

# Opioioid Companies Say Lawyers' Fee Demand Threatens Settlement Talks

"Johnson & Johnson and other drug companies facing thousands of lawsuits over their role in the opioioid epidemic have warned that settlement talks will be "severely" jeopardized if plaintiffs' lawyers are allowed to assess a fee payment worth billions of dollars," reports Tom Hals and Nate Raymond in Reuters *Business News*.

"Major distributors such as McKesson Corp and drugmakers including Teva Pharmaceutical Industries Ltd joined in the request that U.S. District Judge Dan Polster in Cleveland, Ohio, reject a request by a committee of plaintiffs' lawyers for a 7% fee assessed against any settlements. They filed their brief late Wednesday."

"The request could amount to \$3.3 billion, based on a \$48 billion settlement proposal that five companies have been negotiating with various state attorneys general."

"The drug companies noted that the attorneys would receive more money from the settlement than even some of the states they represent. Dozens of state attorneys general also opposed the request for the fee to the plaintiffs executive committee that is litigating thousands of lawsuits by towns, counties and tribal governments."

***Read the article.***