



Resolution in Support of Increased County Child Support Funding

- WHEREAS: Iron County administers the Child Support Enforcement Program on behalf of the state, providing a holistic set of services to Iron County children and their parents, including paternity establishment, assistance with finding employment, obtaining child support and establishing health insurance orders for children, and enforcing and modifying those orders; and
- WHEREAS: Child support is one of the most effective anti-poverty programs in the state, with county child support agencies serving approximately 347,000 children and collecting roughly \$906 million in financial support for Wisconsin families in 2021; and
- WHEREAS: Child support is proven to reduce childhood poverty rates, lead to better educational and behavioral outcomes for children, and have a positive effect on food security, health and housing stability; and
- WHEREAS: County child support agencies work closely with both parents to ensure that they have the help they need to be successful, including assistance with finding employment, referrals to other social service programs and right-sizing orders for individuals impacted by substances use disorders or other challenges; and
- WHEREAS: State funding for county child support services has failed to keep up with county agency costs, which have steadily increased due to a high number of caseloads per worker, increased complexity of cases, inflation and new regulations; 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 funding. The state has already dropped from 2nd in the nation for the collection of current support in 2016 to 6th in the nation in 2021.
- WHEREAS: Without additional state funds, county child support agencies may need to eliminate positions, further increase caseloads, or reduce services, further impacting federal performance measures, which would result in the loss of additional federal funds; and
- WHEREAS: The individuals most impacted by insufficient funding for child support are the children and families served by county child support agencies, who will need to seek out public assistance programming absent the financial security provided by the child support program; and
- WHEREAS: 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 \$6.43 in support for every dollar invested in the program.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Iron County Board of Supervisors respectfully requests that state funding for county child support agencies be increased by \$5 million GPR in each fiscal year of the 2023-25 Wisconsin state budget, which will generate approximately \$9.7 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 Iron County, the Secretary of the Wisconsin Department of Administration, and the Wisconsin Counties Association for consideration.

Resolution declared adopted this 27th day of Sept., 2022

BY


JOSEPH PINARDI, Chairman

ATTEST


MICHAEL J. SAARI, Clerk