IN THE DISTRICT COURT OF CLEVELAND COUNTY
STATE OF OKLAHOMA

STATE OF OKLAHOMA, ex rel., MIKE HUNTER, ATTORNEY GENERAL OF OKLAHOMA,	§	
Plaintiff,	§	
vs.	§	Case No. CJ-2017-816 The Honorable Thad Balkman
(1) PURDUE PHARMA L.P.;	§	
(2) PURDUE PHARMA, INC.;	§	
(3) THE PURDUE FREDERICK COMPANY;	§	
(4) TEVA PHARMACEUTICALS USA, INC.;	§	***Submitted to***:
(5) CEPHALON, INC.;	§	**Judge Thad Balkman**
(6) JOHNSON & JOHNSON;	§	
(7) JANSSEN PHARMACEUTICALS, INC.;	§	
(8) ORTHO-McNEIL-JANSSEN PHARMACEUTICALS, INC., n/k/a JANSSEN PHARMACEUTICALS, INC.;	§	
(9) JANSSEN PHARMACEUTICA, INC., n/k/a JANSSEN PHARMACEUTICALS, INC.;	§	STATE OF OKLAHOMA } S.S. CLEVELAND COUNTY }
(10) ALLERGAN, PLC, f/k/a ACTAVIS PLC, f/k/a ACTAVIS, INC., f/k/a WATSON PHARMACEUTICALS, INC.;	§	FILED
(11) WATSON LABORATORIES, INC.;	§	MAY 03 2019
(12) ACTAVIS LLC; and	§	
(13) ACTAVIS PHARMA, INC., f/k/a WATSON PHARMA, INC.,	§	In the office of the Court Clerk MARILYN WILLIAMS
Defendants.	§	

THE STATE'S RESPONSE TO JANSSEN'S MOTION IN LIMINE #6
(To Preclude Insinuation That Janssen's Opioid Medications Are Inappropriate For Treating Chronic Pain)

INTRODUCTION

Public trial is deeply woven into the fabric of our judicial system. Fundamental to its ethos. Public trials are the backdrop to Atticus Finch's defense of Tom Robinson and Clarence Darrow's cross-examination of William Jennings Bryan. And the reason why courts across the Nation, including this one, are located in the town square. "With us, a trial is by very definition a proceeding open to the press and to the public." *Richmond Newspapers v. Virginia*, 448 U.S. 555, 599, 100 S. Ct. 2814, 2840 (1980) (Stewart, J. concurring). Yet Defendants want to bar the Court's doors and suppress the evidence from ever seeing the light of day.

Motions *in limine* are not appropriate in bench trials. The whole point of a motion *in limine* is to make sure that potentially prejudicial evidence and statements never get to the fact finder (jury) because any damage cannot be undone. Here, the Court is the fact finder. And Defendants, not the State, have taken every single item they can think of, written it down, alerted the fact finder, told the fact finder about it, used bold headings, and will argue about it in open court. So, rather than keep any complained-of statements or evidence secret, Defendants have deliberately drawn the only fact finder's attention to it. That defeats the entire purpose of a motion *in limine*.

To be clear, Defendants' Motions in *Limine* are not about this fact finder. Quite the contrary, these Motions *in Limine* are solely about preventing an open, public trial—part of a metastasizing effort to shield their conduct from the public eye. First J&J and Teva improperly designated well over 90% of their production confidential—***over 3 million documents***—despite assurances to the Court that they would not blanket designate.[1] Then they fought tooth-and-nail to

[1] This number doesn't event take into account the 100,000+ blank documents produced by J&J that simply state, "Withheld as Not Responsive." Defendants' production is an astonishing abuse the Protective Order by any measure, but especially considering that J&J has no competitive interest in documents created before 2016 when it divested its global "pain management franchise." *See* State's Mtn. to De-Designate, Feb. 26, 2019.

prevent the public from seeing *any* of their documents by moving on two separate occasions to exclude cameras from the courtroom. And they sought to move the trial. And every time a document is shown to the Court—or a witness' testimony is played—they clear the courtroom. Now they file motions to seal masquerading as "Motions *in Limine*."

