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ATTORNEY GENERAL OF ARKANSAS

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Attorney General Griffin Leads 13-State Letter Urging Congress to Pass the Stephen Hacula Poppy Seed Safety Act

Griffin: 'Stephen's death is one of many avoidable tragedies caused by bad actors exploiting weaknesses in federal law to target our state's citizens'

LITTLE ROCK – Attorney General Tim Griffin today issued the following statement regarding a letter sent on behalf of himself and 12 other state attorneys general urging Congress to pass the bipartisan Stephen Hacula Poppy Seed Safety Act introduced by Senators Tom Cotton (AR), John Boozman (AR) and Richard Blumenthal (CT), and Congressman Steve Womack (AR-03):

“Stephen Hacula was a 25-year-old resident of Fayetteville who succumbed to morphine intoxication from unwashed poppy seeds. Unwashed poppy seeds contaminated with Schedule II controlled substances like morphine and other opioids are widely available for purchase through common online sources.

“I thank my fellow state attorneys general who have joined me in urging Congress to pass the Stephen Hacula Poppy Seed Safety Act to stop drug pushers from selling these dangerous drugs to consumers. Stephen's death is one of many avoidable tragedies caused by bad actors exploiting weaknesses in federal law to target our state's citizens.”

The proposed legislation would prohibit the distribution and sale of opioid-laced poppy seeds and prevent future addiction, harm and further death. Additionally, it would set a two-year

timeline for the Food and Drug Administration to issue and finalize a rule establishing maximum permissible levels of contamination.

Other states joining Arkansas in the letter include Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, Montana, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Carolina, South Dakota, Texas, Utah, Virginia, and West Virginia.

To read the letter, [click here](#).

About Attorney General Tim Griffin

Tim Griffin was sworn in as the 57th Attorney General of Arkansas on January 10, 2023, having previously served as the state's 20th Lieutenant Governor from 2015-2023. From 2011-2015, Griffin served as the 24th representative of Arkansas's Second Congressional District, where he served on the House Committee on Ways and Means, House Armed Services Committee, House Committee on Foreign Affairs, House Committee on Ethics and House Committee on the Judiciary while also serving as a Deputy Whip for the Majority.

Griffin has served as an officer in the U.S. Army Reserve Judge Advocate General's (JAG) Corps for more than 27 years and currently holds the rank of colonel. In 2005, Griffin was mobilized to active duty as an Army prosecutor at Fort Campbell, Kentucky, and served with the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) in Mosul, Iraq.

He is currently serving as the Commander of the 2d Legal Operations Detachment in New Orleans, Louisiana. His previous assignments include serving as the Commander of the 134th Legal Operations Detachment at Fort Liberty (née Bragg), North Carolina, and as a Senior Legislative Advisor to the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness at the Pentagon. Griffin earned a master's degree in strategic studies as a Distinguished Honor Graduate from the U.S. Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

Griffin also served as U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of Arkansas, and Special Assistant to the President and Deputy Director of Political Affairs for President George W. Bush; Special Assistant to Assistant Attorney General Michael Chertoff, Criminal Division, U.S. Department of Justice; Special Assistant U.S. Attorney, U.S. Attorney's Office, Eastern District of Arkansas; Senior Investigative Counsel, Government Reform and Oversight Committee, U.S. House of Representatives; and Associate Independent Counsel, Office of Independent Counsel David M. Barrett, In re: HUD Secretary Henry Cisneros.

Griffin is a graduate of Magnolia High School, Hendrix College in Conway, and Tulane Law School in New Orleans. He attended graduate school at Oxford University. He is admitted to

practice law in Arkansas (active) and Louisiana (inactive). Griffin lives in Little Rock with his wife, Elizabeth, a Camden native, and their three children.

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