

Zelle LLP Named Co-lead Counsel in Hard Disk Drive Litigation

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Zelle LLP is pleased to announce that the firm has been named co-lead counsel for a nationwide putative class of end-user plaintiffs in *In re: Hard Disk Drives Suspension Assemblies Antitrust Litigation*.

The lawsuit alleges that manufacturers of hard disk drive (HDD) suspension assemblies conspired to fix prices and allocate markets. Zelle represents consumers who, between May 2008 and April 2016, indirectly purchased products containing hard disk drive suspension assemblies manufactured by the defendants.

HDD suspension assemblies are a key component of HDDs found in a range of consumer products, including computers, portable hard drives and gaming systems. The market for HDD suspension assemblies is dominated by two Japanese companies: TDK and NHK Spring. Together, these companies and their subsidiaries control approximately 90 percent of the global market for HDD suspension units.

Plaintiffs further allege that defendants and their co-conspirators reached agreements to refrain from competing on price, and allocate their respective market shares for, HDD suspension assemblies, resulting in higher prices for retailers and consumers in the United States. These claims are at the center of a criminal investigation by the U.S. Department of Justice, which has resulted in a guilty plea and a \$28.5 million fine for NHK Spring. Similar investigations have also been announced in Japan and Brazil.

“We are pleased that the case is moving forward, and we look forward to pursuing relief on behalf of our clients,” said Christopher Micheletti, a partner in the Firm’s San Francisco office. “As alleged in the complaint, we believe consumers were forced to pay more than they should as a result of defendants’ conspiracy.”

Attorneys in Zelle’s Antitrust Practice Group have held leadership positions for

indirect-purchaser classes and/or had other central roles in numerous antitrust class actions over the past 20 years. Many of these actions involved claims related to allegedly price-fixed component parts, as well as price-fixed finished products sold to indirect purchasers.