



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
June 30, 2003

CONTACT:
Mark Beach, AARP
(916) 556-3015

AARP TO REPRESENT FORMER USGS SCIENTISTS IN AGE DISCRIMINATION CASE

OAKLAND, CA — On Tuesday, July 1, Federal Judge Claudia Wilken will hear opening arguments in the age discrimination case of *Adam et al v. Norton* (C-98-2094 CW (EDL)). The suit was brought by AARP and San Francisco attorney Mary Dryovage on behalf of fifteen former senior scientists of the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) who were fired in a Reduction-In-Force in 1995. The plaintiffs claim that they were victims of a pervasive discriminatory attitude toward older workers on the part of USGS management.

The suit alleges that from the beginning of his incumbency as Director of the U.S. Geological Survey in early 1994, Gordon Eaton let it be known in talks to employee assemblies and in private conversations that he believed it was time for older employees of the Geologic Division to retire. Dr. Eaton made numerous statements about getting rid of the “dinosaurs” at the USGS, once even comparing it to “Jurassic Park.”

The plaintiffs claim that Director Eaton’s jokes and comments helped to create and maintain a culture at the USGS that tolerated and even encouraged discrimination against older employees. The suit alleges that the older scientists were fired so that younger people could be placed in their jobs.

“In illegally terminating these senior scientists, the USGS also eviscerated the core capability of what was once one of the premier geologic research organizations in the world,” said Dryovage.

The 15 plaintiffs all worked at the USGS in Menlo Park, California. They include: DAVID P. ADAM (Middletown, CA), LANFORD H. ADAMI (Walnut Creek, CA), JAMES P. CALZIA (Sunnyvale, CA), BELA CSEJTEY, JR.(Palo Alto, CA), ALICE S. DAVIS (San Jose, CA), JAMES L. DRINKWATER (Hudson, WI), ARTHUR B. FORD (Menlo Park, CA), ARTHUR GRANTZ JR.(Palo Alto, CA), H. MAHADEVA IYER JR.(Menlo Park, CA), CHI-YU KING (Los Altos, CA), STEPHEN L. LEWIS (Fresno, CA), ALLAN G. LINDH (Santa Cruz, CA), DENNIS M. MANN (Half Moon Bay, CA), A. THOMAS OVENSINE (Palo Alto, CA), CHESTER T. WRUCKE, (Portola Valley, CA).

Many of the plaintiffs are world-renowned scientists. For example, Arthur Grantz is currently at the Law of the Sea Conference presenting papers on the Arctic Ocean; Arthur Ford is returned from a trip to the Arctic Ocean, where he served as a lecturer on a cruise and he wrote the Encyclopedia Britannica chapter on Antarctica.

They are seeking recalculation of their retirement benefits, back and front pay, and attorneys' fees & expenses.

"This trial is the culmination of an eight year fight to vindicate the rights of these older workers," said AARP Senior Attorney Tom Osborne.

###