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Illinois Church Action on Alcohol & Addiction Problems

Marijuana Alert - April 19, 2022



J&J settles West Virginia opioid litigation for \$99 million

(Reuters) - Johnson & Johnson said on Monday it agreed to pay \$99 million to settle claims by West Virginia that it helped fuel an opioid addiction crisis in the state, removing the company from an ongoing trial that began earlier this month.

West Virginia is still pursuing claims against Teva Pharmaceuticals Industries Ltd and AbbVie Inc's Allergan in the Kanawha County Circuit Court trial for their alleged role in the crisis.

The state accused the companies of causing a "tsunami" of addiction.

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Chicago Pot Cartel by Pritzker, Wrigley Families Alleged in Suit

(Bloomberg) -- The legal marijuana business in Illinois is being controlled by a state-protected "Chicago cartel" that includes companies linked to the wealthy Pritzker, Wrigley and Kovler families, according to a lawsuit filed by a group called True Social Equity in Cannabis. Marijuana companies Akerna Corp., Green Thumb Industries Inc., Verano Holdings and Surterra Holdings Inc. have successfully monopolized the Illinois-branded marijuana market, from cultivation to manufacturing to retail dispensaries, the plaintiffs said in a complaint filed Monday in Chicago federal court. The companies collude to control prices, with a pound of branded marijuana in Illinois going for about \$4,000, compared with \$300 in a competitive market like California, according to the suit by True Social Equity in Cannabis, which consists of pot consumers, workers and entrepreneurs. [Read](#)

Politico Marijuana Update:

Legislation supported by some Illinois marijuana farmers stalled in the Legislature's spring session, but advocates aren't giving up hope that it can be resurrected.

Applicants for “craft cultivation” licenses — many of which are minority-owned businesses — were pushing legislation that would allow them to start their businesses cultivating up to 14,000 square feet of land. Current state law says they must start at 5,000 square feet before ramping up to a larger canopy.

The legislation, however, got pushback from some established weed companies that expressed concern that expanding the canopy would attract multistate operators who would buy up all the small businesses, many of them social-equity applicants.

Crafting a compromise: The two sides have been negotiating a compromise for nearly two months. An agreement on expanding to 14,000 square feet was reached with some established companies. But the Cannabis Business Association of Illinois, which represents most of the companies, says the agreement doesn’t do enough to address social equity and isn’t on board with the deal.

The association has “grave concerns” that the goals of achieving social equity are not addressed in the draft legislation, said **Pam Althoff**, the industry group’s executive director. “The General Assembly has put an emphasis on social equity, but the proposed opportunity for craft grow doesn’t address any of that.” [Read](#)

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