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NEWS FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**AG Schimel Continues 72-County Tour to Discuss
Public Safety in Forest and Langlade 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 Forest and Langlade counties on Thursday, February 8.

“Wisconsin’s less populous counties cannot be forgotten, as they, too, are ravished by the state’s opiate and meth epidemics,” said Attorney General Schimel. “These local meetings are valuable in hearing how health and human services staff and law enforcement are working together, and how the state’s efforts aid in the fight to make our communities safer and stronger.”

“The attorney general’s personal approach, in seeking input from local law enforcement agencies, will assist in establishing best practices to address current law enforcement issues,” said Langlade County Sheriff Mark Westen. “These practices will be essential in creating strategies for dealing with the most important aspects of public safety and the social wellbeing of our citizens. We have recognized the importance of not only narcotics enforcement, but also how it directly correlates with the mental health issues our communities are dealing with. And, due to an unsettling trend in our state, and nationwide, the attorney general has been an extraordinary advocate in recognizing the importance of officer wellness. We look forward to continuing a partnership with Attorney General Schimel to identify and address issues concerning public safety.”

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 counties safe.

The North Central Drug Enforcement Group, which includes Forest and Langlade counties' law enforcement, will receive more than \$51,000 this year to help investigate drug distribution crimes in the area. This drug task force has also received more than \$157,000 since 2015 to fight heroin and methamphetamine, and funding will be available through 2018.

DOJ also financially supports Forest and Langlade counties' crime victim services organizations, ensuring that crime victims are given guidance and counseling as they participate in the criminal justice system. Since 2015, through U.S. DOJ Victims of Crime Act grants, DOJ has distributed nearly \$312,000, to victim services providers in Forest County, and nearly \$419,000 to victim services providers in Langlade County.

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>