

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

San Benito County Sues Opioid Manufacturers, Distributors for Opioid Epidemic

May 10, 2018, Hollister, San Benito County

The County of San Benito filed a lawsuit against the opioid manufacturers and distributors for creating the opioid epidemic in San Benito County, joining a consortium of 30 California counties to do so. The San Benito County Board of Supervisors has retained the national law firm of Baron & Budd and a joint venture of law firms to represent its interests, seeking an abatement remedy in addition to legal damages for taxpayer money spent providing social resources in response to the crisis. The lawsuit was filed in the Northern District of California, Case No. 5:18-cv-02733.

The California Opioid Consortium includes 30 counties, representing approximately 10.5 million residents. All 30 counties are filing suit in federal court and expect their cases to be transferred into the Multi-District Litigation in Ohio, where over 500 public entities have filed similar suits.

“The County seeks to recovery taxpayer funds used to respond to the opioid epidemic,” says San Benito County Supervisor Anthony Botelho. “Local government services have been subsidizing the impact of the opioid epidemic, created by irresponsible multi-billion dollar corporations, which have placed profits over public safety.”

The California Opioid Consortium and its counsel have developed evidence that many of the nation’s largest drug manufactures misinformed doctors about the addictiveness and efficacy of opioids. The manufacturer Defendants include Purdue Pharma; Teva Ltd; Janssen Pharmaceuticals, Inc. (a wholly-owned subsidiary of Johnson & Johnson); Endo Health Solutions, Inc.; Allergan PLC; and Mallinckrodt. Drugs manufactured by these companies include, but are not limited to: OxyContin, Actiq, Fentora, Duragesic, Nucynta, Nucynta ER, Opana/Opana ER, Percodan, Percocet, Zydane, Kadian and Norco.

The lawsuit also names the nation’s largest drug distributors – Cardinal Health, AmerisourceBergen, and McKesson Corp. – which failed to monitor, identify and report “suspicious” opioid shipments to pharmacies, in violation of the federal Controlled Substances Act.

The County’s legal team includes the law firms of Baron & Budd; Levin, Papantonio, Thomas, Mitchell, Rafferty & Proctor; Powell & Majestro; Greene Ketchum Bailey Farrell & Tweel; Hill, Peterson, Carper, Bee & Deitzler; McHugh Fuller Law Group. The firms currently represent over 300 cities and counties throughout the United States.

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