



SKAGIT COUNTY LITIGATION TARGETING MANUFACTURERS OF OPIOIDS

Report to the Mount Vernon School District

Board of Directors

January 3, 2018

Background

- Skagit County has contracted with the Keller Rohrback law firm
- Keller Rohrback's experience includes:
 - *Representing public entities*
 - *Consideration public interest and public impacts*
 - *Experience litigating against large pharmaceutical companies*
- Skagit Co. Prosecutor, Rich Weyrich, has invited school districts, cities, and other impacted entities to sign onto the lawsuit

Facts

- The US has 4.5 % of the world population, but consumes 80% of the opioids
- Heroin and OxyContin are nearly identical in chemical structure
- Most heroin addicts first became addicted to prescription opioids
- Pharmaceutical companies first marketed OxyContin as non-addictive, long-term pain management medication
- Over 100 people per day die of opioid overdoses in the US – upwards of 50,000 per year

The Litigation Plan

- Gather facts for damages
- Develop a support plan to help those who are addicted
- Reduce the flow of opioids into communities
- Hold pharmaceutical companies accountable for their false marketing and sales tactics
- Keep the damages in the communities that bring forth the lawsuits
- Sign on by contingency – no cost to the entities unless the litigation results in financial restitution

Benefits of Solidarity

- Skagit County could become the first in the nation to have the county, all cities, all school districts, and the hospital district sign onto litigation
- Sends a positive message of unity - we are standing together as communities, supporting those who are affected by addiction.