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NEWS FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Attorney General Kaul Statement on Passage of Opioids Settlement Legislation

MADISON, Wis. – Wisconsin Attorney General Josh Kaul today released the following statement regarding legislation passed yesterday in the state Assembly, [Assembly Bill 374](#), regarding opioids litigation settlements.

“My top priority for potential opioid-related settlements is to recover as much as possible to support Wisconsin’s fight against the opioid crisis. Unfortunately, the legislation regarding opioid-related settlements that Republicans in the Assembly passed yesterday, AB 374, misses a great opportunity to help maximize the positive impact those settlements can have for communities across the state.

“AB 374 would unconstitutionally give the Joint Finance Committee (JFC) significant authority over opioid-related settlements—authority that goes beyond that provided to JFC through lame duck legislation. And it creates no process for legislative review of confidential materials, a process JFC still hasn’t been able to develop in the 2 1/2 years since the lame duck laws were passed. AB374 unnecessarily adds uncertainty to potential opioid-related settlements.

“Unlike the approach taken in some other states, this bill also contains no cap on attorneys’ fees for opioid-related settlements. Without a cap, some funds that would otherwise go to fighting the epidemic would instead go to legal fees. There’s no reason that Wisconsin shouldn’t have a cap when other states do.

“We should work collaboratively—across the aisle—to develop better legislation. I support the idea of passing good legislation ensuring that Wisconsin recovers as much

as possible and allocating a large part of Wisconsin's share of those settlements to local governments. But the bill being rushed through the legislature isn't good legislation and it shouldn't become law."