

RESOLUTION NO. 18-21

A RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF INCREASED COUNTY CHILD SUPPORT FUNDING

WHEREAS, Buffalo County, as lead County in the Buffalo and Pepin County Child Support Program administers the Child Support Enforcement Program on behalf of both counties, provides services to over 750 Buffalo and Pepin County cases including paternity establishment, obtaining child support and health insurance orders for children, and enforcing and modifying those orders; and

WHEREAS, our children's well-being, economic security and success in life are enhanced by parents who provide financial and emotional support; and

WHEREAS, County child support agencies collected \$935 million in child support during 2019 and established 98,405 health insurance orders for Wisconsin children; and

WHEREAS, Pepin County's Child Support Agency provides services to children as well as custodial and non-custodial parents that reduce childhood poverty rates, establish parental rights and promote the involvement of both parents in the lives of their children; and

WHEREAS, the economic security and social service programs provided by Pepin County Child Support Agency are needed by Wisconsin children and families now more than ever due to the economic downturn caused by COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, state funding for county child support services has failed to keep up with county agency costs, which have steadily increased due to growing caseloads, inflation and new federal regulations; and

WHEREAS, Wisconsin's Child Support Enforcement Program has fallen from 2nd in the nation for collecting current support to 5th; and

WHEREAS, Wisconsin's decreased performance has led to the state losing out on an estimated \$70,000 in potential federal incentive payments between Calendar Year 2019 and 2020; and

WHEREAS, an abrupt federal interpretation change in June 2019 eliminated \$4.2 million in federal birth cost recovery matching funds for Wisconsin; and

WHEREAS, Wisconsin's strong performance in child support is at risk without additional state funding. Further drops in performance would result in additional reductions to federal funding for Wisconsin; and

WHEREAS, decreased federal funding results in less funding for Buffalo and Pepin County's child support agency. This could lead to reductions in child support enforcement staff and services and reduced child support collections; and

WHEREAS, new state investments in child support are amplified by a generous federal match. Every \$1 of state GPR invested in the Child Support Program generates roughly \$2 in federal matching funds; and

WHEREAS, Wisconsin's Child Support Enforcement Program is incredibly cost-effective, collecting an average of \$6.20 in support for every dollar invested in the program.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Pepin County Board of Supervisors respectfully requests that state funding for county child support agencies be increased by \$4 million GPR in each fiscal year of the 2021-23 Wisconsin state budget, which will generate approximately \$7.7 million in additional federal funding each year. This investment will ensure that Wisconsin counties can continue to effectively provide economic support to our children.

IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be forwarded by the County Clerk to the Governor of the State of Wisconsin, State Senators and State Representatives representing Pepin County, the Secretary of the Wisconsin Department of Administration, and the Wisconsin Counties Association for consideration.

RECOMMENDED BY THE PEPIN COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES BOARD:

COMMITTEE MEMBERS VOTE

/s/ Tessa King, Chair

In Favor - 7 Oppose - 0 Absent - 0 Abstain - 0

FISCAL IMPACT REVIEWED – Entire impact as noted above.

/s/ Pamela Hansen

Finance Director

 X
Recommend

Not Recommend

RECOMMENDED BY THE PEPIN COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE:

COMMITTEE MEMBERS VOTE

/s/ Tom Milliren, Committee Chair

In Favor - 5 Oppose- 0 Absent - 0 Abstain - 0

COUNTY BOARD ACTION:

 X ADOPTED
 DEFEATED
 TABLED

by the Pepin County Board of Supervisors on this 21st day of April 2021
In Favor - 12 Opposed - 0 Absent - 0 Abstain - 0

/s/ Audrey Bauer
County Clerk

/s/ Tom Milliren
County Board Chair