Resolution No. 502 - 18

Requesting Increased Funding and Oversight Reforms for Wisconsin’s Child Protective Services System

WHEREAS, the Wisconsin child welfare system is county-operated and state-supervised, except Milwaukee County, where the system is administered by the Wisconsin Department of Children and Families (DCF), Division of Milwaukee Child Protective Services (DMCPS); and

WHEREAS, DCF provides insufficient funding to counties for the provision of child abuse and neglect services including prevention, investigation, treatment, and out-of-home placement costs, though the state has primary responsibility for compliance with federal requirements and shares liability for ensuring the system is meeting its obligations to children and families in all 72 counties; and

WHEREAS, in recent years the state of Wisconsin added numerous mandates and practice expectations which increased county child protective services (CPS) workload and costs; and

WHEREAS, the opioid and methamphetamine epidemics have brought Wisconsin’s child welfare system to a point of crisis, with increasing concern about the system’s ability to meet its obligations to children and families; and

WHEREAS, the capacity for counties to continue to bear the lion’s share of financial responsibility to address this crisis has been exhausted, as rising county contributions to the CPS system have far outpaced increases to the DCF Children and Family Aids allocation and counties have used reserve funding to cover CPS expenses and increase staffing; and

WHEREAS, maintaining sufficient resources for Wisconsin’s child welfare system is critical to secure the safety and future of our most vulnerable children; and

WHEREAS, without a proportional increase in the DCF Children and Family Services allocation, the CPS system has been stressed for over a decade, causing caseloads for CPS workers to grow to unreasonable levels, contributing to high levels of staff turnover in some counties and an overrun of out-of-home care costs above what counties can sustain within available resources; and

WHEREAS, Wisconsin’s CPS system leaves significant gaps in state-level oversight for all counties except Milwaukee County, including the absence of caseload standards, no process for regular legislative evaluation and prioritization of CPS needs
and the absence of a legislative committee that provides regular policy guidance
concerning CPS system issues such as adequate funding, performance, cost sharing
and long-term stability; and

WHEREAS, along with DMCPs, all eleven of Wisconsin's peer states with county-
administered CPS systems have either adopted caseload standards for CPS
caseworkers, completed thorough workload studies as a basis of determining funding
needs, or otherwise have made significant recommendations related to keeping CPS
workloads manageable; and

WHEREAS, the children within Wisconsin's CPS system are too important to allow
the current level of under resourcing, oversight gaps and, disparity of attention, while
shifting the burden to property taxpayers.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Marinette County Board of
Supervisors does hereby request that the state of Wisconsin increase the Children and
Family Aids Allocation to counties in the 2019-21 state biennial budget by $30 million
annually in order to cover a greater share of out-of-home care costs and increase
staffing levels based on the caseload standards developed by the Wisconsin County
Human Services Association (WCHSA) so Wisconsin's CPS system can meet its
obligations; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Wisconsin Counties Association urges the
state of Wisconsin to close critical oversight gaps by creating legislative mechanisms to
review the CPS resource needs of all counties as part of the biennial budget process
and ensure an appropriate committee provide ongoing policy guidance to respond to
emerging CPS trends and ongoing system needs; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be sent to Governor
Scott Walker, Department of Children and Families Secretary Eloise Anderson,
Department of Administration Secretary Ellen Nowak, area legislators, and the
Wisconsin Counties Association.

Approved this 30th\textsuperscript{th} day of October 2018 by a majority vote of a quorum of the
Marinette County Board.

\[\text{MARK ANDERSON, Chair}\]

\[\text{KATHY BRANDT, County Clerk}\]

Submitted by: Health and Human Services Board – 10/10/2018
Marinette County Finance Department

Fiscal Impact Statement

Number 502-18

Ordinance [ ] Resolution [x]

REQUEST INCREASED FUNDING AND OVERSIGHT REFORMS FOR WISCONSIN'S CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES SYSTEM

Fiscal Impact Statement:

This resolution is in support of the Wisconsin County Human Services Association (WCHSA) request to increase the State of Wisconsin, Department of Children and Family (DCF) aids allocation by $30 million annually in the 2019-2021 state biennial budget. There is no fiscal impact to the County.

Laura Mans
Laura Mans
Interim Finance Director

September 18, 2018
Date