

One Wisconsin Now: Schimel's latest excuse

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Refusing to Withdraw From Investigation Is Latest Excuse in Schimel Opioid Affair

MADISON, Wis. — Brad Schimel's latest excuse for not suing his campaign donor Purdue Pharmaceuticals is a poor one.

As reported in the Capital Times, Schimel's latest excuse is a rule that says states can not both file a lawsuit and participate in a multi-state investigation, and since Wisconsin is involved in the investigation, there's simply nothing he can do. Originally more than 40 states had joined the investigation with a possibility of a settlement but that number has "dwindled" to just 24 states. The states that withdrew have since filed lawsuits, Schimel not among them.

"This shows a real lack of leadership on behalf of Brad Schimel for Wisconsinites struggling with the nationwide opioid crisis," said One Wisconsin Now Research Director Joanna Beilman-Dulin. "Schimel's inaction is in spite of the 71 of 72 Wisconsin counties who themselves have filed lawsuits."

Schimel, who has received campaign funds from opioid manufacturer Purdue Pharma's political action committee, has refused to join in action by 18 other state Attorneys General and sue Purdue and other opioid manufacturers in court. Purdue

also contributed \$555,475 to the Republican Attorneys General Association (RAGA) between 2014 and 2016. RAGA has already run ads attacking Schimel's 2018 election opponent.

Beilman-Dulin noted that Schimel's previous excuse, in a campaign re-election ad, blamed families for the current opioid crisis, not the pharmaceutical drug manufacturers who spent millions of dollars to flood our streets with opioids. In the ad, Schimel cites family members and friends, not manufacturers of the highly addictive drugs, as the source of the prescription painkillers that lead to more serious drug addictions.

She concluded, "Instead of playing what could be a years-long wait-and-see game with an investigation, Schimel should follow the leadership of Wisconsin counties and attorneys general nationwide and file suit."