



Department of Justice

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE AND ARIZONA STATE ATTORNEY GENERAL
BREAK UP DENTAL GROUP'S CONSPIRACY TO ELIMINATE DISCOUNTING**

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- The Department of Justice and the Arizona Attorney General's office acted jointly today to stop a statewide agreement that made it almost impossible for many dentists in Arizona to cut their prices or offer discounts on dental services.

Similar agreements are common in the health care industry, and those that stifle price competition are likely to be challenged elsewhere, the Justice Department warned today.

In a civil antitrust suit and proposed settlement filed in Phoenix, the dentist-controlled Delta Dental Plan of Arizona Inc. was accused of eliminating discounts and reducing price competition under an agreement that had the effect of preventing dentists from cutting fees below those offered in the Delta Plan. This is the first action challenging such contract provisions, which are known in the industry as "most favored nation" clauses. Approximately 85% of the dentists in Arizona have affiliated with

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