file a lawsuit just three days after the fire. Pursuant to the agreement, Ms. Lichaw's family will receive over \$4.7 million. According to Kotin, "Ms. Lichaw's brother and mother are pleased that their tragic loss has been acknowledged and recognized. Felice was the centerpiece of their family and while the money is a comfort, the pain of their loss remains."

Carol Melton, another victim of the fire, will receive over \$4.7 million in this settlement. Carol was overcome by smoke and passed out in the stairwell while holding hands with one of the decedents. She was the survivor who awoke 90 minutes later, pounded on the lock doors, and alerted the fire department. "She's to be commended for the many lives she helped that day," said Kotin.

"This was a long, hard-fought battle. We spent 4 years exposing and proving the indefensible conduct that led to this tragedy. The last six months, essentially, involved the defendants fighting over their percentages of fault," said Kotin.

"What has been frustrating to these victims and to us as their attorneys is the fact that all the legal maneuvering overlooked the fact that these people were locked in a smoke filled stairwell and forgotten. These defendants finally stepped up and accepted responsibility for an inexcusable event."

### Attorneys

- Daniel M. Kotin

### Related Practices

- Personal Injury & Wrongful Death
- Premises Liability

All of the Corboy & Demetrio clients are extremely pleased that the case settled. Carol Melton and Karen Griffin were preparing to be part of the first trial which was beginning this week. "Both Carol and Karen were prepared to testify about the horrible ordeal they endured, but the prospect of reliving the experience was quite painful for both of them," said Kotin. "This settlement should provide them with a sense of closure, and an opportunity to move on in life."