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**NEWS FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**AG Schimel Continues 72-County Tour to Discuss  
Public Safety in Walworth County**

MADISON, Wis. – Attorney General Brad Schimel continued his 72-county statewide tour to meet with local law enforcement and elected officials this week with a stop in Walworth County on Wednesday, March 7.

“Local law enforcement and officials around the state are experiencing a silent crime wave, largely driven by the opioid and meth epidemics,” said Attorney General Schimel. “It’s crucial that the Wisconsin Department of Justice (DOJ) is working closely with our partners on the municipal, county, and tribal level to carry out our shared mission and maximize our limited resources .”

"On behalf of all of the participants from the Walworth County area, I thank Attorney General Schimel for taking time out of his busy schedule to conduct an in-depth roundtable discussion," said Walworth County sheriff Kurt Picknell.

Attorney General Schimel and the 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 additional resources and expertise 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.

This year, DOJ provided funding to support the Walworth County's alcohol and drug courts, which provide an alternative to incarceration for those struggling with addiction. The county will receive more than \$215,000 to enhance and support the program.

The South East Area Drug Operations Group, which includes Walworth County, will receive nearly \$212,000 from U.S. DOJ and Wisconsin DOJ this year to help investigate drug distribution crimes in the area. This drug task force has also received \$190,000 since 2015 to fight heroin and methamphetamine, and funding will be available through 2018.

DOJ also financially supports Walworth County's 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 more than \$310,000 to victim services providers in Walworth 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>