

Sens. Bewley and Hansen: It's about time - Purdue and the Sackler family will be held accountable for the death and destruction they've caused Wisconsin families thanks to AG Kaul and Governor Evers

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(Madison)—Senator Dave Hansen (D-Green Bay) and Senator Janet Bewley (D-Mason) praised Attorney General Kaul and Governor Evers for their decision to file lawsuits against Purdue Pharma L.P., Purdue Pharma Inc., and Richard S. Sackler to hold them accountable for the damage that their products and practices have done to Wisconsin families and communities.

“For several years Senator Bewley and I tried to get then-Attorney General Brad Schimel and former Governor Walker to file a lawsuit to force Purdue and the Sackler family to pay for the death and destruction they caused so many people in our state. Time after time they refused.” said Hansen. “Thankfully Attorney General Kaul and Governor Evers are willing to stand up to these corporate thugs and seek justice for the people of our state.”

The lawsuit filed by Attorney General Kaul “seeks a permanent injunction, abatement of the public nuisance, and civil penalties. It alleges that Purdue Pharma L.P., Purdue Pharma Inc., and Richard S. Sackler, repeatedly made false and deceptive claims regarding opioids, including OxyContin.”

“People are literally dying in our streets as a result of their actions. Families are being torn apart, our criminal justice system is being overwhelmed,” Bewley pointed out. “Governor Walker and Attorney General Schimel were all too happy to sit on the sidelines in order to not offend the pharmaceutical industry. This lawsuit is long overdue.”

According to the complaint:

“In 2017, more people died in Wisconsin from an opioid overdose than from motor vehicle accidents, suicide, or firearms.”

- In 2017 alone, “Wisconsin lost 916 of its citizens to the opioid epidemic.”
- “The rate of babies born addicted to opioids and other addictive drugs in Wisconsin has quadrupled between 2006 and 2015...”
- “Between 1999 and 2015, the volume of prescription opioids per capita in Wisconsin rose 425 percent...”
- “...between 1999 and 2015, Wisconsin has lost 45,200 workers due to opioids,” and “cost the State approximately \$37 billion in real economic output.”

“Make no mistake, people like Richard Sackler and the owners of Purdue Pharma are nothing more than drug dealers in nice suits,” said Hansen. “They knew the damage and heartbreak they were causing yet, despicably, they chose wealth and profit over the lives of the people who used their product. They need to be held accountable.”