

RESOLUTION NUMBER 33-2018

**RESOLUTION RELATING TO REQUESTING INCREASED
FUNDING AND OVERSIGHT REFORMS FOR WISCONSIN'S
CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES SYSTEM**

The County Board of Supervisors of Green Lake County, Green Lake, Wisconsin, duly assembled at its regular meeting begun on the 16th day of October 2018, does resolve as follows:

- 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

Majority vote is needed to pass.

Roll Call on Resolution No. 33-2018

Submitted by: DHHS Board

Ayes 16, Nays 0, Absent 3, Abstain 0

/s/ Joe Gonyo

Joe Gonyo, Chair

Passed and Adopted/~~Rejected~~ this 16th
day of October 2018.

Brian Floeter

/s/ Harley Reabe

County Board Chairman

John Gende

/s/ Elizabeth A. Otto

ATTEST: County Clerk
Approve as to Form:

/s/ Nancy Hoffmann

Nancy Hoffmann

/s/ Dawn N. Klockow

Corporation Counsel

/s/ Harley Reabe

Harley Reabe

/s/ Joy Waterbury

Joy Waterbury

/s/ Richard Trochinski

Richard Trochinski

/s/ Charlie Wielgosh

Charlie Wielgosh

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

10
11 **WHEREAS**, in recent years the state of Wisconsin added numerous mandates and
12 practice expectations which increased county child protective services (CPS) workload
13 and costs; and

14
15 **WHEREAS**, the opioid and methamphetamine epidemics have brought Wisconsin's child
16 welfare system to a point of crisis, with increasing concern about the system's ability to
17 meet its obligations to children and families; and

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

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

27
28 **WHEREAS**, without a proportional increase in the DCF Children and Family Services
29 allocation, the CPS system has been stressed for over a decade, causing caseloads for
30 CPS workers to grow to unreasonable levels, contributing to high levels of staff turnover
31 in some counties and an overrun of out-of-home care costs above what counties can
32 sustain within available resources; and

33
34 **WHEREAS**, Wisconsin's CPS system leaves significant gaps in state-level oversight for
35 all counties except Milwaukee County, including the absence of caseload standards, no
36 process for regular legislative evaluation and prioritization of CPS needs and the absence
37 of a legislative committee that provides regular policy guidance concerning CPS system
38 issues such as adequate funding, performance, cost sharing and long-term stability; and

39
40 **WHEREAS**, along with DMCPs, all eleven of Wisconsin's peer states with county-
41 administered CPS systems have either adopted caseload standards for CPS
42 caseworkers, completed thorough workload studies as a basis of determining funding
43 needs, or otherwise have made significant recommendations related to keeping CPS
44 workloads manageable; and

45
46 **WHEREAS**, the children within Wisconsin's CPS system are too important to allow the
47 current level of under resourcing, oversight gaps and, disparity of attention, while shifting
48 the burden to property taxpayers.

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50

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

58 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Green Lake County Board of Supervisors urges
59 the state of Wisconsin to close critical oversight gaps by creating legislative mechanisms
60 to review the CPS resource needs of all counties as part of the biennial budget process
61 and ensure an appropriate committee provide ongoing policy guidance to respond to
62 emerging CPS trends and ongoing system needs; and
63

64 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Green Lake County Clerk shall send a copy of this
65 resolution to Governor Scott Walker, Department of Children and Families Secretary
66 Eloise Anderson, Department of Administration Secretary Ellen Nowak, area legislators,
67 and the Wisconsin Counties Association.