

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF WEST VIRGINIA**

THE COUNTY COMMISSION OF  
MINGO COUNTY, and THE TOWN  
OF KERMIT, WEST VIRGINIA,  
on behalf of themselves and  
all others similarly situated,

*Plaintiffs,*

v.

Case No. 2:21-cv-00079  
JURY TRIAL DEMANDED

MCKINSEY & COMPANY, INC.,

*Defendant.*

**CLASS ACTION COMPLAINT AND DEMAND FOR JURY TRIAL**

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## I. INTRODUCTION

1. On May 10, 2007, John Brownlee, United States Attorney for the Western District of Virginia, announced the guilty plea of the Purdue Frederick Company, the parent of Purdue Pharma, L.P. (“Purdue”), relating to the misbranding of OxyContin. Brownlee stated, “Even in the face of warnings from health care professionals, the media, and members of its own sales force that OxyContin was being widely abused and causing harm to our citizens, Purdue, under the leadership of its top executives, continued to push a fraudulent marketing campaign that promoted OxyContin as less addictive, less subject to abuse, and less likely to cause withdrawal. In the process, scores died as a result of OxyContin abuse and an even greater number of people became addicted to OxyContin; a drug that Purdue led many to believe was safer, less subject to abuse, and less addictive than other pain medications on the market.”

2. Along with the guilty plea, Purdue agreed to a Corporate Integrity Agreement with the Office of Inspector General of the United States Department of Health and Human Services. For a period of five years, ending in 2012, Purdue was obligated to retain an Independent Monitor and submit annual compliance reports regarding its marketing and sales practices and training of sales representatives vis-à-vis their interactions with health care providers.

3. In the wake of Purdue’s accession to the Corporate Integrity Agreement, Purdue faced newly imposed constraints on its sales and marketing practices. The Corporate Integrity Agreement was a problem to solve. Despite the agreement’s constraints (i.e. do not lie about OxyContin), Purdue and its controlling owners, the Sackler family, still intended to maximize OxyContin sales.

4. The problem was complex. As a result of the 2007 guilty plea, the Sacklers made the strategic decision to distance the family from Purdue, which was regarded as an increasingly

dangerous “concentration of risk” for Purdue’s owners. Ten days after the guilty plea was announced, David Sackler wrote to his dad, Richard Sackler, and uncle, Jonathan Sackler, describing precisely what that “risk” was: legal liability for selling OxyContin. In response to Jonathan stating that “there is no basis to sue ‘the family,’” David replied:

Message

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**From:** David Sackler [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 5/17/2007 11:08:08 PM  
**To:** 'Sackler, Jonathan' [REDACTED]; Sackler, Dr Richard [REDACTED]  
**CC:** Ives, Stephen A. [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: Idea  
**Attachments:** image001.jpg

Well I hope you're right, and under logical circumstances I'd agree with you, but we're living in America. This is the land of the free and the home of the blameless. We will be sued. Read the op-ed stuff in these local papers and ask yourself how long it will take these lawyers to figure out that we might settle with them if they can freeze our assets and threaten us.

5. Given concern over this “concentration of risk,” the two sides of the Sackler family spent considerable time and energy debating the best way to achieve distance from Purdue, and collectively considered a variety of options for doing so. One option was to sell the company to or merge the company with another pharmaceutical manufacturer. Shire was discussed as a possible target, as was Cephalon, UCB, and Sepracor, Inc. The proceeds of such a transaction could then be re-invested in diversified assets, thereby achieving the Sacklers’ desired distance.

6. Another option was to have Purdue borrow money in order to assure Purdue had adequate funds to continue operating while the Sacklers, as owners, began to make substantial distributions of money from the company to themselves. Once again, the proceeds of the distributions could then be re-invested in diversified assets, thereby achieving the Sacklers’ desired distance.

7. In order to pursue *either* of these options, the Sacklers needed to maximize opioid sales *in the short term* so as to make Purdue – by then the subject of substantial public

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