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**Federal Judge Certifies Class in Pension Benefits Lawsuit
Against Abbott Laboratories and Hospira**

Chicago, IL (January 4, 2006)—Federal District Court Judge Robert W. Gettleman granted class certification to thousands of older workers who alleged Abbott Laboratories dumped them and spun them off into Hospira, Inc. because they were near to claiming rich retirement benefits, according to lawyers for the plaintiffs.

Three former Abbott employees sued Abbott and Hospira in 2004, alleging that Abbott, faced with the prospect of paying its older employees significant pension benefits when they retired, decided to spin-off its Hospital Products Division, which employed many of its older workers, to create a new company called Hospira.

The plaintiffs allege Abbott terminated them during the spin-off with the intent to interfere with their accrual of further benefits under the Abbott benefit plans. Several of those valuable benefits ended shortly after the former Abbott employees reported to work for Hospira. Finally, Abbott and Hospira adopted a two-year, no-hire policy that effectively eliminated any rights plaintiffs would have retained under the Abbott benefit plans.

Specifically, the plaintiffs allege that Abbott designed the spin-off to cut off the employees' pension benefits and insulate itself from ever paying any of the increased pension obligations accrued by its older employees as they approached their peak salary years when their benefits were becoming considerably more valuable.

The plaintiffs sued Abbott and Hospira on behalf of a class of all affected workers under ERISA, the Employee Retirement Income Security Act, 29 U.S.C § 1140. They filed a motion to certify their lawsuit as a class action on September 15, 2005, which would allow all the affected workers to participate in and benefit from the lawsuit.

In his December 30, 2005 Memorandum Opinion and Order, Judge Gettleman granted plaintiffs' request and certified a class of plaintiffs for each of the three counts of plaintiffs' complaint. The Order permits a class against Abbott on two counts that includes all former Abbott employees who were terminated between August 22, 2003 (the date the spin-off was announced), and April 30, 2004 (the date plaintiffs were terminated), as a result of the spin-off.

With regard to Hospira, the Court certified a subset of the class against Abbott that is limited to only those employees who were eligible to retire from Abbott on the date of their termination.

The Judge ordered the parties back in court on January 10, 2006, for a status report on ongoing discovery between the parties.

The plaintiffs and class are represented by Steven M. Sprenger, Mark A. Amadeo, and Latif Doman of Sprenger & Lang, PLLC, 1400 Eye Street, N.W., Suite 500, Washington, DC, 20005, and Michael M. Mulder, Paul W. Mollica, and Jamie S. Franklin of Meites, Mulder, Burger & Mollica, 208 LaSalle, Suite 1410, Chicago, IL 60604.

Abbott is represented by Joseph Torres of Winston & Strawn, 35 W. Wacker Drive, Chicago, IL 60601. Hospira is represented by Chris Ligouri of Jenner & Block LLP, One IBM Plaza, Chicago, IL 60601.

Judge Gettleman's opinion (*Nauman, et al. v. Abbott Laboratories and Hospira, Inc.*, No. 04 C 7199) is available at www.abbottlabscase.com.

ABOUT PLAINTIFFS' LAWYERS

Sprenger & Lang, with offices in Minneapolis and Washington, D.C., has obtained some of the country's largest gender, age, and race discrimination judgments on behalf of tens of thousands of discrimination victims. Sprenger & Lang has successfully represented classes of plaintiffs against companies such as Burlington Northern, CBS, Cargill, Northwest Airlines, First Union, Amtrak and Ceridian Corporation. The firm is featured in the recently-released book Class Action, which discusses a gender discrimination class action lawsuit that the firm successfully prosecuted for over ten years and inspired the wide.

Meites, Mulder, Burger & Mollica Meites, Mulder, Burger & Mollica, based in Chicago, Illinois, since 1980, represents employees (and other plaintiffs) in class action lawsuits throughout the United States. Most recently, the firm has recovered settlements in class action ERISA suits against McDonnell Douglas and Sears Roebuck.

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