For all of Defendants' claims that the State has no case, they sure are worried about the evidence seeing the light of day. But Defendants eviscerated any argument about concealing evidence from the public based on a fear of statements impacting unknown foreign jurors when they publicly stated to all the unknown jurors that the State's case is baseless. They did not have to make those statements. But they did:

> Sabrina Strong, attorney for Johnson & Johnson and its subsidiary Janssen Pharmaceuticals, issued a statement to NPR and other media outlets saying the move by Hunter showed that most of the claims were without merit . . . . "We will continue to defend against the remaining baseless and unsubstantiated allegations."

https://www.npr.org/2019/04/04/710101827/oklahoma-drops-some-claims-to-refocus-lawsuit-against-opioid-makers. And, having done so, Defendants opened the door. As the Court saw just last Friday in Defendants' own documents: when they speak, they have a duty not to omit material information. Telling the whole world that the State's claims are baseless certainly blew that door wide open.

Beyond their title, Defendants' Motions do not even pretend to be motions *in limine*. Indeed, Defendants make no bones about the fact that these are not motions to keep information away from a jury. Quite the contrary, these Defendants' purpose is clear. "[T]he concern is not about the judge in this case but exposure of prejudicial information to millions of Americans, including countless prospective jurors in hundreds of matters pending against Janssen and J&J across the country." Janssen MIL No. 12 at 4; *see also* Jansen MIL Nos. 1, 5, 8, 9, 10, 13; Teva MIL Nos. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 10. There is no case, none, that says the Court can consider hypothetical,

non-existent future trials in other states, that may never be conducted, under unknown laws and rules, when deciding what the State can use at this bench trial. Even if Defendants' motions were motions *in limine*, they fundamentally misunderstand the Court's duty to the public.

It is not the Court's job to shield the public—hypothetical jurors in other forums or otherwise—from information. Quite the opposite. Centuries of English-American judicial tradition charge the Court with empowering the public through access to trial and to information. *See generally Richmond_Newspapers v. Virginia*, 448 U.S. 555, 100 S. Ct. 2814 (1980). The justifications for this obligation are manifold and recognized in Oklahoma:

> [T]here are vital social interests served by the free dissemination of information about events having legal consequences and about legal proceedings themselves. The public has a right to know about threats to its safety and measures aimed at assuring its security. It also has a legitimate interest in the conduct of judicial proceedings, particularly in matters of general public concern. Furthermore, the subject matter of legal proceedings is often of direct significance in debate and deliberation over questions of public policy.

In re in re the Okla. Bar Ass'n to Amend the Rules of Prof'l Conduct, 2007 OK 22, ¶ 4, 171 P.3d 780, 855. There is no more important judicial event in Oklahoma than this case. Indeed, the Court recognized this mandate when it allowed cameras in the courtroom over the very same protests regurgitated in Defendants' Motions *in Limine*: "'A trial is a public event. What transpires in the courtroom is public property . . . . Those who see and hear what transpired can report it with impunity. There is no special perquisite of the judiciary which enables it, as distinguished from other institutions of democratic government, to suppress, edit, or censor events which transpire in proceedings before it." Aug. 22, 2018 Order at 2 (citing *Craig v. Harney,* 331 U.S. 367,67 S.Ct. 1249,91 L.Ed. 1546 (1947)).

The public's right to access does not end at the trial either. Rather, "the privilege extends, in the first instance, to materials on which a court relies in determining the litigants' substantive

rights." *FTC v. Standard Fin. Mgmt. Corp.*, 830 F.2d 404, 408 (1st Cir. 1987). This right includes presumptive access to all documents used at trial. *See Shadid v. Hammond*, 2013 OK 103, ¶¶ 1-2, 315 P.3d 1008 (Taylor, J. concurring) ("Court records are public records . . . . Sealing a public record should be a very rare event that occurs in only the most compelling of circumstances."). Indeed, the Court's Protective Order envisions no restriction on the use of "Confidential" information at trial, and restriction on the use of "Highly Confidential – Attorneys' Eyes Only" information only "by a separate stipulation and/or court order." *See* Amended Protective Order, ¶ 16 (Apr. 16, 2018). Defendants' arguments that the Court must protect the public from the evidence is entirely backward.

