



For Immediate Release

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Equal Rights Center and Hank's Oyster Bar Reach Agreement to Make Restaurant More Accessible

WASHINGTON, D.C., June 9, 2010 – Today the Equal Rights Center (ERC), a national non-profit civil rights organization, announced its agreement with Hank's Restaurant Bar owners, Leeds the Way LLC and Peggy Mallios, to make the restaurant more accessible to people with disabilities. The ERC was joined by Marc Fiedler, an ERC member who uses a wheelchair.

“Ensuring equal access to enjoy a fine restaurant like Hank's Oyster Bar is one of the reasons the Americans with Disability Act was put into place, and the Equal Rights Center is pleased to see that Hank's Oyster Bar will now be accessible to people with disabilities,” said Don Kahl, Executive Director of the Equal Rights Center.

In 2007, Fiedler visited Hank's Oyster Bar and was unable to dine due to several inaccessible features including an inaccessible entrance and restroom, and a lack of accessible dining tables. Fiedler approached the ERC, who conducted subsequent investigations that uncovered numerous violations of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), a federal law that requires places of public accommodation to be accessible to people with disabilities, and the District of Columbia Human Rights Act (DCHRA).

“The ADA celebrates its 20th anniversary this summer and we are happy to see businesses recognizing their legal obligations to provide services to people with disabilities,” said Elaine Gardner, Disability Rights Project Director at the Washington Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights and Urban Affairs. “We hope other restaurants will recognize the importance in maintaining accessible features that give all those in the District an opportunity to enjoy every day activities.”

As a result of the parties' agreement, Leeds the Way will make necessary modifications to Hank's Oyster Bar to insure that the restaurant complies with the ADA and the DCHRA. This will include ensuring the entry door, the public entrance, and the bathroom are accessible to people with disabilities. Leeds the Way has also agreed to train employees on the ADA and ensure the restaurant's policies are aimed at improving accessibility.

Both Fiedler and the Equal Rights Center were represented in this matter by the Washington Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights & Urban Affairs and the law firm of Kirkland & Ellis LLP.

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About the Equal Rights Center (www.equalrightscenter.org)

Originally formed in 1983, the Equal Rights Center (ERC) is a national non-profit civil rights organization based in Washington, D.C. With members located in 33 states and the District of Columbia, the ERC works nationally to promote equal opportunity in housing, employment, disability rights, immigrant rights, and access to public accommodations and government services for all protected classes under federal, state, and local laws.

About the Washington Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights and Urban Affairs (<http://www.washlaw.org>)

The Washington Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights and Urban Affairs was established in 1968 to provide pro bono legal services to address issues of discrimination and entrenched poverty. Since its founding, the Committee has handled more than 5,000 cases on behalf of individuals and advocacy organizations in the areas of equal employment, fair housing, public accommodations, public education, asylum and refugee rights, and disability rights. For more information about the Committee, see www.washlaw.org. The Committee can be reached at 202.319.1000.