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NEWS FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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AG Kaul Statement Regarding Deployment of Federal Agents to Milwaukee

MADISON, Wis. – Attorney General Josh Kaul today issued the following statement:

If the Trump administration were serious about protecting the safety of Wisconsinites, it would be leading an effective national response to the coronavirus pandemic. Instead, the administration is feverishly attempting to distract attention from that colossal—and continuing—failure through the tool it knows best: stoking chaos and division.

During this administration, and especially in recent weeks, we have witnessed the President employing fascist tactics, including his demonization of immigrants, his attacks on communities with large minority populations and the elected representatives of those communities, the blatantly illegal use of force against protesters near the White House, and the deployment of secret federal police to Portland over the objections of state and local officials.

I don't use the phrase "fascist tactics" lightly. But there is no more accurate way to describe this administration's repeated resort to and incitement of racism, xenophobia, and violence.

In the context of recent events, the Trump administration's announcement today can only be expected to increase concern and division. Moreover, it fails to include any commitment that agents will participate in long-term, intensive investigations that can lead to real improvements in public safety. I am concerned that this is no more than a short-term stunt, and I encourage our federal representatives to oppose this

action unless and until the Trump administration commits to working collaboratively with state and local officials and is much more transparent about its plans.

I have great respect for the dedicated federal agents and prosecutors in Wisconsin and across the country who work day in and day out to make communities safer. Under ordinary circumstances, I would welcome the announcement of additional federal resources to help solve and prevent violent crimes in Wisconsin. Unfortunately, the Trump administration has made it abundantly clear that it's happy to politicize law enforcement; the administration's actions must be met with great skepticism.

My office will continue working to learn more about the plans for the additional agents coming to Wisconsin. The Wisconsin Department of Justice works to protect the public, and we are happy to work with additional federal agents if there is transparency, collaboration, and it's clear that the agents will be working to reduce violent crime. However, if the agents will be interfering with peaceful protests or attempting to build arrest statistics without a broader concern for improving public safety, I will be speaking out against their presence here, and I will take any appropriate legal action.