Defendants repeatedly trumpet other false narratives in support of their argument that the Court should conceal evidence from the public. They argue that the State seeks to punish Defendants where no punitive claim exists. Likewise, they argue that the State unfairly seeks to have Defendants alone pay for the entire opioid crisis. It does not. The legislature has expressly carved out joint and several liability for cases like this one, 23 O.S.§ 15, and the State brought its case accordingly. It's not unfair, it's the law. Defendants could have joined additional parties. *See* Scheduling Order (Jan. 29, 2018). They did not. They could have produced or sought evidence of other causes. They did not. And they can try to seek contribution for a 17-billion-dollar Judgment (or whatever amount the Court decides) from all the phantom causes of the crisis that they claim exist when this case is over. They did not do this because—in all likelihood—Defendants have a joint defense agreement with every manufacturer in the national cases, and they have refused to allege or testify that any drug company had anything to do with causing this crisis. All of these actions were part of Defendants' strategy. That strategy may have been a bad one, but it doesn't mean that this case is unfair. And it doesn't mean that the Court should whitewash the record of

all the evidence Defendants don't like.

LEGAL STANDARD

Even in Defendants' inverted world where the Court functions to conceal information from the public, their Motions *in Limine* must fail. Motions *in limine* are not concerned with considerations of the general public, only the jury. *Middlebrook v. Imler, Tenny & Kugler, M.D.'s Inc.*, 1985 OK 66, ¶ 12, 713 P.2d 572, 579 ("The function of a motion in limine is to preclude introduction of prejudicial matters ***to the jury***." (emphasis added)). Of course, this is a bench trial. There is no Oklahoma jury to prejudice here. And in a bench trial, the rationale underlying pre-trial motions *in limine* does not apply. Where there is no jury, to the extent the evidence is prejudicial to the moving party, the judge has already seen it, and any benefit of shielding the evidence from the eyes of the trier of fact is absent. *See id.*

Likewise, there is no efficiency to be gained, as a party aggrieved by an order in limine must make an offer of proof of the excluded matter at trial. *Id.* For these reasons, trial courts are advised to deny motions *in limine* in non-jury cases:

> In the trial of a nonjury case, it is virtually impossible for a trial judge to commit reversible error by receiving incompetent evidence, whether objected to or not. An appellate court will not reverse a judgment in a nonjury case because of the admission of incompetent evidence, unless all of the competent evidence is insufficient to support the judgment or unless it affirmatively appears that the incompetent evidence induced the court to make an essential finding which would not otherwise have been made. On the other hand, a trial judge who, in the trial of a nonjury case, attempts to make strict rulings on the admissibility of evidence, can easily get his decision reversed by excluding evidence which is objected to, but which, on review, the appellate court believes should have been admitted.

9A Charles Alan Wright & Arthur R. Miller, Federal Practice and Procedure § 2411 (3d ed. 2008) (quoting *Builders Steel Co. v. CIR*, 179 F. 2d 377, 379 (8th Cir. 1950)).[2] As stated more pointedly

[2] *See also* Am. Jur. 2d *Trial* § 45 (2015) ("[T]he use of a motion in limine to exclude evidence in a case tried by the court without a jury has been disapproved on the grounds that it can serve no useful purpose in a nonjury case…granting of such a motion in a bench trial constitutes an error.");

by one trial court, "This is a bench trial, making any motion in limine asinine on its face." *Cramer v. Sabine Transportation Co.*, 141 F. Supp. 2d 727, 733 (S.D. Tex. 2001)).

