

RESOLUTION APPROVING THE MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT (MOA)  
BETWEEN THE STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS  
ON PROCEEDS RELATING TO THE SETTLEMENT OF OPIOID LITIGATION

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- WHEREAS, as of 2019, the opioid epidemic had taken the lives of more than 16,500 North Carolinians, torn families apart, and ravaged communities from the mountains to the coast; and
- WHEREAS, the COVID-19 pandemic has compounded the opioid crisis, increasing levels of drug misuse, addiction, and overdose death; and
- WHEREAS, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates the total “economic burden” of prescription opioid misuse alone in the United States is \$78.5 billion a year, including the costs of healthcare, lost productivity, addiction treatment, and criminal justice involvement; and
- WHEREAS, certain counties and municipalities in North Carolina joined with thousands of local governments across the country to file lawsuit against opioid manufacturers and pharmaceutical distribution companies and hold those companies accountable for their misconduct; and
- WHEREAS, representatives of local North Carolina governments, the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners, and the North Carolina Department of Justice have negotiated and prepared a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) to provide for the equitable distribution of any proceeds from a settlement of national opioid litigation to the State of North Carolina and to individual local governments; and
- WHEREAS, Local Governments and the State of North Carolina anticipate a settlement in the national opioid litigation to be forthcoming; and
- WHEREAS, it is anticipated that a settlement in the national opioid litigation with Johnson & Johnson, AmerisourceBergen, Cardinal Health, and McKesson will make available, to the counsel with whom Buncombe County has a direct contractual relationship, the opportunity to participate in a subdivision and common benefit attorneys’ fee fund of approximately \$1.6 billion or more at the national level in exchange for waiver of the counsel’s contingency fee agreements with local governments including Buncombe County with respect to recoveries from those companies; and
- WHEREAS, by signing onto the MOA, the state and local governments maximize North Carolina’s share of opioid settlement funds to ensure the needed resources reach communities, once a negotiation is finalized, as quickly, effectively, and directly as possible; and
- WHEREAS, it is advantageous to all North Carolinians for local governments, including Buncombe County and its citizens, to sign onto the MOA and demonstrate

solidarity in response to the opioid epidemic, and to maximize the share of opioid settlement funds received both in the state and this county to help abate the harm; and

WHEREAS, the MOA directs substantial resources over multiple years to local governments on the front lines of the opioid epidemic while ensuring that these resources are used in an effective way to address the crisis.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Commissioners for the County of Buncombe as follows:

1. The Recitals set forth above, along with the definitions of certain terms, are incorporated herein by reference as if fully restated.
2. That this Board hereby approves the Memorandum of Agreement between the State of North Carolina and Local Governments on Proceeds Relating to the Settlement of Opioid Litigation, and any subsequent settlement funds that may come into North Carolina as a result of the opioid crisis.
3. Furthermore, Buncombe County authorizes the County Manager, the County Attorney, or either of them, or their designee to take such measures as necessary to comply with the terms of the MOA and receive any settlement funds, including executing any documents related to the allocation of opioid settlement funds and settlement of lawsuits related to this matter.
4. Be it further resolved copies of this resolution and the signed MOA be sent to [opioiddocs@ncdoj.gov](mailto:opioiddocs@ncdoj.gov) as well as forwarded to the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners at [communications@ncacc.org](mailto:communications@ncacc.org).

Read, approved and adopted this 7<sup>th</sup> day of December, 2021.

ATTEST

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS FOR THE  
COUNTY OF BUNCOMBE

\_\_\_\_\_  
Lamar Joyner, Clerk

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Brownie Newman, Chairman

APPROVED AS TO FORM

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County Attorney