

October 26, 2021

The Honorable Jerrold Nadler  
House Committee on the Judiciary  
2141 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Jim Jordan  
House Committee on the Judiciary  
2141 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Nadler and Ranking Member Jordan:

We are writing on behalf of ourselves or family members who have suffered the pain of ovarian cancer or mesothelioma caused by the use of Johnson & Johnson's baby powder, which has been found to contain a known carcinogen, asbestos, and was withdrawn from the U.S. market in May 2020. We strongly encourage you to support H.R. 4777, the "Nondebtor Release Prohibition Act of 2021." Johnson & Johnson abused our trust when it sold a product they knew contained asbestos, and today, they are failing to take responsibility for their actions by filing for bankruptcy despite being a tremendously profitable multi-billion dollar global corporation. H.R. 4777 would ensure that Johnson & Johnson cannot avoid accountability and willfully abuse the bankruptcy system against people who now have cancer due to their misconduct.

Evidence shows that Johnson & Johnson's baby powder tested positive for the presence of asbestos, a known carcinogen, and that they have known about the presence of asbestos in their products for decades and failed to inform consumers and regulators. For example, an investigation conducted by Reuters found that, "J&J didn't tell the FDA that at least three tests by three different labs from 1972 to 1975 had found asbestos in its talc – in one case at levels reported as 'rather high.'" Because illnesses from asbestos exposure typically take decades to appear, tens of thousands of people – the vast majority women – are suffering from ovarian cancer and mesothelioma because of this toxic baby powder.

Ovarian cancer and mesothelioma are horrific diseases. When you learn that you or your loved one has been diagnosed with ovarian cancer or mesothelioma, you are not only filled with fear, but also with anger. This is compounded by the fact that our cancers were caused by long-term use of baby powder – a product we all considered so innocent that we used it regularly for years, and even on our children. Through surgeries, chemotherapy, and radiation, we wonder what could have been if only J&J had put safety over profits and disclosed what they knew internally about the dangers of this product.

Bankruptcy is an important tool for individuals and companies that fall on hard times and need a fresh start. J&J does not fall into that category. It is using tricks and loopholes to

distort the bankruptcy system solely to eliminate the legal rights of cancer victims – yet another indignity for our families that have been ravaged by J&J’s greed and selfishness. We ask that you support H.R. 4777 to stop this injustice and prevent companies like J&J from leaving victims with scraps in a bankruptcy system never designed to protect profitable corporations that simply refuse to accept accountability.

Sincerely,

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