

1 **RESOLUTION NO. 37-18**

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

4 **INTRODUCED BY:** Health and Human Services Board

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6 **To the Honorable Board of Supervisors of Columbia County:**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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47 WHEREAS, along with DMCPS, all eleven of Wisconsin's peer states with county-
48 administered CPS systems have either adopted caseload standards for CPS caseworkers,
49 completed thorough workload studies as a basis of determining funding needs, or otherwise
50 have made significant recommendations related to keeping CPS workloads 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
54 the burden to property taxpayers.

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56 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Columbia County Board of Supervisors
57 does hereby request that the state of Wisconsin increase the Children and Family Aids
58 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
61 (WCHSA) so Wisconsin's CPS system can meet its obligations; and

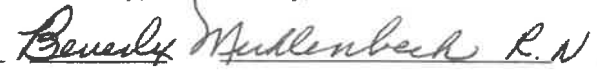
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63 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Wisconsin Counties Association urges the state of
64 Wisconsin to close critical oversight gaps by creating legislative mechanisms to review the
65 CPS resource needs of all counties as part of the biennial budget process and ensure an
66 appropriate committee provide ongoing policy guidance to respond to emerging CPS trends
67 and ongoing system needs; and
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69 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be sent to Governor Scott Walker,
70 Department of Children and Families Secretary Eloise Anderson, Department of
71 Administration Secretary Ellen Nowak, area legislators, and the Wisconsin Counties
72 Association.
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74 Fiscal Note: None

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76 Fiscal Impact: None
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Tom Drury, Community Member

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82 Beverly Muhlenbeck, RN, Community Member
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Michael Walters, MD, Community Member

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88 Craig Robson, Board Member

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91 Keith F. Miller, Board Member

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94 Tom Borgqvist, Board Member

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97 Nancy M. Long, Secretary

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100 Kevin Kessler, Vice Chair

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103 Susanna R. Bradley, Chair

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106 STATE OF WISCONSIN
COUNTY OF COLUMBIA
CERTIFIED COPY

I certify that this is a true and exact copy
of the original of which I am legal custodian
for the County Clerk of Columbia County.

Signed by


County Clerk or Deputy County Clerk

Date 12/19/18

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES BOARD