



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 6, 2016

CONTACT: Charlie Burr, BOLI, (971) 673-0788

**Avakian files formal charges of unlawful discrimination and harassment of minors
against Stars Cabaret**

Commissioner's Complaint will seek emotional distress damages and civil penalties

PORTLAND, OR—Labor Commissioner Brad Avakian has filed formal civil rights charges against Stars Cabaret for unlawful sexual harassment of minors, the Bureau of Labor and Industries (BOLI) announced today. Respondents may now request a contested case hearing before an administrative law judge.

BOLI investigators had previously found that Stars Cabaret unlawfully discriminated against two employees, 13 and 15 years of age. The investigation determined that Stars knew or should have known about repeated sexual harassment.

“A commissioner’s complaint can shield the identity of victims who’ve suffered extreme workplace abuse and harassment,” said Commissioner Avakian. “Today’s charges reflect the severity of conditions faced by these vulnerable minors.”

During the period from August to September 2014—after police had arrested one of Stars’ Beaverton managers on charges of sexual abuse and compelling prostitution of a 13 year old minor—the club employed another female 15 years of age to work as an adult entertainer.

The charges also note that Stars Cabaret failed to adequately vet forms of identification, keep adequate records, and discourage sexual harassment. Witnesses described dancers being groped by managers and managers giving dancers better shifts and benefits in exchange for sex acts.

Stars Cabaret chose not to implement uniform precautionary measures to protect minors outside of the Beaverton location because, as owner Randy Kaiser stated to BOLI, they were “not obligated to.”

Civil rights investigators previously determined that the 13 year old and 15 year old minors were employees, not independent contractors who entered into an enforceable contract.

The Administrative Prosecution Unit will seek at least \$4 million per victim with specific amounts to be proven at hearing for emotional distress damages. The unit will also pursue civil penalties for violations of child labor laws.

Copies of the commissioner’s complaint and formal charges are public documents available on the agency’s website [here](#).

Workers can start the civil rights complaint process by contact the Civil Rights Division at crdemail@boli.state.or.us or by calling **971-673-0764**. A new live entertainment hotline at **1-844-304-2654** also can provide workers information about retaliation, sex discrimination, harassment, unlawful wage practices and a host of other workplace protections. Callers to the toll-free hotline may request confidentiality.

A previous commissioner's complaint against **Daimler Trucks North America** resulted in a record \$2.4 million civil rights settlement last year, the largest in the agency's history. The agency is also investigating a commissioner's complaint against contractor **Evan Williams** and related companies alleging retaliation, threats of violence, and other unlawful practices against employees who filed wage complaints.

Visit www.oregon.gov/BOLI for more information about all of BOLI's work to protect employment rights, advance employment opportunities, and protect access to housing and public accommodations free from discrimination.

###