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PRESS RELEASE

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Attorney General Frosh Announces Over 90% Participation in Settlement Agreements with Opioid Manufacturer Johnson & Johnson and Three Opioids Distributors

BALTIMORE, MD (January 28, 2022) - Maryland Attorney General Brian E. Frosh, together with the Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) and the Maryland Municipal League (MML), announced today that the State of Maryland and 58 of its 60 qualifying subdivisions have elected to participate in settlement agreements with the opioids manufacturer Johnson & Johnson and three major opioids distributors, McKesson, AmerisourceBergen, and Cardinal Health. The settlement, negotiated by state attorney generals, is expected to yield up to \$26 billion nationwide with Maryland to receive approximately \$400 million over the next 18 years.

“The settlement will yield hundreds of millions of dollars for Maryland alone, money that the State and its subdivisions can use to remediate the addiction and devastation experienced by families across our State as a result of the opioid crisis,” said Attorney General Frosh. “I want to thank MML and MACo and the staff at the Opioid Operational Command Center and the Governor’s Office who helped bring us to this point.”

The two settlement agreements will provide funds for opioid remediation to the State and its subdivisions over 18 years, including an infusion of funds that will become available in the coming months. Accompanying the settlement is a statewide allocation agreement that requires proceeds to be spent on opioids abatement. The agreement, while preserving local autonomy, provides for continued coordination of opioids spending throughout the state.

“After months of collaboration with our partners in the Attorney General’s office and the counties, the final framework allows for all municipalities in the State to access a piece of the Settlement funds,” said Scott A. Hancock, Executive Director, Maryland Municipal League. “This balanced agreement will provide tangible benefits throughout the State in the battle against the opioid crisis.”

The settlement is part of an unprecedented degree of cooperation between states and local governments nationwide, required the coordination of thousands of public officials, public servants, and their attorneys nationwide. Within Maryland alone, the Office of the Attorney

General worked with hundreds of officials at the state and local level to bring about the participation in this settlement.

“Attorney General Frosh made sure local governments were brought to the table to sort out some issues – and I think that yielded a better final agreement that met the test for so many of our jurisdictions,” said Michael Sanderson, Executive Director, Maryland Association of Counties. “Maryland’s local governments have a lot of work still ahead, this crisis is not behind us, and we have many residents who still need help. These resources will reach every county and help us serve and save even more Marylanders from the terrible problems of opioid abuse.”

The first distribution of proceeds is expected in April of this year.

<https://www.marylandattorneygeneral.gov/press/2022/012822.pdf>