

Resolution #R-54-18

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, in Marathon County, three new social work positions were created to address the high demand for CPS services including an increase of out of home care of 9% from 2016-2017 that remain at a high level with associated operating costs necessitating funding from county reserves in 2018 and projected for 2019.

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 Board of Supervisors for the County of Marathon 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 Marathon County Board of Supervisors joins the Wisconsin Counties Association in urging 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, Governor-Elect Tony Evers, Department of Children and Families Secretary Eloise Anderson, Department of Administration Secretary Ellen Nowak, area legislators, and the Wisconsin Counties Association.

Dated this 15th day of November, 2018.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE

/s/ Katie Rosenberg

/s/ Tim Buttko

Fiscal Impact Statement: None

Contact Information:

<p>Honorable Scott Walker Governor, State of Wisconsin 115 East Capitol Madison, WI 53702</p> <p>Honorable Tony Evers Governor-Elect, State of Wisconsin 115 East Capitol Madison, WI 53702</p> <p>Secretary Eloise Anderson Wisconsin Department of Children and Families 201 East Washington Avenue, Second Floor P.O. Box 8916 Madison, WI 53708-8916</p> <p>Secretary Ellen Nowak Wisconsin Department of Administration 101 E. Wilson Street, 10th Floor P.O. Box 7864 Madison, WI 53707 DOASecretarysOffice@wisconsin.gov</p>	<p>Wisconsin Counties Association Attn: Sarah Diedrick-Kasdorf 22 E. Mifflin Street, Suite 900 Madison, WI 53703 diedrick@wicounties.org</p> <p><u>Area Legislators:</u> Honorable Senators Jerry Petrowski, Terry Moulton, and Thomas Tiffany Wisconsin State Senate P.O. Box 7882 Madison, WI 53707-7882</p> <p>Honorable Representatives Patrick Snyder, John Spiros, Bob Kulp, Mary Felzkowski, and James Edming Wisconsin State Assembly P.O. Box 8953 Madison, WI 53708</p>
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STATE OF WISCONSIN)
)SS.
COUNTY OF MARATHON)

I, Nan Kottke, County Clerk in and for Marathon County, Wisconsin, hereby certify that the attached Resolution #R-54-18 was adopted by the Marathon County Board of Supervisors at their Adjourned Organizational meeting which was held November 15, 2018.

SEAL



Nan Kottke
Marathon County Clerk