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For Immediate Release  
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## **Counties Testify on Opioid Settlement Bill Before Senate Committee SB 386 will Prepare Wisconsin to Receive Opioid Settlement Funds**

As parties to the National Prescription Opiate Litigation (Case No.: MDL 2804), Wisconsin counties have been leading the battle to ensure the right thing is done and counties are able to mitigate and abate the profound impact of opioids here in our state. These counties have been on the frontlines fighting this epidemic, across many levels of county government, from human services to child welfare services to law enforcement to the court system.

At the request of the Wisconsin Counties Association (WCA), Senator Testin, along with co-sponsor Representative Plumer, introduced Senate Bill 386 (companion Assembly Bill 374) on June 7, 2021.

The bill relates to the national opioid litigation involving 71 of Wisconsin's 72 counties and terms for potential settlements. Given recent developments in the settlement negotiations, the bill is needed to ensure Wisconsin counties can immediately access any future settlement funds without delay.

Today, WCA Executive Director Mark O'Connell, along with Racine County Executive Jonathan Delagrave, Milwaukee County Deputy Corporation Counsel Scott F. Brown, Marathon County Board Chair Kurt Gibbs, and WCA General Counsel Andy Phillips testified in favor of SB 386 before the Senate Committee on Health.

"The dollars are ready for us to use for mitigation and abatement, and it is critical that counties have the proper tools to fight the opioid scourge, without getting caught up in layers of government and bureaucracy," said O'Connell. "This legislation will prepare Wisconsin to receive settlement funds and we are working closely with state leaders to ensure this happens."

In his testimony, Racine County Executive Jonathan Delagrave stated, "If you care about family preservation, unification and reunification, you will vote for this legislation."

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Delagrave concluded, “Across the state, we have seen the destruction firsthand of the opioid epidemic and this legislation will ensure Wisconsin is poised to get these funds and hit the ground running to change the narrative on this issue.”

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*Note: WCA Executive Director O’Connell is available for additional comments to discuss this legislation, the opioid settlement, and potential roadblocks to getting this settlement money to counties. He can be reached at 866.404.2700 or via email at [oconnell@wicounties.org](mailto:oconnell@wicounties.org).*