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**ATTORNEY GENERAL MADIGAN ANNOUNCES ONGOING INVESTIGATION OF PRESCRIPTION OPIOID MANUFACTURERS*****Madigan & Broad Coalition of Attorneys General Investigating Impact Prescription Opioid Makers Have on Country's Growing Opioid Epidemic***

**Chicago** — Attorney General Lisa Madigan today announced an investigation by her office and with attorneys general across the country into several opioid manufacturers to determine whether the manufacturers have engaged in unlawful practices in the marketing and sale of opioids and what role the companies may be playing in creating or prolonging the country's opioid epidemic.

Nationwide and in Illinois, opioids – prescription and illicit – are the main driver of drug overdose deaths. Opioids were involved in more than 33,000 deaths nationwide in 2015, and opioid overdoses have quadrupled since 1999, according to information from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

"I want to know whether drug companies, seeking higher profits, have recklessly and unlawfully pushed addictive opioids," Madigan said. "We must hold drug companies accountable for their role in the epidemic levels of opioid overdoses and deaths in Illinois and around the country."

According to the Illinois Department of Public Health, Illinois was one of 14 states with statistically significant increases in overall drug overdose deaths in recent years. In 2015, there were 559 overdose deaths directly attributed to prescription opioids in Illinois, and 1,339 overdose deaths in which opioids were involved. In addition, the Chicago metropolitan area ranks first nationwide in emergency department mentions for heroin use. Cook County ranks first in the nation in the percentage of arrestees testing positive for opiates.

In August 2016, Madigan filed a lawsuit against the pharmaceutical company Insys Therapeutics Inc. for deceptively marketing and selling Subsys, a highly addictive opioid drug, to physicians treating non-cancer patients for off-label uses like back and neck pain in an effort to rake in high profits. In addition, in September 2016, Madigan and 35 other attorneys general filed an antitrust lawsuit against the makers of Suboxone, a prescription drug used to treat opioid addiction, over allegations that the companies engaged in a scheme to block generic competitors, forcing people to pay artificially high prices at a time when the companies reaped more than \$3 billion in profits. Madigan's office also provides training to medical professionals on identifying and treating patients with opioid addictions.

Assistant Attorney General Paige Boggs is handling the investigation for Madigan's Consumer Protection Bureau.

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