



State of Connecticut
SENATE
STATE CAPITOL
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HARTFORD, CT 06106-1591
SENATE REPUBLICAN OFFICES

July 22, 2021

Attorney General, William Tong
Office of the Attorney General
165 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, CT 06106

Governor Ned Lamont
Office of the Governor
210 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, CT 06106

Secretary Melissa McCaw
Office of Policy and Management
450 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, Connecticut 06106

Dear Attorney General Tong, Governor Lamont and Secretary McCaw:

The opioid epidemic has touched the lives of countless families across our state. We have all watched people struggle. We have all experienced loss, pain, and suffering. We have seen people rise up, fall back, and strive to achieve recovery. We have worked together for years to combat this epidemic striving to break the stigma, provide needed support and programs, and save lives.

Yesterday's news of the national settlement with the country's largest pharmaceutical distributors and drug maker provides an opportunity to expand upon our bipartisan efforts to tackle the opioid crisis. An estimated \$300 million for Connecticut programs over the next 18 years has the potential to support a long-term strategy to make a significant difference and save lives.

We were pleased to hear state leaders pledge that these funds will be used to respond to the opioid crisis and not for other purposes.

We must ensure that these dollars are used to continue this fight.

We must not repeat the infamous misuse of the state's tobacco settlement funds. In Connecticut, funds promised to curb smoking have far too often been relied upon as a budgetary escape hatch. We must learn from the past and do better because people's lives are in the balance.

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We would like to discuss with you how these dollars will be deployed. For example, will a trustee board be established similar to what was done with the tobacco settlement money? We also would like to discuss what protections will be in place to ensure the funds are used to combat the opioid epidemic, prevent addiction, and help people on the long road to recovery.

Thank you for your attention and commitment to continue our work together on this issue.

Sincerely,



Kevin C. Kelly
Senate Republican Leader



Paul M. Formica
Senate Republican Leader Pro Tempore



Tony Hwang
Deputy Senate Republican Leader



Heather Somers
Deputy Senate Republican Leader