

JUDGE URGES BAN OF SOME IPHONES IN TECH BATTLE

The Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO — A trade court judge will recommend banning some iPhones from being imported into the United States after concluding Apple's best-selling device infringed on technology owned by mobile chip maker Qualcomm.

The U.S. International Trade Commission decision is the latest twist in a bitter legal dispute between Qualcomm and Apple over the rights to some of the technology that connects iPhones to the internet.

It's unclear if the recommended ban will be imposed or even which iPhone models would be affected. ITC Judge MaryJoan McNamara's recommendation still must be weighed by the full trade commission.

Qualcomm applauded McNamara's findings. Apple didn't immediately respond to a request for comment.

A similar decision was reached by a trade commission judge last September in another patent infringement case that Qualcomm filed against Apple. The full commission is expected to issue its ruling on that judge's initial findings later Tuesday.

The legal battle between Qualcomm and Apple broke out more than two years ago after the U.S. Federal Trade Commission sued Qualcomm for allegedly using its portfolio of mobile technology patents to gouge smartphone makers and stifle competition in the chip market. A federal court judge in San Jose, California, is still mulling a decision in that case, two months after presiding over a trial.

Shortly after the FTC filed its case in 2017, Apple pounced with its own lawsuit accusing Qualcomm of trying to wring licensing fees for technology that it didn't really invent.

Apple subsequently stopped paying royalties to Qualcomm, further poisoning the two companies' relationship.

Qualcomm prevailed in another round of skirmishing when a federal court jury in San Diego decided Apple should pay \$31 million in damages for making several different types of iPhones that violated Qualcomm patents. The bout is scheduled to resume April 15 at yet another federal court trial in San Diego.

LI jobless rate falls to 3.7 percent

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Long Island's unemployment rate fell to 3.7 percent in February, the lowest for that month since 2001, preliminary state data released Tuesday show.

The rate declined from a year-earlier 4.8 percent, according to Labor Department data.

The decline comes after the Labor Department last week reported a pickup in employment growth in February, when the local economy was expanding at an annual rate of 9,400 jobs. That topped January's year-over-year increase of 8,400 jobs. Both those months represented a turnaround from the last five months of 2018, when department revisions revealed that the local employment market was losing jobs. Those data are based on a sample survey of Long Island businesses.

Tuesday's numbers are drawn from a census survey of Long Island residents, regardless of where they work.

The number of unemployed residents fell by 14,700 to a total of 55,000 in February, also the lowest for the month since 2001. The number of residents with jobs grew by 26,000 to 1.42



Kimberly Stevens of Rocky Point, right, speaks with a recruiter at a 2018 Melville job fair. February's unemployed totaled 55,000.

JOHN PARASKEVAS

million, a high for the month. "February's report showed that Long Island's labor market remains tight," said Shital Patel, associate economist in the department's Hicksville office.

She noted that the number of unemployed residents in February was less than half the peak of 119,300 reached in 2010 in the aftermath of the last recession.

John A. Rizzo, economics

professor at Stony Brook University and chief economist for the Long Island Association trade group, agreed.

"The labor market's strong run on Long Island just continues," he said. "People are entering the labor market in anticipation of getting jobs."

Across the island, Rockville Centre had the lowest jobless rate, 3 percent. Southampton and Riverhead towns tied for the highest — 5.6 percent. Southampton's rate usually rises this time of year because of seasonal factors.

Around the state, Nassau's 3.5 percent unemployment rate was the lowest among the counties. Suffolk tied with Queens and Ulster for the sixth-lowest rate — 4 percent.

The Labor Department uses year-over-year comparisons because local data aren't adjusted to account for seasonal fluctuations. The Island's jobless rate compares with 4.4 percent for the state and 4.1 percent for the nation, on the same seasonally unadjusted basis.

Purdue Pharma to pay \$270M to settle opioid charges

The Associated Press

OKLAHOMA CITY — The maker of OxyContin and the company's controlling family agreed Tuesday to pay a groundbreaking \$270 million to Oklahoma to settle allegations they helped create the nation's deadly opioid crisis with their aggressive marketing of the powerful painkiller.

It is the first settlement to come out of the recent coast-to-coast wave of nearly 2,000 lawsuits against Purdue Pharma that threaten to push the company into bankruptcy and have stained the name of the Sackler family, whose members rank among the world's foremost philanthropists.

"The addiction crisis facing our state and nation is a clear and present danger, but we're doing something about it today," Oklahoma Attorney General Mike Hunter said.



AP / TOBY TALBOT

Purdue Pharma is the maker of the painkiller OxyContin.

Nearly \$200 million will go toward establishing a National Center for Addiction Studies and Treatment at Oklahoma State University in Tulsa, while local governments will get \$12.5 million. The Sacklers are responsible for \$75 million of the settlement.

In settling, the Stamford, Connecticut-based company denied any wrongdoing in con-

nection with what Hunter called "this nightmarish epidemic" and "the worst public health crisis in our state and nation we've ever seen."

The deal comes two months before Oklahoma's 2017 lawsuit against Purdue Pharma and other drug companies was set to become the first one in the recent barrage of litigation to go to trial. The remaining defendants still face trial May 28.

Opioids, including heroin and prescription drugs like OxyContin, were a factor in a record 48,000 U.S. deaths in 2017, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Oklahoma recorded about 400 opioid deaths that year. State officials have said that since 2009, more Oklahomans have died from opioids than in vehicle crashes.

Other states have suffered far worse, including West Virginia, with the nation's highest

opioid death rate. It had over 1,000 deaths in 2017.

Purdue Pharma CEO Craig Landau said the company is committed to "help drive solutions to the opioid addiction crisis."

But some activists were furious, saying they were denied the chance to hold Purdue Pharma fully accountable in public, in front of a jury. "This decision is a kick in the gut to our community," said Ryan Hampton, of Los Angeles, who is recovering from opioid addiction. "We deserve to have our day in court with Purdue. The parents, the families, the survivors deserve at least that. And Oklahoma stripped that from us today."

Purdue Pharma introduced OxyContin in the 1990s and marketed it hard to doctors, making tens of billions of dollars from the drug.