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## NEWS RELEASE

### **Federal District Court Approves \$6 Million Settlement Disabled Workers of NUMMI to Benefit**

(SAN FRANCISCO, CA, **February 3, 2012**) – Today, United States District Court Judge Charles Breyer approved a \$6 million settlement in a case brought by disabled workers of the New United Motor Manufacturing (NUMMI) plant in Fremont, CA who claimed they were unfairly excluded from severance benefits.

Today's ruling approves the settlement which was announced on August 18, 2011. The settlement resolves a lawsuit – *Cookson et al v. NUMMI, et al.*, C10-02931 CRB – that was filed in the U.S. District Court, Northern District of California, on July 14, 2010. The suit alleged that NUMMI and Toyota violated the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) by denying bonuses and transitional services to qualified workers who were on leaves of absence due to their own medical conditions. Many of the disabled workers had been employed at the plant for 25 to 30 years, yet they claimed their years of service were not considered in their severance package because of their medical leave status. Plaintiffs say this resulted in losses of up to \$38,000 each.

"I worked for NUMMI for 25 years, but I was offered the same severance as a person who had worked one year," said plaintiff David Botello. "The only reason I wasn't working was that I was injured on the job – I got hurt working for NUMMI. And when I was released by my doctor, NUMMI would not allow me to return."

Plaintiff June Andrade claimed she was prevented from returning to NUMMI after recovering from surgery for an on-the-job injury. Andrade stated, "What NUMMI did was not fair. I tried to return to work but was not allowed to. I did not choose to get injured."

Attorney Tony Lawson, counsel for the plaintiffs, stated, "The court's approval of the settlement provides critical funds to more than 500 former NUMMI workers. These workers were dedicated to NUMMI but did not receive a severance package because they were on medical leave." Lawson praised the United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission for its involvement in this case and for its role in achieving the settlement. The former NUMMI workers had also filed charges with the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC). As a part of the settlement, NUMMI entered into a conciliation agreement with the EEOC.

"This settlement enforces the important rights of injured and disabled workers who require medical leave," stated Claudia Center of Legal Aid Society-Employment Law Center, who also represented the class members.

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