

RESOLUTION NO.: 63—2018-19

TO THE HONORABLE, THE OUTAGAMIE COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:

MAJORITY

1 The Wisconsin child welfare system is county-operated and state-supervised,
2 except Milwaukee County, where the system is administered by the Wisconsin
3 Department of Children and Families (DCF), Division of Milwaukee Child
4 Protective Services (DMCPS).

5
6 DCF provides insufficient funding to counties for the provision of child abuse and
7 neglect services including prevention, investigation, treatment, and out-of-home
8 placement costs, though the state has primary responsibility for compliance with
9 federal requirements and shares liability for ensuring the system is meeting its
10 obligations to children and families in all 72 counties.

11
12 In recent years the state of Wisconsin added numerous mandates and practice
13 expectations which increased county child protective services (CPS) workload
14 and costs.

15
16 The opioid and methamphetamine epidemics have brought Wisconsin's child
17 welfare system to a point of crisis, with increasing concern about the system's
18 ability to meet its obligations to children and families.

19
20 The capacity for counties to continue to bear the lion's share of financial
21 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
23 and Family Aids allocation and counties have used reserve funding to cover CPS
24 expenses and increase staffing.

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26 Maintaining sufficient resources for Wisconsin's child welfare system is critical
27 to secure the safety and future of our most vulnerable children.

28
29 Without a proportional increase in the DCF Children and Family Services
30 allocation, the CPS system has been stressed for over a decade, causing caseloads
31 for CPS workers to grow to unreasonable levels, contributing to high levels of
32 staff turnover in some counties and an overrun of out-of-home care costs above
33 what counties can sustain within available resources.

34
35 Wisconsin's CPS system leaves significant gaps in state-level oversight for all
36 counties except Milwaukee County, including the absence of caseload standards,
37 no process for regular legislative evaluation and prioritization of CPS needs and
38 the absence of a legislative committee that provides regular policy guidance
39 concerning CPS system issues such as adequate funding, performance, cost
40 sharing and long-term stability.
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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.

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, the undersigned members of the Health and Human Services Committee recommend adoption of the following resolution.

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Outagamie 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 so Wisconsin's child protective services system can meet its obligations, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Outagamie County Board of Supervisors urges the state of Wisconsin to close critical oversight gaps by creating legislative mechanisms to review the child protective services 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 child protective services trends and ongoing system needs, and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the Outagamie County Clerk be directed to forward a copy of this resolution to Governor Scott Walker, Wisconsin Department of Children and Families Secretary Eloise Anderson, Wisconsin Department of Administration Secretary Ellen Nowak, the Wisconsin Counties Association, the Outagamie County Health and Human Services Director, and the Outagamie County Lobbyist for distribution to the Legislature.

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Dated this 23rd day of October, 2018.

Respectfully Submitted,
HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
COMMITTEE

Dan Gabrielson
Dan Gabrielson

Justin Krueger
Justin Krueger

Christine Lamers
Christine Lamers

Cathy Thompson
Cathy Thompson

Kelly Schroeder
Kelly Schroeder

Duly and officially adopted by the County Board on: October 23, 2018

Signed: [Signature]
Board Chairperson

[Signature]
County Clerk

Approved: 10/25/18

Vetoed: _____

Signed: [Signature]
County Executive