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**Sprenger & Lang Alleges ERISA Violations
Against Abbott Laboratories and Hospira, Inc.**

November 8, 2004 (Chicago, IL) – Former employees of the hospital products division (HPD) of Abbott Laboratories (NYSE: ABT) filed a complaint today alleging that Abbott and Hospira, Inc. (NYSE: HSP) unlawfully interfered with their rights to receive employment benefits, in violation of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA).

The complaint, filed in the U.S. District Court in Chicago by the law firms Sprenger & Lang and Meites, Mulder, Burger & Mollica, stems from Abbott's decision on August 22, 2003, to terminate its HPD employees and to spin-off its hospital products businesses into a separate company, which was later named Hospira. Approximately 10,000 HPD employees in the U.S. who were terminated by Abbott during the spin-off followed their jobs to Hospira. According to the complaint, before the spin-off, seventy percent of HPD employees were aged 40 or older, making HPD the most senior division in the company. These long-tenured employees, the complaint alleges, stood to earn substantial employee benefits under Abbott's benefit plans as they approached their retirement, but Abbott terminated the HPD employees in order to prevent them from earning these benefits.

After the spin-off was completed, Hospira revealed that it would not provide the spun-off HPD employees with retiree medical benefits and that, after 2004, the employees would not be able to earn additional pension benefits in their defined benefit plan.

Abbott and Hospira ensured that HPD employees would not receive benefits that they otherwise would have been entitled to, by implementing no-hire policies, according to the complaint. The Abbott no-hire policy precludes HPD employees from returning to Abbott for a period of two years. Under the policy, HPD employees returning to Abbott will experience a break in service under Abbott's benefit plans that will reduce the employment benefits they can earn after they return. Hospira, likewise, adopted a two-year policy of its own that prevents HPD employees from retiring from Abbott and receiving retirement benefits while continuing to work for Hospira.

Abbott's termination of the HPD employees followed on the heels of other employee benefit reductions that Abbott implemented in response to the increasingly negative impact that the company's benefit liabilities had on its reported financial statements.

“Abbott Laboratories looked into its employee benefits crystal ball and didn’t like what it saw, so the company terminated the plaintiffs to reduce its future financial liability,” said Sprenger & Lang’s Steven Sprenger, an attorney for the plaintiffs.

“Although Hospira claims that its benefits package is ‘competitive on all fronts’ with its peers, there is no question that Hospira is not even competitive with Abbott, where employees who were retained by the company continue to earn pension benefits and retirees receive medical coverage. The spin-off has benefited Abbott and Hospira at the expense of the employees who were terminated,” said Paul Mollica of Meites, Mulder, Burger & Mollica, co-counsel for the plaintiffs.

Attorneys representing the plaintiffs are seeking class certification for 10,000 former Abbott employees, as well as reinstatement and restoration of lost benefits.

Abbott is based in Abbott Park, IL, and Hospira is based in Lake Forest, IL. The companies produce and distribute healthcare and pharmaceutical products.

For more information about the case, please visit <http://www.abbottlabscase.com>.

ABOUT SPRENGER & LANG

Sprenger & Lang, with offices in Minneapolis and Washington, DC, has obtained some of the country’s largest gender, age, and race discrimination and ERISA judgments on behalf of tens of thousands of employees. Sprenger & Lang has successfully represented classes of plaintiffs against companies such as Burlington Northern, CBS, Northwest Airlines, First Union, Amtrak, and Ceridian Corporation. For more information about the firm, please visit <http://www.sprengerlang.com>.

ABOUT MEITES, MULDER, BURGER & MOLLICA

Meites, Mulder, Burger & Mollica is a national leader in handling large, complex class actions and multi-plaintiff lawsuits throughout the United States. The firm has successfully represented the rights of plaintiffs against numerous corporate and state defendants, including Merrill Lynch, Mitsubishi, Sears, Shell, Amoco, McDonnell-Douglas, United Airlines, and General Motors. For more information about the firm, please visit <http://www.mmbmlaw.com>.