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Lac du Flambeau Tribe Files Federal Lawsuit Against Opioid Industry

LAC DU FLAMBEAU—APRIL 5, 2018—The Lac du Flambeau Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians filed a federal suit against prescription drug manufacturers, distributors and pharmacies for their role in the opioid epidemic that has become a national crisis and devastated tribes.

“The prescription opioids epidemic has been building for years and is a current and ongoing nuisance on the property and to the lives of Lac Du Flambeau residents,” President Joseph Wildcat, Sr. says. “While we continue to fight drug abuse alongside our Tri-County partners to eliminate the scourge, the Tribe seeks financial resources to adequately abate the epidemic.”

The Tribe and its Members have experienced substantial loss of resources, economic damages, addiction, disability, and harm to their health and welfare. This prompted the lawsuit in U.S. District Court of Western Wisconsin.

Prescription opioids killed over **40,000** Americans in 2017. Prescription opioids kill twice as many people in the U.S. as heroin. Prescription opioids and related drug overdose deaths exceed the number of car accident deaths in the United States. Nearly 150 Americans die every day from opioids overdoses. Almost 91% of persons who have a non-fatal overdose of opioids are prescribed opioids again within one year. **One-third of all children who go into foster parent care do so because of the opioids addiction of their parent(s).** Seven in 10 opioids overdoses that are treated in an emergency room due to abuse of prescription opioids. **An opioid-addicted baby is born every 30 minutes in America.**

“We all are victims of a lengthy civil conspiracy, via fraud, misrepresentation, and intentional wrongful conduct, to cause as many people as possible to use and get addicted to opioid prescription pills,” Attorney Andrew Adams III of Hogen Adams PLLC says. “All in an effort to profit billions of dollars with reckless disregard of consequences to American and Native American people.”

Child welfare costs associated with opioid-addicted parents have skyrocketed. The Tribe’s medical costs are overwhelming due to the costs of the opioid epidemic. Foster care costs have substantially increased. Education and addiction therapy costs have multiplied. The Tribe has suffered economic losses from the treatment and care of babies who are born addicted to opioids.

“The wrongful conduct of the opioid industry has allowed millions of opioid pills to be diverted from legitimate channels of distribution to the illicit black market in quantities that have fueled the opioid epidemic affecting the Tribe,” Tribal Attorney Adams says.

[**VIEW THE TRIBE’S LAWSUIT**](#) case number 3:18-cv-00228 and case citation Lac du Flambeau Band of Chippewa Indians v. McKesson Corporation *et al*

About the Lac du Flambeau Band of Lake Superior Chippewa

The tribe is an Indian tribal government that was federally recognized by treaty with the United States in 1854. The tribe has more than 4,000 members, with more than 2,000 members residing on the tribe’s 86,000-acre reservation, located in Lac du Flambeau, Wis.

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Lac du Flambeau Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians

Joseph Wildcat, Sr., President

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