

# Big cities take aim at prescription painkillers

September 16 2014, by Matthew Perrone

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Some of the nation's largest cities are ratcheting up their criticism of prescription painkillers, blaming the industry for a wave of addiction and overdoses that have ravaged their communities and busted local budgets.

The heightened rhetoric comes as Chicago tries to recover millions in [health care costs](#) from opioid drugmakers, alleging that companies deliberately misled the public about risks. It's a strategy that could be attractive to other cash-strapped cities.

On Tuesday, health commissioners from Chicago, New York and Boston came to Washington to lobby Congress and the White House on efforts to combat painkiller abuse.

Chicago's lawsuit, filed in July, alleges that five pharmaceutical companies deceptively marketed their drugs. The drugmakers have asked that the suit be dismissed because it fails to cite specific instances of fraud.

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