

Jersey County files opioid lawsuit to combat lethal drug epidemic against large drug companies

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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JERSEYVILLE - Jersey County and State's Attorney Ben Goetten announced Tuesday they have filed an opioid lawsuit to combat the lethal drug epidemic against a large group of multibillion-dollar drug companies.

The suit is filed for alleged violations of the Illinois Consumer Fraud and Deceptive Business Practices Act and Uniform Deceptive Trade Practices Act.

The plaintiffs in the suit filed in the Circuit Court of the Seventh Judicial Circuit Court in Jersey County are the state of Illinois, the people of Jersey County, and Jersey County by Benjamin L. Goetten, the State's Attorney of Jersey County, and undersigned Special Assistant State's Attorney's.

The Jersey County complaint is filed against the following:

- Purdue Pharma L.P.
- Purdue Pharma Inc.
- The Purdue Frederick Company Inc.
- Teva Pharmaceuticals USA, Inc.
- Cephalon, Inc.
- Johnson & Johnson
- Janssen Pharmaceuticals, Inc.
- Ortho-McNeil-Janssen Pharmaceuticals, Inc., n/k/a Janssen Pharmaceuticals, Inc.
- Janssen Pharmaceutica, Inc. n/k/a Jansen Pharmaceuticals, Inc.
- Endo Health Solutions, Inc.
- Endo Pharmaceuticals, Inc.
- Allergan PLC f/k/a Actavis PLC
- Actavis, Inc., f/k/a Watson Pharmaceuticals, Inc.
- Watson Laboratories, Inc.
- Actavis LLC
- Actavis Pharma , Inc. f/k/a Watson Pharma, Inc.

Jersey County States' Attorney Goetten said he has seen enough and today, he has filed a fraud lawsuit against those whom he says are responsible: Purdue Pharma and its subsidiaries.

“These drug companies have raked in billions of dollars by deceitful advertising and fraudulent conduct that has brought misery and heartbreak to our community. I witness this devastation firsthand almost every day, when I step into a courtroom or hear about one more death due to an opioid drug overdose.”

Attorney Ann Callis, who is appointed Jersey County Assistant States' Attorney to assist in this litigation, added: “As a Madison County Chief Judge for eight years and as a

judge assigned to the Felony Division, I saw what Ben saw. An epidemic that is increasingly out of control and exhausting our community's resources, so, while our citizens suffer, these drug companies continue to see an exponential increase in profits."

The Center for Disease Control states that today, more Americans die from drug overdoses than from car accidents. The devastation of the opioid epidemic on rural America is as grave as their urban and suburban neighbors'.

For example, in 1996, when OxyContin was first released by Purdue, one of the defendant's in Jersey's lawsuit, their profits from this drug reached 45 million. By the year 2000, their profits rose by 2000 percent, to \$1.1 Billion. 10 years later, their profits increased to 3.1 billion dollars.

"This egregious greed, deception and misleading marketing and advertising must be stopped, and with this lawsuit, we hope to succeed," concluded Goetten.