

Tap Into Mahopac News

# Putnam County to Sue Drugmakers Over Opioid Epidemic

By Bob Dumas | November 29, 2017

CARMEL, N.Y.-The Putnam County Legislature is moving to join various states and counties across the country in filing lawsuits against both pharmaceutical companies and distributors that County Executive MaryEllen Odell says created a nationwide opioid epidemic through the fraudulent and negligent marketing and distribution of pain medications.

“New York State has been one of the hardest hit states in the nation, with the rate of prescription and heroin overdoses exceeding almost every other state in the country, and Putnam County is not immune from it,” Odell said. “Through our One Army in the War Against Addiction [program], the county has worked with law enforcement agencies and many not-for-profit organizations to fight the battle within our communities through awareness, education and enforcement, but we need to do more.”

Odell, who is president of the New York Association of Counties, said governments should take a page from the tobacco lawsuits of the 1990s and collectively go after the source of the prescription opioid epidemic—the pharmaceutical manufacturers and distributors— and hold them accountable.

At a special full legislature meeting held Tuesday, Nov. 21, the legislature voted unanimously to have the law firm of Napoli Shkolnik PLLC represent Putnam County’s interests in the New York Opioid Cost Recovery litigation.