

Fueling an Epidemic

Exposing the Financial Ties Between Opioid Manufacturers and Third Party Advocacy Groups

SUPPLEMENT TO FEBRUARY 2018 REPORT

As detailed in the February 2018 minority staff report titled, “Fueling an Epidemic: Exposing the Financial Ties Between Opioid Manufacturers and Third Party Advocacy Groups,” Insys Therapeutics, Inc., reported contributions of \$562,500 to the National Pain Foundation (NPF) between 2012 and 2017.¹ Specifically, Insys reported payments of \$50,000 in 2013 and \$512,500 in 2015—all “generally for sponsorship of conferences, trade shows, and meetings.”²

More than two months after this report, the Global Pain Initiative (the name NPF adopted in mid-2017³) provided financial information in response to a October 2017 request from Ranking Member McCaskill.⁴ In this production, the Global Pain Initiative described \$662,500 in contributions from Insys in 2013, 2015, 2016, and 2017—\$100,000 more than Insys reported to the Committee. Yearly totals of reported payments from Insys to the Global Pain Initiative appear below.

	2013	2015	2016	2017
Insys Payments	\$50,000	\$350,000	\$225,000	\$37,500

According to the Global Pain Initiative, Insys provided \$50,000 in 2013 “to the organization *without restrictions* to start operations, in 4-separate payments of \$12,500.00 each.”⁵ In 2015, Insys reportedly provided three payments totaling \$350,000 to “launch a race car program ‘Global Pain Initiative’ to reach public for feedback,” to “launch data discovery as to pain in the U.S. and move that to pain abroad,” and to develop a “‘digital data’ collection tool for ‘person centric’ data.”⁶

Insys also awarded a \$300,000 grant to the Global Pain Initiative in 2016, although the company actually provided only \$225,000 that year to “assemble key opinion leaders to discuss ‘breakthrough pain’” and “write papers” regarding this category of pain.⁷ A letter of agreement between Insys and NPF in March 2016 states that the company made the final \$75,000 payment under the grant contingent “upon receipt of final deliverables.”⁸ In 2017, Insys provided half of this remaining amount—\$37,500—“to pay honoraria to key opinion leaders and costs associated with three papers that were generated.”⁹ (A December 2016 letter from Insys to NPF further indicates that the organization received this payment, at least in part, for hosting a “Consensus Meeting” in Florida and generating a “Consensus Statement on the Treatment of Breakthrough Pain.”¹⁰) The Global Pain Initiative apparently failed to receive the additional \$37,500 because a “paper on ‘breakthrough’ pain was rejected by a major pain journal because of the toxic milieu of what was occurring with the companies that [Ranking Member McCaskill is] investigating.”¹¹

In correspondence with the minority staff in May 2018, counsel for Insys stated the company could not “find a record of an additional \$100,000 payment” to account for the discrepancy between the amount the company reported to the Committee and the amount the Global Pain Initiative reported.¹² As explained in the February 2018 report, Insys previously failed to report \$2,500,000 in responsive payments to the U.S. Pain Foundation in an initial response to the Committee.¹³ The company could also not confirm or deny \$12,500 in payments the Academy of Integrative Pain Management reported receiving from the company in 2014 and 2015.¹⁴

In July 2018, however, the company stated it had resolved the discrepancy in its records and could confirm the existence of the \$100,000 payment.¹⁵ Insys also conveyed that new management at the company had reduced charitable contributions by 77% during the second half of 2017; the company also decided in the third quarter of 2017 to end these types of contributions altogether.¹⁶ The company further noted that any additional contributions after this decision occurred as a result of prior contractual obligations.¹⁷

¹ Ranking Member Claire McCaskill, *Fueling an Epidemic: Exposing the Financial Ties Between Opioid Manufacturers and Third Party Advocacy Groups* (Feb. 12, 2018).

² Letter from Counsel for Insys to Sen. Claire McCaskill (Nov. 10, 2017).

³ Email from Dr. Daniel Bennett, Chairman, Board of Directors, Global Pain Initiative, to Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Minority Staff (Jan. 10, 2018).

⁴ Letter from Counsel for the Global Pain Initiative to Sen. Claire McCaskill (Mar. 29, 2018) (Appendix A).

⁵ *Id.* (emphasis in original).

⁶ *Id.*

⁷ *Id.*

⁸ *Id.* (Appendix B).

⁹ *Id.* (Appendix A). According to the Global Pain Initiative, this payment occurred in January 2017—within the time period applicable to the March 2017 requests from Ranking Member McCaskill to Insys. See Letter from Sen. Claire McCaskill to Santosh Vetticaden, Interim Chief Executive Officer of Insys Therapeutics, Inc. (Mar. 28, 2017).

¹⁰ Letter from Counsel for the Global Pain Initiative to Sen. Claire McCaskill (Mar. 29, 2018) (Appendix B).

¹¹ *Id.* (Appendix A).

¹² Email from Counsel for Insys to Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Minority Staff (May 14, 2018).

¹³ Ranking Member Claire McCaskill, *Fueling an Epidemic: Exposing the Financial Ties Between Opioid Manufacturers and Third Party Advocacy Groups* (Feb. 12, 2018).

¹⁴ *Id.*

¹⁵ Email from Counsel for Insys to Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Minority Staff (July 20, 2018).

¹⁶ *Id.*

¹⁷ *Id.*