

Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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SAFE Glen Cove Coalition: Opioid Epidemic- More Lawsuits Holding Drugmakers Accountable

Opioids have resulted in the overdose deaths of nearly 500,000 people from 1999 to 2019 in the United States, according to U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

According to The Washington Post, Santa Clara, Los Angeles and Orange counties and the city of Oakland accuse the companies of deceptively marketing painkillers in ways that downplayed their addictive risks. The drugmakers argue they acted appropriately and that they did not cause the epidemic. Four drugmakers are set to face trial on Monday in a lawsuit by several large counties in California that are seeking more than \$50 billion over claims the companies helped fuel an opioid epidemic by deceptively marketing addictive painkillers.

The case against Johnson & Johnson, Teva Pharmaceutical Industries Ltd, Endo International PLC and AbbVie's Allergan unit is one of the thousands of lawsuits by states and local governments seeking to hold pharmaceutical companies responsible for the drug crisis. If Orange County Superior Court Judge finds the companies liable following a non-jury trial, the counties say the companies should have to pay \$50 billion to cover the costs of abating the public nuisance they created plus penalties.

More than 3,400 similar lawsuits are pending nationally over the opioid epidemic. The only other case to go to trial in the opioid litigation resulted in the state of Oklahoma in 2019 winning a \$465 million judgment against J&J, which is appealing. Other cases are slated to go to trial in the coming months, creating new pressure for the companies to reach settlements.

The nation's three largest drug distributors - McKesson Corp, AmerisourceBergen Corp and Cardinal Health Inc - and J&J have proposed paying a combined \$26 billion to resolve the cases against them. The proposed deal has not been finalized.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is a federal agency that conducts and supports health promotion, prevention and preparedness activities in the United States, with the goal of improving overall public health. To learn more about the CDC please visit www.cdc.gov.

The Washington Post is a major American daily newspaper published in Washington, D.C. It has taken a leadership role in following the Nations opioid epidemic. Please visit The Post's Opioid Files for more information at www.washingtonpost.com.

The SAFE Glen Cove Coalition is conducting an opioid prevention awareness campaign entitled. "Keeping Glen Cove SAFE," in order to educate and update the community regarding opioid use and its consequences. To learn more about the SAFE Glen Cove Coalition please follow us on www.facebook.com/safeglencovecoalition or visit SAFE's website to learn more about the Opioid Epidemic at www.safeglencove.org.