

WEST VIRGINIA GETS \$36M TO END SUIT AGAINST 2 DRUG COMPANIES

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CHARLESTON, W.Va. (AP) - Two major prescription drug distributors have agreed to pay \$36 million to settle a West Virginia lawsuit alleging they fueled West Virginia's opioid epidemic with excessively large shipments of painkillers into the state over several years.

State officials on Monday say Cardinal Health will pay \$20 million and AmerisourceBergen will pay \$16 million under the terms that have now been filed with Boone County Circuit Court.

The companies have denied any wrongdoing.

Judge William Thompson disclosed the proposed settlements two weeks ago with no details.

The state has settled similar claims against other wholesalers for another \$11 million.

A Charleston Gazette-Mail investigation found drug wholesalers shipped 780 million hydrocodone and oxycodone pills to West Virginia in six years, a period when 1,728 people statewide fatally overdosed.