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NEWS FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**AG Schimel Applauds Governor Walker's and Legislature's Continued
Commitment to Fighting Wisconsin's Drug Epidemic**

MADISON, Wis. – Attorney General Brad Schimel released the following statement today applauding Governor Walker's and the legislature's continued commitment to combating Wisconsin's opioid crisis.

“Drug abuse has continued to remain one of the foremost public policy discussions in Wisconsin thanks to Governor Walker, Lieutenant Governor Rebecca Kleefisch and Representative John Nygren,” said Attorney General Schimel “Our multidisciplinary approach to attacking this crisis has led to some incredible successes. The recommendations announced today are balanced, well-researched, and combat the epidemic through all necessary channels: prevention, treatment and enforcement.”

Included in new recommendations from the Governor's Task Force on Opioid Abuse and Governor Walker's executive orders are two new assistant attorney general (AAG) positions which will be located in the Wisconsin Department of Justice (DOJ) Division of Criminal Investigation's (DCI) Wausau and Appleton field offices. These AAGs will provide on the ground assistance to DCI agents, local law enforcement, and assist over-burdened prosecutors. Basing the prosecutors out of DCI's field offices in those allow the AAG's to respond quickly and effectively to cases throughout those regions and work side by side with investigators to establish sound cases.

Attorney General Schimel continued, “I'm thrilled to see this regional prosecutor model expanded to areas of the state where we most need to continue our fight against Wisconsin's drug epidemic. Since I began my role as Attorney General, I have advocated for a regional prosecutor model. While AAGs in Madison do incredible work, in the context of drug enforcement, having boots on the ground prosecutors who

are part of the community, working alongside law enforcement, local prosecutors, and judges is priceless.”

In August 2017, Attorney General Schimel announced the appointment of an assistant attorney general in the DCI Eau Claire field office who serves as the statewide methamphetamine resource prosecutor. Basing the AAG out of this office allows for a quick and effective response to cases throughout the northwest part of the state involving methamphetamine trafficking and to work proactively with both DCI criminal agents and outside law enforcement agencies. The methamphetamine resource prosecutor represents the state in criminal cases; advises local prosecutors on matters relating to methamphetamine trafficking; and assists in the development of legislation concerning the growing threat that methamphetamine poses to local communities.

Attorney General Schimel continues to fight the opioid epidemic with a three-pronged approach: prevention, treatment, and enforcement. *Dose of Reality*, DOJ’s award winning public awareness campaign, continues to educate communities on prescription drug abuse and since October 2015, DOJ’s Drug Take Back Day has successfully collected and disposed of nearly 360,000 pounds of unused medications.

DOJ also provides critical support to the state’s treatment alternatives and diversion program; has increased access to lifesaving opioid antidotes; and lobbied Congress to increase access to addiction treatment.

Attorney General Schimel continues to work with a bipartisan coalition of attorneys general to investigate 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. Most recently, investigative subpoenas were served for documents and information, also known as Civil Investigative Demands, on Endo, Janssen, Teva/Cephalon, Allergan, and their related entities, as well as a supplemental Civil Investigative Demand on Purdue Pharma.