

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Ashe County Board of Commissioners announced today that they have filed their complaint in the Western District of the United States District Court in Statesville, North Carolina against the manufacturers and distributors of prescription opioid pain relievers. The Board of Commissioners had previously passed a resolution declaring the opioid crisis a public nuisance which must be abated for the benefit of Ashe County and its residents and citizens and that they had signed a contract with a large number of law firms throughout the southeastern United States to file civil litigation in the courts.

The Board of Commissioners found that the National Institute of Drug Abuse, a division of the National Institute of Health, reports that every day, more than 90 Americans die after overdosing on opioids and found that the misuse of and addiction to opioids including prescription pain relievers, heroin and synthetic opioids are a serious national crisis that affects public health as well as social and economic welfare. In addition, the Board of Commissioners found that they have the authority to abate or cause to be abated any public nuisance that interferes with the public health, safety, peace and convenience of their citizens. The Board also signed a contract to retain national law firms, Baron & Budd, PC from Dallas, Texas; McHugh Fuller Law Group from Hattiesburg, Mississippi; Levin, Papantonio, Thomas, Mitchell, Rafferty & Proctor, PA from Pensacola, Florida; Hill, Peterson, Carper, Bee & Deitzler, PLLC from Charleston, West Virginia; Greene, Ketchum, Farrell, Bailey & Tweel, LLP from Huntington, West Virginia and local North Carolina law firms, Pinto, Coates, Kyre & Bowers, PLLC, Greensboro, North Carolina; Donald R. Vaughan and Associates, Greensboro, North Carolina; and Melvin & Powell, Winston-Salem, North Carolina.

The Ashe County Board of Commissioners stated, "Our lawsuit sends a clear message that the citizens of Ashe County are taking strong action against the root cause of the opioid crisis – the actions and failures of the manufacturers and distributors of these powerful narcotic drugs. We have filed an extremely detailed complaint in excess of 160 pages that spells out clearly the facts and legal reasons why the recovery of damages and abatement of the problem for our citizens is of paramount importance. The highly experienced professionals we have retained to represent us have a proven record of accomplishment in this type of litigation, and we are confident that the Board of Commissioners has taken the appropriate action in behalf of our citizens to do all that we can to put an end to the opioid abuse that daily affects the lives of all of our residents. We know this will not be an easy or quick process, but we feel it is critical to do so if there is any way to end this crisis that is impacting so many individuals and families. We are so pleased in behalf of all our citizens that our attorneys have agreed with us that there

will be absolutely no expenditure of any taxpayer money for attorneys fees or any expenses of the lawsuit.”