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3 **A RESOLUTION**

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5 Earmarking \$10,000,000 of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding designated to
6 combat the racial disparities in Milwaukee County’s vaccination rates and increase the
7 County’s Black vaccination rate
8

9
10 WHEREAS, the Federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) of 2021 was signed
11 into law by President Biden on March 11, 2021, in an effort to support individuals,
12 families, businesses, and governments impacted by the Coronavirus Disease
13 pandemic; and
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15 WHEREAS, Milwaukee County (the County) received \$183.7 million in ARPA
16 funding, through the ARPA State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund; and
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18 WHEREAS, the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors adopted File No. 21-
19 555 establishing the ARPA Task Force and detailing the group’s overarching goals
20 which includes using ARPA funds to help advance the County’s vision which states: “By
21 achieving racial equity, Milwaukee County is the healthiest county in Wisconsin”; and
22

23 WHEREAS, an article published on March 19, 2022 in the Milwaukee Journal
24 Sentinel highlighted the racial disparities in vaccination rates statewide and specifically
25 amongst Milwaukee County residents, which is home to nearly 70% of the State’s Black
26 population; and
27

28 WHEREAS, the article reported “In Milwaukee County, Black residents are the
29 only racial group in which the majority of residents is unvaccinated. Roughly 47% of
30 Black residents received one dose, while roughly 41% are fully vaccinated...Every other
31 racial group in Milwaukee is 60% or higher for one-dose”; and
32

33 WHEREAS, Dr. Jasmine Zapata, chief medical officer and state epidemiologist
34 for community health with the Wisconsin Department of Health Services, explains
35 "issues with financial inequities, misinformation in the media, access barriers, structural
36 racism and a longstanding history of harm in our country toward the Black population
37 that has led to distrust with the medical and public health systems" are all contributing
38 factors to the low Black vaccine rate; and
39

40 WHEREAS, while Milwaukee County does not have a health department, it does
41 play a role in the vaccine roll out and the County’s Chief Health Policy Adviser Ben
42 Weston agreed with Dr. Zapata’s sentiments adding “Black residents don’t have the
43 same opportunities as white residents in the Milwaukee area” when it comes to access
44 to vaccines; and
45

46 WHEREAS, the Milwaukee County Chief Health Policy Advisor also suggested
47 that misinformation in the media affects the Black vaccine rate, a phenomenon that the
48 Milwaukee County Board formally recognized when File No. 21-1088 was adopted and
49 health misinformation was declared a public health crisis in Milwaukee County; and
50

51 WHEREAS, as of April 11, 2022 the COVID-19 pandemic has claimed the lives
52 of 2,172 Milwaukee County residents according to the Wisconsin Department of Health
53 Services (DHS); and
54

55 WHEREAS, data reported by DHS indicates communities of color have
56 experienced higher rates of COVID-19, hospitalizations and deaths compared to White
57 Wisconsin residents since the pandemic began and Black residents have 1.8 times
58 greater hospitalization rates than White Wisconsinites; now, therefore,
59

60 BE IT RESOLVED, the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors hereby reaffirms
61 its commitment to health equity and authorizes the Office of Strategy, Budget, and
62 Performance, working in conjunction with the Office of the Comptroller, to designate
63 \$10,000,000 of American Rescue Plan Act funds to increase the Black COVID-19
64 vaccine rate in Milwaukee County; and
65

66 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Department of Health and Human Services
67 and the Office of Equity are requested to evaluate and recommend an outreach strategy
68 that may include, but is not limited to:

- 69 • educational efforts
- 70 • community outreach
- 71 • strategic community partnerships
- 72 • mobile vaccine sites
- 73 • home visits
- 74 • employment of individuals to staff the home visits and mobile vaccine
75 sites
- 76

77 to expand vaccine coverage and address the racial disparities in Milwaukee County's
78 vaccination rates and report back to the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors by the
79 June County Board cycle on the progress of a plan to expend the designated ARPA
80 funds to help achieve health equity for Black residents.