RESOLUTION SUPPORTING INCREASED FUNDING FOR THE
WISCONSIN CHILDREN AND FAMILY AIDS ALLOCATION

TO THE MANITOWOC COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS:

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

WHEREAS, even though the state has primary responsibility for compliance with federal
requirements and shares liability for ensuring the system is meeting its obligations to children,
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; and

WHEREAS, in recent years the state of Wisconsin has added numerous mandates and
practice expectations, which has 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, 33 percent of all CPS cases are now drug cases, which results in dramatic CPS
workload increases due to the time intensity of these drug cases – an average of 25 hours per Initial
Assessment versus 14 hours per non-drug case; and

WHEREAS, Manitowoc County has experienced increased CPS referrals from 1,056 in
2014 to 1,174 in 2017 and increase children in out-of-home care from 38 in 2014 to 70 in 2017,
with the majority of cases attributed to parental substance abuse; 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

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, Wisconsin’s CPS system leaves significant gaps in state-level oversight for
all counties, 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 in 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 Manitowoc 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 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 Manitowoc County Board of Supervisors 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, and area legislators.

Dated this 8th day of November 2018.

Respectfully submitted by the
Human Services Board

[Signature]
Rick Henrickson, Chair

FISCAL IMPACT: None.

FISCAL NOTE: Reviewed and approved by Comptroller.

LEGAL NOTE: Reviewed and approved as to form by Corporation Counsel.

I respect the prerogative of the members of the Manitowoc County Board of Supervisors to voice their opinions on legislative issues. Therefore, it is my practice to neither approve nor veto a legislative policy resolution that has been enacted by the County Board in order to allow the County Board, acting as the legislative branch of county government, to freely express its
sentiment on legislative and public policy issues or to request action by a
governmental entity or both.

APPROVED:  

Bob Ziegelbauer, County Executive  

Date:

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