

Boston Law Firms Thomas & Associates, Suzanne E Durrell Represent Whistleblower in \$2.3B Pfizer Case

Pfizer to pay \$2.3 billion to settle claims it misbranded painkiller drugs, promoted off label drug use & paid kickbacks to doctors. Boston attorneys Suzanne E. Durrell, Robert M. Thomas, Jr. & Rory Delaney represent key whistleblower, Blair Collins.

Sept. 3, 2009 - [PRLog](#) -- The United States, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and numerous other states announced today that Pfizer Inc will pay approximately \$2.3 billion dollars to settle claims that, among other things, the company misbranded one of its pain killer drugs, promoted the off label use of numerous drugs, and paid kickbacks to doctors to induce or reward the prescription of Pfizer drugs. As part of the settlement, Pfizer subsidiary Pharmacia & Upjohn Company, Inc. ("Pharmacia") will enter a guilty plea to a criminal information charging that the company "misbranded" the painkiller Bextra (valdecoxib) by promoting the drug for variety of conditions and at dosages other than those for which its use was approved by the Food and Drug Administration. Bextra was withdrawn from the market in 2005 after concerns about its safety profile especially for cardiovascular risks in long term users of the drug.

Boston attorneys Suzanne E. Durrell, Robert M. Thomas, Jr. and Rory Delaney represent one of the whistleblowers, Blair Collins, who brought kickback allegations regarding the drugs Lipitor, Norvasc, Viagra, Zithromax, and Zyrtec, and whose information helped form the basis for today's settlement.

The whistleblower's case, which concerns company activity nationwide, was brought in Federal District Court for the District of Massachusetts. A number of other such suits were filed by other whistleblowers. The government was able to substantiate allegations made in a number of the law suits and Pfizer has agreed to pay a record-breaking criminal recovery of \$1.3 billion dollars in addition to \$1 billion to settle the civil cases alleging that the company caused the submission of false claims to the federal and states' governments.

The locally-filed "kickback" complaint alleges that Pfizer paid illegal remuneration for speaker programs, mentorships, preceptorships, so-called "journal clubs", and gifts (including entertainment, cash, travel and meals) to health care professionals to induce them to promote and prescribe several drugs, including Lipitor, Norvasc, Viagra, Zithromax, and Zyrtec, in violation of the Medicare and Medicaid Anti-Kickback Act and the False Claims Act.

"Our client is very pleased with the settlement," said his attorneys, Suzanne Durrell, Robert Thomas and Rory Delaney. "He pursued this over the years at great personal cost to himself and his family, and is enormously gratified to see this settlement."

Mr. Collins and his attorneys praised the dedication, tenacity, and teamwork of the federal and state attorneys and investigative agencies in bringing these cases to a successful and record-breaking conclusion: "This impressive, record-breaking result is a testament to the hard work of many public servants and further solidifies the well-deserved reputation of the Boston U.S. Attorney's Office in conjunction with the Department of Justice and the state attorneys general for aggressively prosecuting health care fraud" said Attorney Durrell.

For further information, please contact Suzanne E. Durrell at (617) 571 3441 (cell) or by email at Suzanne.durrell@verizon.net or Robert M. Thomas, Jr. at (617) 371-1072 or 857 207-0924.(cell) by email at rmt@thomasandassoc.net or Rory Delaney at 857 498 0384 (cell) or email at rhd@thomasandassoc.net. Information on the False Claims Act and related areas of interest may also be found at the firms' websites:

<http://www.thomasandassoc.net> and <http://www.durrelllaw.com>.

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Launched in April of 2000, Thomas & Associates (www.ThomasandAssoc.net) is a boutique litigation practice concentrating in the areas of whistleblower litigation, white-collar criminal defense, and special prosecution of labor racketeering cases.

Founder, Bob Thomas, is a 1985 cum laude graduate of Harvard Law School and a former Assistant United States Attorney

Rory Delaney, of counsel to Thomas & Associates, is a 1990 law graduate of the University of Cambridge and a barrister in the United Kingdom, in addition to being a member of the Massachusetts Bar.

In connection with its growing whistleblower practice, the firm is affiliated with Suzanne E. Durrell (of counsel, www.DurrellLaw.com), the former Chief of the Civil Division of the Boston United States Attorney's Office.

Thomas & Associates now has an active docket of False Claims Act (qui tam) cases filed in federal and state courts around the country. This now constitutes a significant portion of the firm's practice.

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