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## **HILTON AUSTIN CAUGHT IN LONG LIST OF LEGAL BATTLES**

### *Condo Owners Allege Poor Construction while City Blames Developer*

Austin -- The Hilton Austin is embattled in legal disputes involving its residents, the city, and the developer hired to build the structure. The City of Austin chose the Landmark Organization to construct the hotel as part of an effort to attract more profitable trade shows to the convention center in the late nineties. Now, constant water leakage and mold has caused some residents to claim their condominiums are uninhabitable.

Gary Golden has lived in condos on both the eighth and ninth floors of the building. Since the day he and his wife moved in, they have dealt with numerous water leaks and even had glass from a higher balcony plummet onto theirs. Golden says, "Every problem we have had has been a nightmare to get fixed." Many of the issues, like repairing damages after his entire condo flooded in January, have never been fixed. He says that no one wants to take responsibility, so it is very hard to get results.

Golden and his wife have hired the Lorenzana Law Firm, P.C., to represent them in a lawsuit filed against Austin Convention Enterprises, Hilton Hotels Corporation, Neches Street Partners, The Five Fifty-Five Condominium Association, and the building's developer among others.

As seven condo owners sue the city for allowing sloppy construction that has ruined their investments, the city is pointing its finger at Landmark. According to the *Austin American Statesman*, Landmark CEO Mark Schultz denies fault and says the building only requires minor repairs.

Meanwhile, the city is still appealing a suit from Austin attorney Harry Whittington. He claims the city illegally condemned his family's land, which is now the site of the Hilton Austin parking garage.

(more)

The city's implication of Landmark comes as the company, now called Faulkner USA, has paid out millions in settlements because of allegations of more defective construction and damp buildings plagued with mold throughout the state of Texas.

Landmark has been accused of faulty construction of structure after structure, ranging from school to jail, and, currently, hotel. It merged with Faulkner Construction Co. in December 2002, becoming Faulkner USA and losing its tarnished name in the process. Mark Schultz remains the Chief Executive Officer and continues to affirm his company's quality of work.

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