A party seeking to exclude evidence in limine bears a heavy burden even in a jury trial. Under Oklahoma law, all relevant evidence is admissible unless otherwise prohibited, and the standard for relevance is very liberal. *See* 12 O.S. § 2402; *United States v. Leonard*, 439 F.3d 648, 651 (10th Cir. 2006). Relevant evidence is defined as, "evidence having any tendency to make the existence of any fact that is of consequence to the determination of the action more probable or less probable than it would be without the evidence." 12 O.S. § 2401. "[A] fact is 'of consequence' when its existence would provide the fact-finder with a basis for making some inference, or chain of inferences, about an issue that is necessary to a verdict," but it only need to have "any tendency" to do so. *United States v. Jordan*, 485 F.3d 1214, 1218 (10th Cir. 2007). Accordingly, "court[s] are often reluctant to enter pretrial rulings which broadly exclude evidence, unless it is clear that the evidence will be inadmissible ***on all potential grounds***." *Martin v. Interstate Battery Sys. of Am., Inc.*, No. 12-CV-184-JED-FHM, 2016 WL 4401105, at *1 (N.D. Okla. Aug. 18, 2016) (emphasis added); *Middlebrook*, 1985 OK 66, ¶ 12 ("Error is committed, if at all, when in the course of the trial the court rules on the matter.").

Defendants are using motions in limine collectively to attempt to silence the State, stifle

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United States v. Heller, 551 F.3d 1108, 1111-12 (9th Cir. 2009) (stating that the need for a motion *in limine* became moot once the defendant waived his right to a jury trial); *LaConner Assocs. Ltd. Liab. Co. v. Island Tug and Barge Co.*, No. C07-175RSL, 2008 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 109863, at *2 (W.D. Wash. May 15, 2008) (when ruling on motions *in limine*, a court is forced to determine the admissibility of evidence without the benefit of the context of trial); *Capitol Neon Signs, Inc. v. Indiana Nat'l Bank*, 501 N.E.2d 1082, 1083 (Ind. Ct. App. [4th Dist] 1986) ("The trial court erred when it granted CNSI's motion in limine. Such motion has no place in a court trial."). The more prudent course in a bench trial, therefore, is to resolve all evidentiary doubts in favor of admissibility. *See Commerce Funding Corp. v. Comprehensive Habilitation Servs., Inc.*, No. 01 Civ 3796 (PKL), 2004 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 17791, at *5 (S.D.N.Y. Sept. 3, 2004); *Balschmiter v. TD Auto Fin., LLC*, No. 13-CV-1186-JPS, 2015 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 66629, at *4-5 (E.D. Wis. May 21, 2015).

justice, and prevent the admission of any evidence whatsoever. Motions in limine should not be used as gag orders. The Court ordered a televised trial on August 22, 2018. For purposes of deciding Defendants' motions in limine in this bench trial, the Court should not consider other states' laws, unknown jurors, or other hypothetical trials in other jurisdictions that may never happen. The Motions *in Limine* should be denied.[3]

ARGUMENT

A primary reason for the opioid crisis in Oklahoma is that Johnson & Johnson and Janssen (collectively, "J&J"), along with the other Defendant manufacturers of opioids, began aggressively marketing opioids as entirely safe and effective for chronic, non-cancer pain. Astonishingly, J&J's Motion *in Limine* #6 ("Motion") asks this Court to prohibit the State from even "insinuating" the truth: That opioids are NOT always safe and effective for chronic pain, but rather carry ridiculously dangerous risks and are not really that effective at treating chronic pain. For the opioid crisis to be abateme, this truth must be stated loud and clear—not just insinuated—and the State intends to do just that starting on May 28, 2019. Indeed, getting to the truth about opioids is the very heart of this case.

J&J's Motion makes three general arguments asking this Court to suppress the truth about opioids: (1) the FDA allowed J&J to market their drugs as effective for chronic, non-cancer pain; (2) Oklahoma nuisance law prevents the State from refuting that marketing; and (3) federal preemption principles prohibit the State from refuting that marketing. J&J's Motion entirely misses the mark. All three arguments are wrong or inapposite.

