



## Harass

CONTINUED FROM C1

took immediate and appropriate action in this case."

An attorney for Kissinger had no comment. Kissinger, who was disciplined by the company, is still employed at Hawaiian.

Legal experts said juries are often sympathetic to employees who are able to show the sexual harassment occurred and that the alleged misconduct was egregious.

Attorney David Simons, who specializes in employment law, said sexual harassment cases often involve allegations of a physical violation which, when compared to emotional distress claims, are easier to demonstrate to a jury.

Simons said that juries also

tend to award large punitive damages in cases when they think the employer failed to take appropriate and prompt action.

"This sends a nice signal that sexual harassment in the workplace needs to stop," added local attorney Rick Fried.

Attorney Wayne Yoshigai said the Hawaiian case is significant because the jury found the pilot was personally liable for \$140,000 of the total award.

Juries tend to issue big awards against supervisors who sexually harass subordinates but in harassment cases involving co-workers, the awards are usually much smaller.

"This sends a strong message that a co-worker ... who engages in wrongful conduct is liable," he said.

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# Hawaiian Air to pay \$510K

## Flight attendant wins suit over alleged sexual harassment by pilot

BY RICK DAYSOG  
Advertiser Staff Writer

A Circuit Court jury awarded a former Hawaiian Airlines flight attendant more than \$500,000 for a sexual harassment claim.

Nancy Ho will receive

\$120,000 in compensatory damages and \$390,000 in punitive damages under a jury verdict issued Tuesday.

The award is one of the largest for sexual harassment since a Circuit Court jury awarded \$1.2 million last December to a former travel agent who alleged she was fired after objecting to harassment by her supervisor.

"This is a very strong indica-

tion that jurors will not tolerate this kind of conduct in the workplace," said attorney Bruce Kim, who represented Ho with local attorney Ronald Albu.

"This is definitely is one of the larger verdicts for sexual harassment."

In her April 2004, lawsuit, Ho alleged that Hawaiian pilot Gary Kissinger grabbed her buttock while she helped passengers de-

plane on an interisland flight in 2002.

Ho reported the incident to her supervisors but said the company failed to take immediate action, prompting her to quit her job in 2003.

According to Ho's suit, Hawaiian didn't adequately investigate her complaint and ignored her request that she not fly with the pilot again.

Hawaiian said it is considering an appeal of the decision.

"We were surprised by the verdict and do not believe the facts support a finding against the company," said Hawaiian spokesman Keoni Wagner.

"Hawaiian Airlines does not tolerate harassment of any kind involving its employees and we

SEE HARASS, C3