

TOP TAKEAWAYS

Nuisance Lawsuits Won't Solve the Opioid Crisis

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OPIOID ABUSE HAS BECOME A NATIONWIDE EPIDEMIC

- Opioid abuse has enormous costs to our society.
 - Between 1999 and 2016, opioid overdoses killed more than 350,000 people in the U.S.
 - In 2016 alone, opioid overdoses accounted for more than 42,000 deaths.
- Unfortunately, plaintiff lawyers are attempting to exploit the opioid crisis to extract large payouts from the pharmaceutical companies.

NUISANCE LITIGATION WON'T FIX THE OPIOID CRISIS

- For an injury to constitute a public nuisance, it must cause injury to the general public.
 - The vast majority of people who are prescribed pain killers do not misuse the product or become addicted.
- Due to massive attorneys' fees, only a tiny fraction of any financial settlement will find its way to the government.
- Using the courts to regulate medicines is an abuse of our justice system.

CONSUMERS ARE THE ONES WHO SUFFER

- Consumers are the ones who bear the costs of these lawsuits in the form of:
 - Higher drug prices.
 - Reduced access to pain medications for patients who need them.
- Furthermore, lawsuits draw funding away from the research and development of new medications and cures as well as from helpful programs.

THERE ARE BETTER WAYS TO COMBAT THE OPIOID CRISIS

- Legislation, regulation, law enforcement, treatment, and education can help to solve this significant public health problem. This includes:
 - Setting limits on the amount of medicine that can be prescribed.
 - Requiring doctors to use prescription drug monitoring databases.
 - Expanding treatment options for those who need it.
 - Reducing supply by cutting off the flow of illicit drug.
 - Implementing public education initiatives.

It is important to remember that, if used correctly, opioids relieve pain and can help those who are suffering. Policymakers can prioritize the opioid epidemic without harming consumers by focusing on a multi-pronged approach that doesn't require hundreds of frivolous lawsuits.