First, this case is not about whether J&J marketed opioids for the treatment of chronic,

[3] Because the Court ordered the Parties to address each *limine* topic individually, and the State does not know which response the Court will read first, the State has included this Introduction and Legal Standard section into each of its responses.

non-cancer pain (J&J calls this an "undisputed fact" on page 1 of its Motion), but, rather, is about *how* and *why* J&J did so. *How* did J&J market opioids for chronic, non-cancer pain? By understating the extreme risks of opioids (with claims like opioid addiction is a "myth" and is "rare") and vastly overstating their efficacy (with claims like opioids improve "quality of life" and "physical and social functioning"). When opioids are described truthfully, it is clear they are *not* always appropriate for chronic pain especially when used long term. *Why* did J&J embark on this false and aggressive marketing campaign? The answer is simple: Money. Duragesic alone was a $1 billion-per-year drug. It contains fentanyl—one of the world's most potent opioids—and it was prescribed at J&J's insistence for regular everyday pain. And J&J knew the chronic non-cancer pain market was a goldmine to exploit.

Likewise, this case is not about FDA labels and it is not about federal regulation. The FDA does not give drug manufacturers a license to lie about their drugs. Nor does FDA approval constitute a definitive, unassailable proclamation of a drug's safety and efficacy. In fact, J&J states in its Amended Answer *as an affirmative defense*:

> [T]he FDA is actively examining the issue of whether opioids are safe and effective for the long-term treatment of chronic, non-cancer pain[.]

J&J Amended Answer (Sept. 21, 2018) at 30. That means J&J admits that even today it does not know if its drugs were safe and effective for chronic pain (they weren't and aren't). Moreover, the FDA itself has censured J&J for making "false or misleading" statements that "suggest that Duragesic is less abused that other opioids" and for making numerous "unsubstantiated effectiveness claims."[4] FDA approval provides no basis for limiting the State's ability to show the true nature of opioids and how J&J's marketing departed from the truth.

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[4] *See* 2004 FDA Warning Letter, available at: https://www.pharmamedtechbi.com/~/media/Images/Publications/Archive/The%20Pink%20Sheet/66/038/00660380018/040920_duragesic_letter.pdf (last visited May 3, 2019)

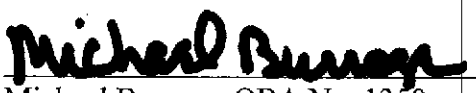
Second, Oklahoma nuisance law—and specifically the "statutory authority" exception J&J relies—does not prevent the State from introducing evidence showing that opioids are not as safe and effective for chronic non-cancer pain as J&J claimed. J&J is welcome to make the argument that it was statutorily authorized to sell its opioids; however, this case is about the *manner* in which J&J marketed, sold, and oversupplied its opioids and other companies' opioids. Again, neither the FDA nor any other regulatory or legislative body statutorily "authorized" J&J to lie and mislead. Further, this legal argument about the application of a statutory defense is not the proper subject of a motion *in limine*. The State incorporates by this reference its Responses in Opposition to Defendants' Motions for Judicial Notice (which touch on these same subjects), filed May 1, 2019.

Third, federal preemption principles (likewise, not the proper subject of a motion *in limine*) do not prohibit the State from introducing evidence regarding the true safety and efficacy of opioids. Defendants already lost these exact preemption arguments at the motion to dismiss stage. *See* December 6, 2017 Order (denying motions to dismiss and holding the State's "claims should not be dismissed based on preemption"). Similarly, after Defendants improperly removed this case, the Western District of Oklahoma rejected Defendants' federal jurisdiction arguments and remanded the case back to this Court. Judge Miles-LaGrange rightly held that the State's claims do not necessarily raise any federal issue. *State of Oklahoma v. Purdue Pharma, et al.*, Case No. CIV-18-574-M, Doc. No. 53 at 9 (W.D. Okla. August 3, 2018). The State's claims simply do not turn a whether J&J complied with or violated any federal statute or regulation. Finally, and once again, no federal regulatory authority or statute permitted or allowed J&J to promote its opioids or others' opioids in the manner it did. Federal preemption principles do not prohibit the State from showing the truth about the safety and efficacy of opioids.

CONCLUSION

For the reasons set forth above, the State respectfully requests the Court deny Janssen's Motion *in Limine* #6 in its entirety, and for such further relief the Court deems proper.

Respectfully submitted,



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CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I certify that a true and correct copy of the above and foregoing was emailed on May 3, 2019 to:

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