



September 19, 2017

ATTORNEY GENERAL MADIGAN ANNOUNCES INVESTIGATIONS OF MORE OPIOID MANUFACTURERS & DISTRIBUTORS***Madigan & Coalition of Attorneys General Issue Subpoenas to Opioid Manufacturers & Distributors***

Chicago – Attorney General Lisa Madigan today joined with a coalition of 41 attorneys general from across the country to announce their expanded investigations into manufacturers and distributors of opioid drugs.

Madigan and the coalition served subpoenas requesting information from opioid manufacturers and distributors to evaluate whether these companies engaged in unlawful practices in the marketing, sale and distribution of opioids. The attorneys general served investigative subpoenas to pharmaceutical companies, including Endo, Janssen, Teva/Cephalon, Allergan and their related entities. The attorneys general also served a supplemental subpoena on Purdue Pharma. In addition to the subpoenas, the attorneys general sent letters to opioid distributors AmerisourceBergen, Cardinal Health and McKesson requesting documents detailing their opioid distribution businesses.

“We must hold opioid manufacturers and distributors accountable for their roles in the nationwide opioid epidemic,” Madigan said. “My investigations have shown that drug companies pressure physicians into prescribing powerful, addictive drugs without regard for the law or patients’ well-being.”

Nationwide and in Illinois, opioids – prescription and illicit – are the main driver of drug overdose deaths. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, opioids were involved in 33,091 deaths in 2015, including 1,339 in Illinois, and opioid overdoses have quadrupled since 1999. Among the more than 64,000 drug overdose deaths estimated in 2016, the sharpest increase occurred among deaths related to fentanyl and synthetic opioids with over 20,000 overdose deaths. The Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) reported 1,888 opioid deaths in 2016. Rural areas have experienced increases in death rates, but the greatest total number of overdose deaths occurred in Chicago and its surrounding areas. IDPH also reported a 77 percent increase in emergency room visits and a 33 percent increase in hospitalizations related to opioid overdoses in the first three quarters of 2016 compared to the same period in 2015.

Madigan and the attorneys general are investigating what role the opioid manufacturers and distributors may have played in creating or prolonging the opioid epidemic.

The investigation is Madigan’s latest in her efforts to combat Illinois’ opioid epidemic. In August, Madigan announced a \$4.45 million settlement with the pharmaceutical company Insys Therapeutics for deceptively marketing a highly addictive opioid drug for uses that were not approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). Madigan’s investigation found that Insys illegally marketed its drug Subsys – which is significantly more powerful than morphine and has been approved solely to treat cancer pain – as a treatment for breakthrough back and neck pain. Insys also pushed doctors to prescribe higher and more expensive doses of Subsys, contrary to FDA mandates. The settlement will be used to address the significant increase in opioid abuse in communities throughout Illinois.

Division Chief Deborah Hagan, Chicago Bureau Chief Susan Ellis, Medical Director Dr. Monique Anawis, MD, JD, and Assistant Attorneys General Paige Boggs, Jennifer Crespo and Judith Parker are handling the investigation for Madigan’s Consumer Protection Division.

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