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Press Release

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Town of Braintree Joins National Prescription Opiate Litigation

In May of 2018, the Town of Braintree initiated the process to take legal action against opioid manufacturers and distributors to hold them accountable for their alleged role in driving the opioid epidemic. The lawsuit, filed today in the United States District Court for the District of Massachusetts, includes allegations that the defendants falsely trivialized, mischaracterized and failed to disclose the known, serious risks of addiction while promoting the use of opioids in increasingly higher doses without disclosing their greater risks.

Our Town is experiencing a public health crisis due to the alarming rate of deaths caused by drug overdoses and the impact on individuals, their families and friends, and our community. From the day these drugs were manufactured to the day the pills were consumed in our communities, the defendants had control over the information regarding opioids they chose to spread and emphasize. Without consideration for the devastating effect substance use would have on our community, these manufacturers and distributors provided misleading information about opioids and the risk of addiction, creating a population of patients who are struggling with addiction at rates of opioid use that have never been seen before. The filing of this lawsuit seeks to bring the devastating effects of this epidemic to a halt and hold those responsible for the crisis they caused.

While the lawsuit is pending, the Town, in partnership with our State legislators, will continue doing everything it can to help members of our community lead healthy, successful and productive lives. This includes the ongoing work of the Town of Braintree Substance Use Prevention Program and the Braintree Community Partnership on Substance Use, a collaborative group made up of residents, public school, law enforcement, fire, local government and healthcare officials, as well as organizations that support prevention, treatment and recovery. The Partnership was formed to support individuals and families struggling with addiction, and to minimize youth use of and access to alcohol, nicotine delivery products, marijuana, opioids, and other drugs.

A complete copy of the Complaint can be found here: <https://braintreema.gov/DocumentCenter/View/4357/Complaint-As-Filed-PDF>