

3
4
5 **A RESOLUTION**
6

7 requesting the inclusion of the Great Lakes Erosion Control loan program in the 2021-
8 2023 State of Wisconsin biennial budget to control the detrimental effects of lakeshore
9 erosion to property owners and public lands and infrastructure and encourage the
10 proliferation of resources to protect the shoreline and bluffs
11

12
13 WHEREAS, in his biennial budget, Governor Evers included the Great Lakes
14 Erosion Control loan program, providing \$5 million in revolving loans to assist
15 municipalities and property owners on the shores of Lake Michigan and Lake Superior
16 where the structural integrity of municipal buildings or homes are threatened by erosion
17 of the shoreline; and
18

19 WHEREAS, the Great Lakes Basin includes the five Great Lakes and the
20 surrounding lands in the United States and Canada, whose direct surface runoff and
21 watersheds form a large drainage basin that feeds into the lakes; and
22

23 WHEREAS, the State of Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR)
24 describes erosion as the process by which wave energy moves material from the shore
25 out to greater water depths, which can occur even at low water levels and can be
26 exacerbated by storm surges and wind; and
27

28 WHEREAS, in September 2020, the Pew Charitable Trusts published an article
29 on the detrimental effects of erosion on the Great Lakes, which states that climate
30 change, including increased precipitation, higher temperatures, and a lack of ice cover
31 during the winter, are contributing to more drastic fluctuations in water levels in all of the
32 Great Lakes; and
33

34 WHEREAS, the Wisconsin Geological and Natural History Survey describes how
35 erosion steadily chips away at shorelines, especially near bluffs, causing them to
36 steepen and eventually crumble into the water; and
37

38 WHEREAS, several homes along the shores of Lake Michigan in Southeastern
39 Wisconsin have been lost to long-term erosion and the collapsing of bluffs; and
40

41 WHEREAS, in 2019, lakefront bluffs in Sheridan and Warnimount Parks in
42 Milwaukee County collapsed and, although the damage was minimal, Milwaukee
43 County Parks buildings and infrastructure are at risk in the future; and

44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60
61
62
63
64
65
66
67
68
69
70
71
72
73
74
75
76
77
78
79
80
81
82
83
84
85
86
87

WHEREAS, in January 2020, the Milwaukee County shoreline sustained major damage from a winter storm, which produced powerful waves and winds, ice accumulation, and resulted in low-level area flooding, bluff erosion, and significant damage to public infrastructure, and over \$10 million in damages (File No. 20-144); and

WHEREAS, in a report provided through File No. 21-93, the Milwaukee County Department of Parks, Recreation, and Culture outlined the numerous damages incurred through the storm and the status on receiving funding from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the Wisconsin Department of Emergency Management (WEM), with many damages either being denied or still pending approval over one year later; and

WHEREAS, in 2012, the University of Wisconsin Sea Grant Institute published the article “Stabilizing Coastal Slopes on the Great Lakes” describing methods to combat bluff erosion, which is dependent upon the type of soil, nearby present and future developments, present and future climate obstacles, and how quickly the land is degrading; and

WHEREAS, the solutions can be complex to plan, costly to implement, and a lack of support exists to assist residents, business, and municipalities in understanding and addressing erosion; and

WHEREAS, if erosion is not controlled on the Great Lakes’ shorelines, the damage to homes, recreation, and infrastructure will continue and cause irreparable harm; and

WHEREAS, it is a benefit to Milwaukee County and the entirety of Wisconsin’s Lake Michigan shoreline to combat erosion and provide resources to residents, businesses, and municipalities for the purpose of erosion control; and

WHEREAS, the Committee on Intergovernmental Relations, at its meeting of May 6, 2021, recommended adoption of File No. 21-434 (vote 4-0); now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors hereby supports the Great Lake Erosion Control loan program as proposed in the 2021-2023 State of Wisconsin biennial budget and requests that State of Wisconsin Legislature and Governor include it in the adopted budget; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors hereby supports efforts to control the detrimental effects of lakeshore erosion to property owners and public lands and infrastructure and encourages the proliferation of resources to protect the shoreline and bluffs; and

88 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Office of Government Affairs staff is hereby
89 requested to communicate the contents of this resolution to the Wisconsin Governor
90 and state legislators, and to advocate for erosion control in the State of Wisconsin.

91

92

93

94

05/06/21

s:\committees\2021\may\igr\resolutions\21-434 great lakes erosion control.docx