

**RESOLUTION  
ROCK COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

Human Services Board  
INITIATED BY

Human Services Board  
SUBMITTED BY



Charmian Klyve, Director  
DRAFTED BY

December 2, 2015  
DATE DRAFTED

**Opposition to Senate Bill 326/Assembly Bill 429 Affecting Child Welfare Practice**

1 **WHEREAS**, Senate Bill 326/Assembly Bill 429 proposes changes to when and how cases of suspected  
2 or threatened child abuse or neglect are referred to law enforcement and significantly modifies the  
3 requirements for coordination of the investigation with law enforcement of all cases of abuse and neglect  
4 cases and referral of certain cases to the district attorney for criminal prosecution; and,  
5

6 **WHEREAS**, the bills require more deliberation and discussion with stakeholders to arrive at the desired  
7 outcome; and,  
8

9 **WHEREAS**, the County Human Services agencies, Wisconsin County Human Services Association,  
10 Wisconsin Counties Association and the State Department of Children and Families have not had  
11 sufficient opportunity to work collaboratively with the authors on the proposed legislation; and,  
12

13 **WHEREAS**, in 2014, Rock County Human Services received 3,507 reports of suspected or threatened  
14 child abuse and neglect, and consequently, the bills have a significant workload impact on the Human  
15 Services Department, as well as all Rock County law enforcement jurisdictions; and,  
16

17 **WHEREAS**, some of the concerns with the proposed legislation include:

18  
19 Not all referrals of child abuse and neglect are screened in to be investigated by the County  
20 Human Services Department, therefore, it would be inconsistent to mandate the Human Services  
21 Department coordinate an investigation with law enforcement when the Human Services  
22 Department lacks statutory authority to act;  
23

24 The investigation of all reports (including screened out cases) of suspected or threatened child  
25 abuse by the Human Services Department would violate the Department of Children and Families  
26 state standards;  
27

28 Law enforcement involvement in all child welfare cases may result in families being less willing  
29 to accept voluntary services or engage in alternative or community response programs for fear of  
30 criminal charges;  
31

32 All reports of child abuse and neglect are to be referred to law enforcement as soon as practicable  
33 but no later than 12 hours after the report is received with no prioritization of these cases;  
34

35 There are complex jurisdictional issues to address when abuse or neglect occurs in multiple  
36 jurisdictions or across county lines and how coordination of investigations would be handled.  
37

38 **WHEREAS**, concerns relating to this bill appear to have arisen in the more populous counties, namely,  
39 Milwaukee and Dane, therefore, could be addressed through specific legislation for counties over 500,000  
40 in population; and,  
41

42 **WHEREAS**, Rock County Human Services and local law enforcement agencies have good working  
43 relationships and current Memorandums of Understanding with regard to how and when local law  
44 enforcement and Human Services agencies respond to and coordinate their investigations; and,  
45

46 **WHEREAS**, counties have requested that the authors of the legislation bring the parties impacted by the  
47 legislation together to arrive at a compromise to this proposed legislation.  
48

15-12A-445

48 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Rock County Board of Supervisors, duly  
49 assembled this 10<sup>th</sup> day of DECEMBER, 2015 does hereby oppose Senate Bill 326/Assembly Bill  
50 429 in its current form; and,

51  
52 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the County Clerk be directed to send a copy of this resolution to  
53 Rock County's legislative delegation, the authors of the bill, and the Wisconsin Counties Association.

54

Respectfully submitted,

HUMAN SERVICES BOARD

Brian Knudson  
Brian Knudson, Chair

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Sally Jean Weaver-Landers, Vice Chair

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Terry Fell

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Linda Garrett

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FISCAL NOTE:

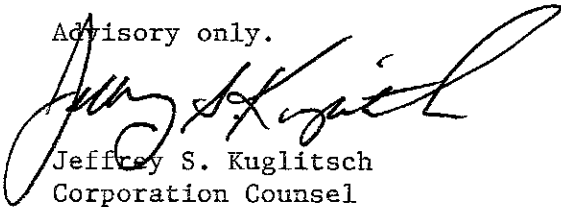
This resolution registers opposition of proposed legislation and has no direct fiscal impact on Rock County operations in and by itself.



Sherry Oja  
Finance Director

LEGAL NOTE:

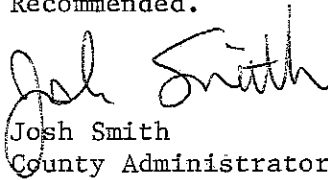
Advisory only.



Jeffrey S. Kuglitsch  
Corporation Counsel

ADMINISTRATIVE NOTE:

Recommended.



Josh Smith  
County Administrator