

# The Troubling Intersection of Royalty Disputes and Consumer Protection Laws

Recent court decisions are making it easier for private litigants who believe they have been underpaid royalties under an oil-and-gas lease to ratchet up the pressure on operators by styling their complaints as putative class actions, writes **Thomas G. Ciarlone Jr.** for Kane Russell Coleman Logan's **Energy Law Today**.

"This has the obvious potential to transform nuisance-value lawsuits into headline-making disputes that can involve thousands of lessors seeking a bigger piece of the pie from the working interest," he explains.

"There could be trouble ahead for operators if the future of royalty disputes lies increasingly within the province of states' attorneys (with broad powers and vast resources) operating under the auspices of consumer protection laws," Ciarlone concludes.

**Read the article.**