

# NEWS RELEASE

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## **County Executive and Council investing \$5 million to support minority and disadvantaged communities affected by opioid epidemic**

**SUMMIT COUNTY, OHIO**—To complement their recent investment of opioid litigation settlement dollars into the [Summit Health and Safety Innovation Fund](#), County Executive Shapiro and County Council are investing additional funds at Akron Community Foundation (ACF) to specifically serve minority and disadvantaged communities within Summit County that have experienced harm due to the opioid epidemic.

County Executive Shapiro and Council are establishing a Field of Interest Fund (FOIF), a charitable giving option that allows a donator to focus their financial gift on a specific area of concern. They are contributing \$5 million to the fund and establishing an advisory committee to make spending recommendations. The seven members will be appointed by the County Executive and confirmed by Council. The committee members will be subject matter experts who bring a diversity of thought and lived experiences.

“I am proud of this dedication of funds to support our minority and disadvantaged communities. We know health disparities exist, and we must take intentional action to ensure vulnerable populations have access to substance use treatment and recovery. I am thankful for Council Member Ford and his advocacy in advancing the social determinates of health, wellbeing, and public safety,” said County Executive Ilene Shapiro.

It is expected that the FOIF will be used to address systemic inequities in addiction prevention, treatment, and recovery, support innovative programming tailored to underserved communities, build capacity within minority and disadvantaged resident-led organizations and communities to expand their impact, and act as a convener.

“In working with Executive Shapiro and her team to establish the Summit Health and Safety Innovation Fund, we found ourselves grappling with the disparate impact of the opioid epidemic on minority and disadvantaged populations. By establishing this separate fund, we are making it clear that Summit County supports every resident seeking to overcome substance use disorder and the communities dealing with its devastating consequences,” said Council Member Brandon Ford (District 5).

Once formally established, additional details will be released about the fund and its grantmaking opportunities. Learn more about Summit County's ongoing efforts to fund programs and resources with opioid litigation settlement funds at <https://summitoac.org/>.

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