

RESOLUTION**ROCK COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

Melissa Wittwer, Director of Child
Support Services
INITIATED BY



9/28/2022
DATE DRAFTED

Support of Increased County Child Support Funding

WHEREAS, Rock County Child Support Services administers the Child Support Enforcement Program on behalf of the state, providing a holistic set of services to Rock 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 substance-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; and

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 Rock 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.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Rock County Board duly assembled this 13th day

of October, 2022 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 Rock County, the Secretary of the Wisconsin Department of Administration, and the Wisconsin Counties Association for consideration.

FISCAL NOTE:

No fiscal impact in and by itself.

Sherry Oja
Finance Director

LEGAL NOTE:

The County Board is authorized to take this action pursuant to Wis. Stat. § 59.51(1)

Richard Greenlee
Corporation Counsel

ADMINISTRATIVE NOTE:

Recommended.

Josh Smith
County Administrator

Committee Action

Public Safety & Justice Committee

Public Safety & Justice Committee recommended this resolution for approval by a unanimous voice vote.