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PHILIP MORRIS U.S.A. APPLAUDS CASTANO DECERTIFICATION

NEW YORK, May 23, 1996 — In a unanimous ruling, the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals today has reversed and remanded the *Castano* class action, with instructions that the district court dismiss the class complaint.

Philip Morris U.S.A. applauds today's decision by the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals to decertify the *Castano* class.

"We are pleased that the Fifth Circuit has decided to decertify the class," said Charles Wall, senior vice president and deputy general counsel for Philip Morris. "We have believed from the beginning that the *Castano* class should not have been certified."

Wall said, "We have full and compelling defenses to each of the assertions the plaintiffs have made, and we are prepared to present them in court."

"In light of the Fifth Circuit's decision, which joins similar decisions by the Third, Sixth and Seventh Circuit Courts of Appeals, other courts which are now or may soon be looking at similar class actions should be persuaded that these types of cases should not be certified for class treatment," Wall said.

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