

Dallas County Trial to Lead the Way in Addressing Opioid Crisis in Texas

The first Texas trial addressing the role of pharmaceutical manufacturers, distributors and physicians in creating and fueling the state's opioid crisis has been scheduled for Dallas County next year.

Judge Robert Schaffer, who will preside over Texas' opioid multidistrict litigation (MDL), announced the initial county cases will include Dallas, Angelina, Freestone and Kendall counties. The first, Dallas County, will be heard in the fall of 2020. Dallas County is represented in its opioid-related case by the law firms of Simon Greenstone Panatier, P.C., The Lanier Firm and The Cochran Firm.

"The public nuisance these drug companies have created is of epidemic proportions, destroying countless lives and families, and costing Dallas County taxpayers far too much. There must be a reckoning, and through this case, there soon will be," said **Jeffrey Simon** of **Simon Greenstone Panatier, P.C.**

The Dallas County MDL seeks to hold several prescription opioid manufacturers, wholesale distributors and certain doctors responsible for their role in the opioid painkiller epidemic.

"Recently uncovered records reveal that more than 461 million prescription pain pills were supplied to Dallas County residents from 2006 to 2012. That's enough for every man, woman and child in Dallas County to consume 28 narcotic pills a year," said Simon.

A release from the firm states:

Once tightly regulated, the pharmaceutical industry made a dedicated push to encourage doctors to expand the prescription of the powerful painkillers beginning in the late 1990s, promoting claims that opioids were a safe, non-addictive means to treat even moderate chronic pain on a long-term basis. The resulting epidemic caused significant increases in addiction and overdose deaths, skyrocketing health care costs and demands on community services, such as courts, child services, treatment centers, emergency response and public safety.

“Records also show that as the opioid epidemic grew worse, defendants supplied more of them,” said Simon. “They profited by flooding Dallas County with narcotic pills that were manufactured from the same base molecule – morphine – as heroin, but these pills were often sold in doses more powerful than heroin.”