**What Municipal Leaders Are Saying About State Settlement with Opioid Distributors**

*Published on Tuesday, January 25, 2022*

PROVIDENCE, RI – This morning, Governor Dan McKee joined Attorney General Peter F. Neronha, Senate President Dominick J. Ruggerio, House Speaker K. Joseph Shekarchi, and city and town officials to announce funding recovered from opioids distributors that will be used to address Rhode Island’s opioids crisis.

In January 2018, [then-Lt. Governor McKee led the effort to organize dozens of municipalities to file a lawsuit](https://www.ri.gov/press/view/32346) against pharmaceutical drug manufacturers and wholesale drug distributors.

Today, mayors, town managers, and town administrators from across Rhode Island reacted to [the announced settlement of more than $90 million in funding](https://riag.ri.gov/press-releases/attorney-general-neronha-state-and-municipal-leaders-announce-settlement-opioid) and the impacts it will have on their respective cities and towns.

“The opioid epidemic affects all of us, regardless of whether you live in a small town or an urban community and regardless of your means financially,” said Woonsocket Mayor Lisa Baldelli-Hunt. “Thanks to the leadership of Governor McKee and Attorney General Neronha, who brought our cities and towns together to file this lawsuit several years ago, we are now able to hold accountable the large companies who fueled the opioid epidemic and bring crucial resources into our community to help residents who have been impacted by this crisis.”

“Like COVID, the opioid crisis disproportionately impacted Central Falls, wreaking havoc among our families, our service providers and our public safety employees,” said Central Falls Mayor Maria Rivera. “Central Falls joined other municipalities across the state in lawsuits, at the urging of then-Lt. Governor McKee, to hold the manufacturers, the distributors, the retailers and all parties who were and are accountable for this epidemic. I look forward to working with the Governor and Attorney General to continue addressing this crisis and deliver support to residents who need it.”

“Our cities and towns are on the front lines of the opioid crisis,” said Smithfield Town Manager Randy Rossi. “In 2018, a coalition of municipal leaders gathered at Smithfield Town Hall under the leadership of then-Lt. Governor McKee to launch a lawsuit that would hold large drug manufacturers accountable for their role in the opioid crisis. Today, I am encouraged to see the results of this collaborative effort and I look forward to continuing with Governor McKee and Attorney General Neronha to fight this epidemic and ensure communities get their support they need.”

“The opioid crisis has impacted far too many mothers, fathers, sons and daughters in Pawtucket and across the state,” said Pawtucket Mayor Donald R. Grebien. “The much-needed funding secured by this settlement will go directly to our residents impacted by this public health crisis that we here in the city have begun to address through our safe stations. I thank Governor McKee and Attorney General Neronha for their leadership and foresight in bringing all of Rhode Island’s cities and towns together to take action against opioid distributors and to fight for what is best for Rhode Islanders.”

“This is a monumental day for Rhode Islanders and their families who know the opioid pandemic all too well,” said East Providence Mayor Bob DaSilva. “The funds that East Providence will receive from the settlement will allow us to expand access to crucial supports and services like prevention, treatment and recovery. Thank you, Governor McKee and Attorney General Neronha, for holding these distributors accountable and putting Rhode Islanders first.”

“We are so thankful that Governor McKee and Attorney General Neronha prioritized our cities and towns in the fight against the opioid epidemic,” said Bristol Town Administrator Steven Contente. “Rhode Islanders should not bear the burden of rising costs of treatment and recovery. This funding makes that possible - this funding will save lives.”

“The opioid crisis is one that I know all too well. As a registered nurse and as Mayor, it is my job and my responsibility to protect the residents of Johnston, and I will do everything in my power to make sure they have access to the services they need. Together, we will beat this epidemic, and I want to thank Governor McKee and Attorney General Neronha for securing this crucial funding to make that possible,” said Johnston Mayor Joseph Polisena.

“This funding is another tool in our toolbox to address the opioid crisis,” said North Providence Mayor Charles Lombardi. “I’m thankful for Governor McKee and Attorney General Neronha’s leadership in including municipalities in this lawsuit and giving us the ability to expand access to crucial services for our residents. We are witnessing the devastating impact of this crisis every day, and I am committed to putting these funds to use to make a difference in our town and save lives.”

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