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**SUPREME JUDICIAL COURT RULES IN FAVOR OF ATTORNEY GENERAL IN
CASE PROTECTING WORKERS' WAGES FROM ILLEGAL EMPLOYER
DEDUCTION**

BOSTON – Today, the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court (SJC) affirmed a decision by the Division of Administrative Law Appeals (DALA) upholding a citation by Attorney General Martha Coakley's Office against Michael Camara and his company, ABC Disposal, Inc. (ABC), a recycling and waste hauling company located in New Bedford, for illegally deducting from employees' wages, in violation of the Massachusetts Wage Act.

"[Today's decision](#) is an enormous victory in our office's efforts to protect workers and their hard earned wages from unfair business practices. The employer in this case shifted costs of doing business onto its workers who were forced to choose between giving up their wages or suffering uncertain discipline," AG Coakley said. "We applaud the Court's ruling and the clarity it brings to the issue."

The underlying case arose from an anonymous complaint filed with the Attorney General's Fair Labor Division in 2006, in which a worker alleged that ABC was deducting from its drivers' wages the costs of damage to company trucks or property of third parties. Investigators discovered that from 2004 to 2006, ABC had deducted over \$20,000 in wages from its truck drivers as a result of its illegal policy. In 2007, the Attorney General's Office issued a citation against ABC and Camara, ordering them to pay restitution in the amount of \$21,487.96 and a penalty of \$9,410. ABC and Camara appealed the citation to the DALA, which ultimately upheld the Attorney General's citation. ABC and Camara then appealed the DALA decision in Bristol Superior Court, which overturned the DALA decision. Following the Attorney General's filing of an appeal to the Appeals Court, the Supreme Judicial Court took the case up sua sponte.

The Attorney General's brief was prepared by Fair Labor Division Assistant Attorneys General Karla Zarbo and Deputy Chief Jocelyn B. Jones. Fair Labor Division Assistant Attorneys General Lisa Price and Anita Maietta assisted in handling the underlying case.

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