

1 SHEBOYGAN COUNTY RESOLUTION NO. 30 (2018/19)

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3 Re: **Requesting Increased Funding and Oversight Reforms for**
4 **Wisconsin's Child Protective Services System**

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

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

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18 **WHEREAS**, in recent years the State of Wisconsin added numerous mandates and
19 practice expectations which increased County child protective services (CPS) workload and
20 costs, and

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

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

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

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

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

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46 **WHEREAS**, along with DMCPS, all 11 of Wisconsin's peer states with
47 county-administered CPS systems have either adopted caseload standards for CPS
48 caseworkers, completed thorough workload studies as a basis of determining funding needs, or

49 otherwise have made significant recommendations related to keeping CPS workloads
50 manageable, and

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

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

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

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69 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that a copy of this Resolution be sent to Governor Tony
70 Evers, Department of Children and Families Secretary Emilie Amundson, Department of
71 Administration Secretary Joel Brennan, area legislators, and the Wisconsin Counties
72 Association.

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75 Respectfully submitted this 19th day of March, 2019.

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78 **HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE***

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83 Brian C. Hoffmann, Chairperson

Roger R. Otten

Roger R. Otten, Vice-Chairperson

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85 _____
86 Curt A. Brauer, Secretary

James Baumgart

James Baumgart

87
88 *Dawn Brulla*

Dawn Brulla

Thomas V. Epping

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90 Opposed to Introduction:

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94 *County Board members signing only