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NEWS RELEASE

Methamphetamine Abuse in Wisconsin Expands 250 Percent, Wisconsin DOJ, FBI, DEA, and Marshfield Clinic Brief Legislators

February 9, 2017

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MADISON, Wis. – Today, Attorney General Brad Schimel, the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), Marshfield Clinic, and the Wisconsin Department of Justice (DOJ) Division of Criminal Investigation (DCI), testified at a legislative informational hearing on the growing challenge of methamphetamine abuse in Wisconsin.

“Meth is notorious for not only destroying the user, but the entire family and community around each user,” said Attorney General Schimel. “Wisconsin’s top law enforcement agency has been working with federal law enforcement to assess the threat of meth and every level of government has made a commitment to stop this horrible drug from continuing to destroy our communities. Today’s hearing gave legislators the information they will need to protect their communities and help law enforcement battle back meth.”

“While heroin and opiate addiction are garnering headlines recently, we have to remember that meth use and abuse is still rampant across the state,” said Sen. Van Wanggaard, Chair of the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Public Safety. “I hope today’s hearing showed legislators and the public the scope of the problem and some ideas as how to tackle the scourge of meth in Wisconsin.”

“With the increase we’ve seen in meth abuse in our state, it’s essential that lawmakers start getting involved, looking to our law enforcement agencies for advisement,” said Rep. John Spiros, Chair of the Assembly Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety. “We’re lucky in Wisconsin to have a Department of Justice that has been dedicated to addressing this problem, and the legislature should be prepared to assist in any way we can. Meth has become a problem in my own area of the state, and I’m looking forward to helping in the next steps to cut down on meth abuse and make our communities safer.”

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In January 2017, the FBI released a report detailing the threat of methamphetamine abuse in Wisconsin. The report estimates that from 2011 to 2015, methamphetamine use in Wisconsin likely expanded between 250 and 300 percent. Western Wisconsin and rural areas of the state are seeing the most concentrated use of methamphetamine. The report was a collaborative effort between the FBI, Wisconsin Statewide Intelligence Center, and DOJ. Data was contributed by 96 organizations, including law enforcement, district attorneys, social services, and private organizations.

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