



# The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

## NORFOLK DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE

45 SHAWMUT ROAD | CANTON, MA 02021 | 781.830.4800 | F: 781.830.4801 | [www.norfolkda.com](http://www.norfolkda.com)

**MICHAEL W. MORRISSEY**  
NORFOLK DISTRICT ATTORNEY

## Press Release

### Norfolk DA Morrissey endorses Attorney General's stand in opioid suit

Contact: D. Traub, 781-830-4917

Norfolk District Attorney Michael W. Morrissey – whose office has responded to 58 fatal overdoses so far this year - supports Attorney General Maura Healey's decision to keep Massachusetts out of the proposed settlement with Purdue Pharma L.P. and the Sackler family for their role in the ongoing opioid crisis.

"The AG is wisely rejecting a weak, weak settlement," said District Attorney Morrissey, who practiced civil litigation for decades before being elected Norfolk DA.

"Purdue's offer would hide the full scope of any misconduct from the public, would not claw back any profits made unscrupulously, and hardly begins to offset the enormous damage that reckless overprescribing of opiates has caused," Morrissey said. "Much of that overprescribing links back to doctors being provided misinformation from the drug companies."

The result, according to Morrissey, is staggering.

"We investigate these deaths and we see a pattern repeated again and again," Morrissey said. "As young people, often in high school, many had sports or other injuries and were overprescribed opioids. Now 5 and 10 years later, those young people have struggled with substance use disorder until it claimed their lives. The link between today's deaths and that early misinformation and dishonest marketing is clear."

While there is an appropriate focus on overdose deaths, Morrissey said that the impact of the epidemic extends much further. "It is driving much of the property crimes in our region, crashes on the roads that cripple and kill, larceny," Morrissey said. "And Norfolk County is far from unique in that."

The end, he said, is not in sight. "There will be more this week, this month and for years to come," District Attorney Morrissey said. "Beyond the loss of life, it represents children who will never know their parents, seniors raising their grandchildren, siblings, spouses, whole communities devastated by a wildfire that these people are being sued for igniting. Millions and millions of tax dollars spent on public safety and social service response."

In an essay printed in the Washington Post Monday Sept. 16, Attorney General Maura Healey explained how the settlement proposed by Purdue Pharma failed to provide accountability, transparency, or sufficient financial compensation.

"In addition to the potential for getting more money to deal with the crisis, it is urgent that we expose how any false advertising, pushing for off-label use, or other corporate misconduct contributed," District Attorney Morrissey said. "The next generation of corporate executives needs to know that they will face real consequences for the kind of misconduct that is the subject of the suit."