



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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BAY MILLS INDIAN COMMUNITY FILES SUIT AGAINST OPIOID MANUFACTURERS AND DISTRIBUTORS

BAY MILLS — Bay Mills Indian Community is taking aim at the opioid crisis — by starting at the top. On Friday, April 19, BMIC filed a lawsuit in the U.S. District Court in Northern District of Ohio that seeks remedy from more than three-dozen entities for their role in marketing and distributing opioids deceptively, making false and misleading claims, and underscoring the risk of prescription drug addiction. At the top of the list is Purdue Pharma, L.P., manufacturer of OxyContin.

“It is our hope that this lawsuit holds big corporations accountable for flooding our community with addictive drugs, and that it will result in resources we need to promote resilience and healing here at Bay Mills,” said BMIC Tribal Chairman Bryan Newland.

BMIC has been working on their response to the prescription drug abuse crisis actively for more than a year. Aside from the lawsuit, the tribe has enacted a culturally-based plan to combat addiction in the community, known as the Tribal Action Plan.

“We are changing the way we approach substance abuse, by moving away from a ‘crime and punishment’ model to actions that try to help families address the root causes of substance abuse,” noted Newland.

The TAP outlines how to combat substance abuse elements in all populations in the community in a broad-based effort amongst tribal departments to provide resources and support to those in need.

BMIC’s complaint is not the first to be filed, and isn’t likely to be the last. To date, more than 600 cities and tribes from 29 states have filed federal lawsuit against drug manufacturers and distributors.

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