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NEWS FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**AG Schimel Continues 72-County Tour to Discuss Public Safety
in La Crosse and Monroe Counties**

MADISON, Wis. – Attorney General Brad Schimel continued his 72-county statewide tour to meet with local law enforcement and elected officials this week with stops in La Crosse and Monroe Counties on Tuesday, December 12.

“I continue to be inspired by the persistence and determination of local law enforcement and officials around the state as they grapple with major public safety challenges like the opioid epidemic,” said Attorney General Schimel. “At the Wisconsin Department of Justice (DOJ), we rely on our partnerships with municipalities and counties to carry out our public safety mission, and today’s meetings are critical to making sure DOJ tailors resources to the needs at the local level.”

“I want to thank Attorney General Schimel, not only for hosting a roundtable in Monroe County, but also for his tireless commitment to the people of Wisconsin in fighting the opioid and methamphetamine epidemics,” said Monroe County District Attorney Kevin Croninger. “Attorney General Schimel understands that finding ways to address these issues requires a collaborative effort between, State, County and Local officials. Attorney General Schimel has taken the lead by hosting these types of discussions and continues to demonstrate a strong desire to hear about the experiences of those on the front lines. While these discussions will certainly not solve the opioid and methamphetamine epidemics, I am confident that through this collaborative effort we will reach the best outcomes possible for the people of both Monroe County and Wisconsin.”

“Though we deal with drug abuse issues each and every day, it is reassuring to know that we have an attorney general who can take time out of his busy schedule to listen

to how these issues of mutual concern affect our local community,” said La Crosse Chief of Police Ron Tischer. “It was very clear to everyone at the table that Attorney General Schimel has a true understanding of the depth and scope of the opioid problem and understands that it will take the efforts of more than the criminal justice system to have long term positive effects on this problem that affects us all”.

Attorney General Schimel and the Wisconsin Department of Justice (DOJ) leadership team is meeting with law enforcement and local officials in every county to discuss public safety concerns specific to each county. The challenges faced by law enforcement leaders and the criminal justice system differ from county to county, even in neighboring communities, making it critical for DOJ to be responsive to public safety needs at the local level. DOJ is local communities’ partner in safety, and these meetings aim to discover what resources and efforts DOJ can provide to make Wisconsin safer and stronger.

DOJ financially supports a number of programs to help public safety officials keep the county safe.

Next year, La Crosse County will receive nearly \$157,000 to fund the county’s adult alcohol and drug court, providing an alternative to incarceration for those struggling with addiction. Earlier this year, DOJ announced that the county will serve as a pilot site and grant recipient to strengthen and improve the county’s response to sexual assault. [La Crosse County is also one of eight counties in the state participating](#) in Wisconsin DOJ’s Evidence-Based Decision Making Initiative. As part of this program, criminal justice professionals in the county use research to seek a just, coordinated and accountable criminal justice system through collaboration with criminal justice stakeholders and community engagement. Next year, the county will also receive \$25,000 from DOJ and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) as a pilot site in the CDC’s Prescription Drug Overdose Prevention Program. By critically analyzing individual drug overdoses in the county, the program plans to develop comprehensive local overdose prevent and response plans, including overdose prevention efforts.

In 2018, Monroe County will be provided more than \$12,000 to expand a treatment court that will support those struggling with alcohol abuse. The West Central Metropolitan Enforcement Group, which includes La Crosse and Monroe counties’ law enforcement, was also provided more than \$169,000 to fight heroin, methamphetamine, and other illegal controlled substances that may be imported, manufactured, and distributed in the local area.

DOJ also financially supports La Crosse and Monroe counties’ crime victim service organizations, ensuring that crime victims are given guidance and counseling as they

participate in the criminal justice system. Since 2015, DOJ has provided organizations in La Crosse County nearly \$1.3 million to provide services to victims of domestic and sexual violence in the county. Since 2015, DOJ has provided nearly \$239,000 to support victim services in Monroe County, including funding to the Gundersen Lutheran Medical Center and the Monroe County Shelter Care Brighter Tomorrows in Sparta.

To see what other counties the Attorney General has visited, and where he will going next, go to: <https://www.doj.state.wi.us/ag-roundtable-map>