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NEWS FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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AG Schimel Announces Involvement in Ongoing Opioid Investigation

MADISON, Wis. – Attorney General Brad Schimel announced today that he has been working with a bipartisan coalition of a majority of attorneys general from across the country in an ongoing investigation to evaluate whether pharmaceutical manufacturers have engaged in unlawful practices in the marketing and sale of opioids. The participating attorneys general are investigating what role the opioid manufacturers may have played in creating or prolonging this epidemic and are utilizing investigative tools, including subpoenas for documents and testimony, to determine the appropriate course of legal action to address the ongoing opioid epidemic.

“I am dedicated to fighting the opioid epidemic at all levels, local, state, and national, and using all tools at my disposal,” said Attorney General Schimel. “While it is highly unusual for the Wisconsin Department of Justice to discuss any open investigation, I can confirm today that DOJ has for some time been examining and will continue to examine the practices of opioid manufacturers to determine whether legal action is warranted. There is no silver bullet to solving this ongoing nationwide crisis. This crisis came about as a result of failings across the entire health care system, but the public should be aware that Wisconsin previously settled an investigation involving one pharmaceutical manufacturer for unlawful marketing practices. The terms of that settlement subject the company to ongoing monitoring of its marketing activities. DOJ is no stranger to litigation in this area and will work to solve this problem with our partners in the law enforcement, medical, dental, substance abuse treatment and business communities.”

Attorney General Schimel continues to be a national leader in the fight against opioid abuse, and is currently leading a 43-state lawsuit against Indivior, the manufacturer

of Suboxone, which is believed to be the largest ever litigated multistate antitrust case. Moreover, Wisconsin is a national leader in drug take back, having collected nearly 275,000 pounds of unused medications over the last two and a half years. During the April 2017 Drug Take Back Day, Wisconsin collected more unused medications than 47 other states.

At the state level, Attorney General Schimel negotiated discount agreements with two naloxone manufacturers and has hosted extensive training for law enforcement on proper naloxone usage and drug investigations. Further, DOJ's award-winning public awareness campaign, Dose of Reality, is destroying the myths about prescription painkiller abuse and preventing improper use of prescription drugs.

The coalition of attorneys general is not identifying any specific targets of its investigation at this time and due to the ongoing and confidential nature of the investigation, DOJ will not have any additional comment today.