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For Immediate Release

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**MARYLAND COURT ISSUES TEMPORARY INJUNCTION
PREVENTING CONVERSION OF FRANCHISE FROM COTTMAN TO AAMCO**

Jeffrey M. Goldstein, Managing Partner of Goldstein, PC., a Washington, DC-based litigation boutique, today has issued the following Press Release:

On March 16, 2006, the Maryland Circuit Court for Prince George's County issued a Temporary Restraining Order prohibiting AAMCO, a national franchisor of transmission outlets, from converting one of its Cottman franchises, located in Prince George's County, Maryland, to an AAMCO branded franchise. The Maryland case arose out of the franchisor's announcement that it planned to convert every Cottman franchise across the country to the AAMCO brand following what is reported to be a merger of the two companies. According to recent reports in the press, the combined company will have more than 1,100 centers and annual sales of more than \$600 million.

Jeff Goldstein and Daniel Blumenthal, of Goldstein, PC, a litigation boutique in Washington, DC, argued that their clients, the Plaintiffs, the McDonald's, would likely suffer severe injury were a conversion of the competing Cottman dealership to occur. The McDonalds' franchise, one of the first AAMCO dealerships in the county, had worked its way up during its nearly 40-year history to being one of the very top rated AAMCO dealerships in the country. In so doing, the McDonalds had invested an estimated \$1.75 million in growing the brand in the Washington metropolitan area over the last few years.

Goldstein pointed out that the McDonalds' franchise agreement contains specific clauses protecting them from encroachment by AAMCO. According to Goldstein, if the neighboring franchise had been converted, it would have violated the McDonalds' franchise agreement. "It's bad enough when franchisors engage in this encroachment conduct in cases where a franchise agreement doesn't speak to that issue, but it's far worse when a franchisor threatens to engage in this conduct in the face of specific prohibitions in the franchise agreement."

Goldstein indicated that although the conversion of the competing franchise had not yet been accomplished, AAMCO's business people had failed to give the McDonalds an unconditional guarantee that the other shop, located only 2 miles from their shop, would not be converted into a competing AAMCO franchise. Goldstein explained that because AAMCO would not provide this guarantee, his clients had no choice but to obtain the Court injunction to preserve the status quo. "If indeed the conversion had been carried out, it would then have been almost impossible to reverse. Once an egg has been scrambled, it cannot be unscrambled." Goldstein concluded by pointing out that while the McDonalds' injunction was limited to their specific market, he believed that other AAMCO franchisees had similar protective clauses in their agreements.