

Court Approves Distribution of \$40 Million From Smokeless Tobacco Settlement to Non-Profit Organizations

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Recently, the firm successfully petitioned a San Francisco Superior Court administering a class action antitrust settlement to authorize the distribution of \$40 million to more than 100 non-profit organizations in California. This distribution was part of a \$96 million settlement that was approved by the state court in San Francisco, California in 2008, and became final earlier this year. Zelle Hofmann attorneys served on the Plaintiffs Executive Committee and were extensively involved in prosecuting this highly successful case. Zelle Hofmann represented a class of California indirect purchasers of moist snuff products which alleged that U.S. Smokeless Tobacco Company monopolized the moist snuff market and engaged in restrictive and exclusionary acts during the time period 1990 to the present in violation of California state antitrust laws. Earlier this year, funds were distributed to indirect purchaser class members who filed claims, and then Zelle Hofmann and other plaintiffs counsel requested, pursuant to the court-approved settlement, that remaining funds be distributed to the non-profit organizations. Zelle Hofmann attorney Chris Micheletti worked on this matter.