



Commissioner Brad Avakian
Bureau of Labor & Industries

Press Release

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Avakian Awards \$152,216 in Pregnancy Discrimination Case

Medford woman was demoted over pregnancy and fired for complaining about it

MEDFORD- Oregon Bureau of Labor and Industries (BOLI) Commissioner Brad Avakian has issued a final order in the case against Gary Speaks and Cyber Center, Inc., which operated a bar and grill in Medford. With evidence showing that a former Cybercenter Sports Grill assistant manager was demoted and lost pay when she became pregnant, and that Speaks and Cyber Center then terminated her for complaining about the discrimination, Avakian ordered \$12,216.40 in back pay and \$140,000 in emotional and mental suffering damages be paid to the woman.

“The Bureau of Labor and Industries is always going to take strong action to protect the rights of female Oregonians in the workplace,” Avakian said. “Cyber Center and Gary Speaks compounded one unlawful decision with an even more egregious one. Demoting an expectant mother would have been bad enough, but firing her when customers rally to her defense is just unconscionable.”

Speaks and the now-defunct business are jointly and severally liable for \$132,172 in economic and non-economic damages arising from the unlawful termination. Only the business is responsible for the remaining \$20,044.40 in back pay and distress damages related to the initial demotion and pay cut, where Gary Speaks was not shown to have actively participated in that unlawful practice. A judgment from BOLI can be collected and enforced through various means, and the judgment remains even if the business is closed.

The 48-page final order in the Cyber Center case is [available online](#). Also visit www.oregon.gov/BOLI for more information about BOLI and the prosecution of civil rights and other employment law violations.

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