

BARRON COUNTY RESOLUTION NO. 2019 - 2

**Resolution Requesting Increased Funding and Oversight Reforms for
Wisconsin's Child Protective Services System**

TO THE BARRON COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS:

1 **WHEREAS**, the Wisconsin child welfare system is county-operated and state-
2 supervised, except Milwaukee County, where the system is administered by the
3 Wisconsin Department of Children and Families (DCF), Division of Milwaukee Child
4 Protective Services (DMCPS); and
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6 **WHEREAS**, DCF provides insufficient funding to counties for the provision of
7 child abuse and neglect services including prevention, investigation, treatment, and out-
8 of-home placement costs, though the state has primary responsibility for compliance with
9 federal requirements and shares liability for ensuring the system is meeting its obligations
10 to children and families in all 72 counties; and
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12 **WHEREAS**, in recent years the state of Wisconsin added numerous mandates and
13 practice expectations which increased county child protective services (CPS) workload
14 and costs; and
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16 **WHEREAS**, the opioid and methamphetamine epidemics have brought
17 Wisconsin's child welfare system to a point of crisis, with increasing concern about the
18 system's ability to meet its obligations to children and families; and
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20 **WHEREAS**, the capacity for counties to continue to bear the lion's share of
21 financial responsibility to address this crisis has been exhausted, as rising county
22 contributions to the CPS system have far outpaced increases to the DCF Children and
23 Family Aids allocation and counties have used reserve funding to cover CPS expenses
24 and increase staffing; in Barron County in 2013, the State share was \$623,523.16
25 (29.22%), the County share was 1,510,118.00 (70.78%) and in 2017 the State share was
26 640,188.00 (18.98%), the County share was 2,732,722.27 (81.02%); and
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28 **WHEREAS**, maintaining sufficient resources for Wisconsin's child welfare system
29 is critical to secure the safety and future of our most vulnerable children; and
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31 **WHEREAS**, without a proportional increase in the DCF Children and Family
32 Services allocation, the CPS system has been stressed for over a decade, causing
33 caseloads for CPS workers to grow to unreasonable levels, contributing to high levels of
34 staff turnover in some counties and an overrun of out-of-home care costs above what
35 counties can sustain within available resources, in 2013 Barron County children's out of
36 home care costs were \$948,244 and in 2017 children's out of home care costs were
37 \$1,212,829 an increase of 28%; and
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39 **WHEREAS**, Wisconsin's CPS system leaves significant gaps in state-level
40 oversight for all counties except Milwaukee County, including the absence of caseload

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41 standards, no process for regular legislative evaluation and prioritization of CPS needs
42 and the absence of a legislative committee that provides regular policy guidance
43 concerning CPS system issues such as adequate funding, performance, cost sharing and
44 long-term stability; and

45
46 **WHEREAS**, along with DMCPs, all eleven 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
49 needs, or otherwise have made significant recommendations related to keeping CPS
50 workloads manageable; and

51
52 **WHEREAS**, the children within Wisconsin's CPS system are too important to
53 allow the current level of under resourcing, oversight gaps and, disparity of attention,
54 while shifting the burden to property taxpayers.

55 **WHEREAS**, this resolution was approved by the Health & Human Services Board
56 on November 26, 2018, on a vote of 9 – 0 with Bartlett, Fladten, Heil, Knutson, Kolpack,
57 Moen, Muminovic, Pannier and Skoug voting in favor and no members voting against.

58 **WHEREAS**, this resolution was approved by the Executive Committee on December
59 5, 2018, on a vote of 9 - 0 with Okey, Bartlett, McRoberts, Heinecke, Rindsig, Hanson,
60 Thompson, Buchanan and Horstman voting in favor and no members voting against.

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


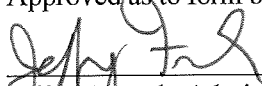
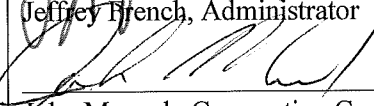
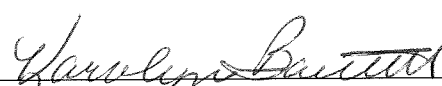

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69 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Wisconsin Counties Association urges
70 the state of Wisconsin to close critical oversight gaps by creating legislative mechanisms
71 to review the CPS resource needs of all counties as part of the biennial budget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

74
75 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that a copy of this resolution be sent to Governor
76 Scott Walker, Department of Children and Families Secretary Eloise Anderson,
77 Department of Administration Secretary Ellen Nowak, area legislators, and the
78 Wisconsin Counties Association.

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OFFERED THIS 14th day of January, 2019.

<p>Number of readings required: One (X) Two ()</p> <p>Vote required for passage: Majority (X) 2/3 Entire Board (20) ()</p> <p>Source of funding: Budgeted () General Fund () Grant () Contingency () Other (X) Details: N/A</p> <p>Fiscal impact: - Current year total amount: \$ - 0 - - Future years total amount: \$ - 0 - - Effect on tax levy – current year: \$ - 0 - - Effect on tax levy – future years: \$ - 0 -</p> <p>Fiscal impact reviewed by:  Jodi Busch, Finance Director</p> <p>Approved as to form by:  Jeffrey French, Administrator</p> <p> John Muench, Corporation Counsel</p>	<p> Karolyn Bartlett, Chair Health & Human Services Board</p> <p> Louie Okey, Chair Executive Committee</p> <p>(The Committee Chair signature verifies the action taken by the Committee.)</p> <p>Board Action: Adopted (X) Failed () Tabled ()</p> <p>Motion: (Skinner/Moen) to approve both resolutions as a consent agenda. Carried.</p>
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