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NEWS FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**AG Schimel and U.S. DOJ Hold Statewide Summit on Opioids and Meth;
Drug Take Back Day is October 27**

MILWAUKEE, Wis. – This week Attorney General Brad Schimel and U.S. Attorneys for Wisconsin Scott Blader and Matthew Krueger are hosting a major summit on fighting opioid and meth abuse with more than 500 attendees expected from around Wisconsin. Attorney General Schimel also invites all Wisconsinites to do their part in preventing the misuse and abuse of prescription painkillers and other pharmaceuticals by taking their unwanted medications, both prescription and over the counter, to Drug Take Back Day locations on Saturday, October 27, 2018.

“For nearly four years, I’ve partnered with the U.S. DOJ, local law enforcement, medical personnel, and treatment providers to fight the opioid epidemic, and now the meth epidemic,” said Attorney General Schimel. “To win this fight, we have to use treatment, prevention, and enforcement equally. Between this summit and Drug Take Back Day on October 27, this week we are having a concentrated, statewide push against the drug epidemic.”

The summit, entitled “Making Progress through Collaborations,” will focus on bringing together the people, from across Wisconsin, who all have a hand in fighting the opioid and meth epidemics. That group of people includes local public health agencies, law enforcement, prosecutors, first responders, hospital personnel, social services, correctional personnel, prevention and intervention workers, prosecutors, treatment providers, victim advocates, social workers, school administrators, teachers, community groups, faith-based leaders, and government officials. More than 500 people are expected to attend, in order to share information across sectors to better target drug traffickers, prevent drug abuse, reduce overdoses, and establish new pathways to recovery.

“Addiction medicine physicians know that addressing our opioid crisis requires both a public health and public safety approach,” said Dr. Kelly Clark, President of the

American Society of Addiction Medicine. “Decreasing the supply of all controlled substances easily available is a powerful approach to preventing drug misuse and addiction. But even if we stopped prescribing all pain medications and stopped heroin trafficking, if we do not provide effective treatment for those who are addicted to opioids, they will simply find other substitutes, like fentanyl and carfentanyl.” Dr. Clark is presenting at the summit.

The summit will teach attendees about best practices being used in Wisconsin and around the country. Attendees will have the option to select from over 40 programs as they work with other professionals to address this national epidemic. Program topics include: substance abuse treatment options and results, the connection between human trafficking and meth and heroin trafficking, veterans treatment initiatives, trauma-informed care during the treatment of drug abuse, building coalitions to combat drug abuse, investigating and reviewing overdose deaths, police assisted recovery initiatives, and many other topics.

The summit takes place October 23 and 24, is paid for by Wisconsin Department of Justice (WI DOJ) discretionary funds and the U.S. Attorney’s Offices for the Western and Eastern Districts of Wisconsin. The Hyatt Regency Milwaukee has also provided critical support for this summit.

Attendees will also kick off national Drug Take Back Day (October 27) by bringing unused and unwanted medications to temporary drug disposal units at the summit. The Milwaukee Police Department will host a Drug Take Back event, for both the area morning-commuters and summit attendees, on Tuesday, October 23 at the corner of Kilbourn Avenue and 3rd Street in Milwaukee, both for Milwaukee morning commuters and attendees.

In partnership with the WI DOJ and the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), **300 local law enforcement agencies will be participating in Drug Take Back Day across the state on October 27.** This effort will continue to bring focus to the issues prescription painkiller abuse and the opioid epidemic cause in Wisconsin.

Drug Take Back Day provides a safe, convenient and responsible means of disposal, while also educating the community about the potential abuse and consequences of improper storage and disposal of these medications. To find a Drug Take Back Location near you, go to: www.doseofrealitywi.gov/find-a-take-back-location/.

Unused or expired medicine should never be flushed or poured down the drain. Water reclamation facilities are not designed to remove all of them and trace amounts of pharmaceuticals are showing up in rivers and lakes.

To ensure the success of Drug Take Back Day, WI DOJ relies on assistance from the DEA, and the generous support of Fuchs Trucking, Covanta Energy, the Wisconsin State

Patrol, the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection, Wisconsin Department of Military Affairs, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, the Indiana State Police, Waukesha County, Waukesha County Sheriff's Office, and all participating local law enforcement agencies.

Since 2015, Wisconsinites have disposed of over 400,000 pounds of unused and unwanted medications; and the state has been a national leader in the DEA's drug disposal program. Repeatedly, Wisconsin had more law enforcement agencies participate in the biannual event than any other state in the country, and has had the third largest drug disposal collections in the country, behind California and Texas.

Drug Take Back Day Guidelines

All waste pharmaceuticals must be generated by a household – no businesses are allowed.

Bring: Prescription (controlled and non-controlled) and over-the-counter medications, ointments, patches, inhalers, non-aerosol sprays, creams, vials, pet medications.

Do Not Bring: Illegal drugs, needles/sharps, acids, aerosol cans, bio-hazardous materials (anything containing a bodily fluid or blood), personal care products (shampoo, soaps, lotions, sunscreen), household hazardous waste (paint, pesticides, oil, gas), mercury thermometers.

Participants may dispose of solid, non-liquid medication(s) by removing the medication from its container and disposing of it directly into a disposal box or into a clear sealable plastic bag. Plastic pill containers should not be collected. Blister packages without the medications being removed are acceptable.

Liquids will be accepted during this initiative. However, the liquids, creams and sprays must be in their original packaging and their weight evenly distributed within the boxes of collected solid prescription medications. Liquids without the original packaging will not be accepted.

Illicit substances such as marijuana or methamphetamine are not a part of this initiative and should not be placed in collection containers.

For more information, go to www.DoseofRealityWI.gov