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5 **A RESOLUTION**
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7 Supporting the efforts of the Milwaukee Public Schools (MPS) District to reconcile and
8 strengthen its financial reporting and accounting practices while calling on the State to
9 adequately fund MPS and other public school systems while retaining a democratically
10 elected local school board to oversee its operations
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13 WHEREAS, recent reports revealed the Milwaukee Public Schools (MPS) District
14 was delinquent in filing financial reports to the State of Wisconsin, which led to the
15 departure of the District's Superintendent, Comptroller and Chief Financial Officer, as
16 well as the State temporarily withholding a \$16.6 million aid payment; and
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18 WHEREAS, the accounting crisis has led to calls for audits of MPS finances and
19 suggestions by some individuals that the State's largest school district should be broken
20 up and/or governed by the State or another local government rather than the directly
21 elected MPS School Board; and
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23 WHEREAS, Article X, Section 3 of the Wisconsin Constitution guarantees a
24 tuition-free, uniform public education for every child in the state; and
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26 WHEREAS, Wisconsin has a proud history of local control for public schools
27 across the state, though locally elected school boards who are directly accountable to
28 the community, ensuring board members prioritize local needs and preferences; and
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30 WHEREAS, MPS, as a large school district, encompass diverse populations,
31 promoting inclusivity and cross-cultural understanding, which, if fragmented, risks
32 creating groups that reinforce socioeconomic and racial segregation; and
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34 WHEREAS, Milwaukee County's vision is to break down racial silos by achieving
35 racial equity and becoming the healthiest county in the state; and
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37 WHEREAS, Milwaukee County also serves and delivers critical services to
38 support the successful education of children who face unique challenges that impact a
39 child's ability to learn, including housing insecurity, income inequality, and racial
40 segregation; none of which can be fully addressed within the school system; and

41 WHEREAS, Milwaukee Public Schools are filled with talented, caring, and
42 dedicated educators and administrators who suffer from lack of adequate funding and
43 staff to equitably and fully instruct students, many of whom are from vulnerable and
44 marginalized communities themselves; and

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46 WHEREAS, leadership failures by district administration are not the fault of
47 teachers or their students, as funding streams have stagnated since the Wisconsin
48 State Legislature has underfunded public education and, in particular, the MPS District;
49 and

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51 WHEREAS, the Committee on Intergovernmental Relations, at its meeting of
52 July 8, 2024, recommended adoption of File No. 24-595 (vote 4-0); now, therefore,

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54 BE IT RESOLVED, the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors hereby supports
55 Milwaukee Public Schools in its efforts to reconcile and strengthen its financial reporting
56 and accounting practices; and

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58 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, Milwaukee County also supports the maintenance
59 of the MPS District and any proposed solutions to the financial difficulties should reflect
60 adequate state funding and the avoidance of unfunded or underfunded mandates to
61 promote academic excellence while ensuring educational consistency, equitable
62 resource distribution, and cultural inclusivity; and

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64 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, Milwaukee County is opposed to any solution
65 which would weaken or dissolve the democratically elected school board members of
66 Milwaukee Public Schools or otherwise ceding governance of public schools to the
67 state, any other level of government, or any private entity as local governance offers
68 direct accountability, adaptability, and community engagement; and

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70 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Office of Government Affairs staff is
71 authorized and requested to distribute this resolution to State policymakers and other
72 stakeholders and support policy solutions which are consistent with the contents of this
73 resolution.

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