

Lawyer testifies in fen-phen fraud case

by UPI

LEXINGTON, Ky. -- A Kentucky lawyer involved in a fen-phen settlement case said he was advised to tell clients they were entitled to less money than court documents indicated. David Helmers gave his testimony in the trial of attorneys William Gallion, Shirley Allen Cunningham Jr. and Melbourne Mills Jr., who are accused of keeping \$65 million that was supposed to be given to plaintiffs, the Lexington (Ky) Herald reported. The allegedly pocketed money is a portion of a \$200 million settlement awarded to 440 people in a 2001 lawsuit against American Home Products, a company that marketed fenfluramine, which is used in the diet drug fen-phen. Fen-phen was taken off the shelves in 1997 after proof surfaced that it caused heart complications. Helmers said he found inaccuracies in the amount of money offered to clients and the amount indicated in the settlement deal while he was meeting with plaintiffs after the case. The defense has argued that Gallion, Mills and Cunningham had no intentions of stealing money from clients.

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