

Historic Federal Lawsuit Filed to End Powerful Florida Sugarcane Industry's Harm to Poor Communities

Economic, Environmental and Health Damages Sought as Well as Green Harvesting and Medical Monitoring

BOCA RATON, FLORIDA, UNITED STATES, June 4, 2019 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [The Berman Law Group](#) today announced that it has

filed a federal class action lawsuit against U.S. Sugar Corporation, Florida Crystals Corporation and nine other defendants on behalf of residents in Belle Glade, Pahokee, South Bay and surrounding communities who have been severely negatively impacted by sugarcane burns. The lawsuit seeks an end to the burns, recovery of substantial economic damages already incurred and health monitoring, especially for children, the poor and elderly.

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Florida's sugar industry burns approximately nine million tons of sugarcane foliage annually from 400,000 acres. Much of the foliage contains dangerous pesticides, herbicides, insecticides and other agricultural chemicals. Toxic chemicals emitted include volatile organic compounds, sulfur oxides and nitrogen oxides. Children and the elderly are especially vulnerable to these toxic chemicals.

“This is the most ambitious legal action ever taken to compel the Florida sugar industry to act responsibly,” said Russell Berman, Partner of The Berman Law Group. “It is time to end these antiquated and reckless sugarcane burns. At a very reasonable cost, the sugarcane industry can stop harming their neighbors and adopt green harvesting, which would also create more jobs in the sugarcane industry in Florida,” said Mr. Berman.

Fred Taylor, a former University of Florida All American football player who grew up in Belle Glade, also spoke in support of the lawsuit. “I grew up with breathing problems myself so I can understand what the people in the community have endured. I really feel bad for everyone that lives in the community still...a lot of people there don't have a way out so they have to tough it out,” said Mr. Taylor.

Joseph Abruzzo, Director of Government Relations for The Berman Law Group and a retired state senator, said, “Too many people, especially children and the poor are suffering because of the sugarcane burns. This has gone on for far too long and must end.”

The burning of toxic-ridden sugar waste material creates ‘Black Snow’ which poses large and unacceptable risks to the people of Belle Glade, Pahokee, South Bay and surrounding communities. In addition to financial damages, the lawsuit seeks relief in the form of a Court-

established and Court-supervised medical monitoring program solely for the purposes of diagnosing diseases and sharing information, as well as the establishment of a medical monitoring fund.

The lawsuit also alleges that the Florida sugar industry has breached their duty to avoid the escape of hazardous substances and failed to warn of the escape of hazardous substances. As a result of these and other actions, property values have also been reduced and economic growth has been curtailed.

Also, of note, the sugar and specialty items produced by Florida sugar companies are supplied to companies such as Kraft, Hershey, Kellogg's, Pepsi, and Nestle, as well as to major chain grocery stores like Costco, Sam's Club, Publix, Kroger and Aldi.

The lawsuit filing is available upon request.

About The Berman Law Group: Established in 2008, The Berman Law Group has quickly garnered a well-deserved reputation as an indefatigable and fearless defender of its clients' rights. The firm has offices in Boca Raton, Deerfield Beach, Orlando, Stuart and Gainesville. For additional information see <https://www.thebermanlawgroup.com/>.

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