

1 By Supervisors Nicholson-Bovell, Gómez-Tom, Bielinski
2 Capriolo, Vincent, Rolland, O'Connor, Logsdon, Johnson, Jr.,
3 Shea, Eckblad, and Roundtree Jr.
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File No. 26-470

6 **A RESOLUTION**
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8 Requesting a proactive flood prevention and preparedness plan that includes
9 intergovernmental coordination and climate resiliency funding for Milwaukee County
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12 WHEREAS, Milwaukee County experienced severe flooding on April 15, 2026,
13 driven by a period of unprecedented rainfall that overwhelmed regional drainage
14 systems, resulting in the Governor of Wisconsin declaring a state of emergency and
15 asking the federal government for aid; and
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17 WHEREAS, during the first half of April 2026 alone, Milwaukee recorded 5.92
18 inches of rain, a figure representing over 150 percent of the average rainfall for the
19 entire month; and
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21 WHEREAS, these weather events demonstrate the growing impacts of climate
22 change on regional infrastructure, resulting in billions of gallons of water backing up
23 into neighborhoods and the emergence of tornadoes in areas where they were
24 historically rare; and
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26 WHEREAS, the April 2026 floods follow the catastrophic "1,000-year" event of
27 August 2025, which left many residents and small businesses in a state of prolonged
28 recovery; and
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30 WHEREAS, Wisconsin's request for federal emergency assistance following
31 the August 2025 floods was denied, forcing local municipalities to deplete limited tax
32 levies to provide immediate disaster relief; and
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34 WHEREAS, the exhaustion of these local funds for emergency cleanup has
35 directly stalled the long-term infrastructure improvements necessary to prevent future
36 flooding; and
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38 WHEREAS, the State of Wisconsin continues to maintain a multibillion-dollar
39 budget surplus that could be applied to critical infrastructure and climate resiliency
40 projects; and
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42 WHEREAS, effective flood preparation is strengthened by proactive
43 government action and collaborative communication among County agencies,
44 municipal partners, and the residents they serve; and
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46 WHEREAS, the Intergovernmental Cooperation Council (ICC) provides an
47 existing framework for coordinating across municipalities, each of which maintains
48 distinct emergency management protocols and service responsibilities; and
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50 WHEREAS, on April 17, 2026, the Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District
51 (MMSD), the City of Milwaukee, and Milwaukee County announced the formation of a
52 collaborative flood task force that can serve as a model for ongoing intergovernmental
53 coordination; and
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55 WHEREAS, the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors recognizes that the
56 current flood management model is a systemic infrastructure crisis and requires a shift
57 from reactive "cleanup" to proactive "prevention"; and
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59 WHEREAS, the Committee on Intergovernmental Relations, at its meeting of
60 May 22, 2026, recommended adoption of File No. 26-470 (vote 5-0); now, therefore,
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62 BE IT RESOLVED, the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors requests the
63 Office of Emergency Management (OEM) to conduct and present a comprehensive
64 assessment of the damage sustained during the April 2026 weather events; and
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66 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, OEM is requested to work with the
67 Intergovernmental Cooperation Council (ICC) and MMSD to support coordination of
68 flood preparedness directives across all Milwaukee County municipalities, recognizing
69 that each jurisdiction maintains distinct emergency management protocols, and to
70 identify preemptive actions, including coordinated storm drain clearing and
71 infrastructure inspection prior to forecasted severe weather events, that can be
72 implemented collectively; and
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74 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, OEM is requested to establish a process for
75 receiving regular updates from MMSD and other relevant task forces and agencies on
76 the status of infrastructure improvement projects and anticipated timelines, and to
77 report that information to the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors on an ongoing
78 basis; and
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80 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, OEM is requested to develop, in collaboration
81 with MMSD and other relevant municipal and regional partners, a coordinated flood
82 preparedness, response, and communications plan and to present that plan to the
83 Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors in an informational report; and
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85 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the coordinated communications plan should
86 support a collaborative countywide approach that helps ensure County and municipal
87 partners are operating from consistent and real time information during emergency
88 situations to support effective public communication and coordinated response efforts;
89 and
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91 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, OEM, in collaboration with the Information
92 Management Services Division (IMSD), is encouraged to identify appropriate tools and
93 methods for distributing emergency information and updates, including whether a
94 shared public information landing page or centralized communications platform would
95 improve coordination, public access to information, and communication with
96 constituents; and

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98 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the communications strategy may include
99 advance flood warnings delivered through text alert systems and social media
100 channels; coordination with local radio stations and other broadcast media; education
101 on who to call to report flooding, downed trees, or other public damage from storms
102 and any available support resources; and clear public guidance on how to stay safe
103 before, during, and after severe weather events; and

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105 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the communications strategy could also include
106 information about clearing debris from sidewalk storm drains before severe weather
107 arrives, signing up for Water Drop alerts, conserving water during flood events, and
108 reporting flooded roads, stranded vehicles, or significant property damage to
109 residents' local municipality to improve preparedness and capture accurate data for
110 future state and federal aid applications; and

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112 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, if OEM determines that additional resources are
113 necessary to implement any component of that plan, OEM is requested to bring a
114 formal funding request to the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors for
115 consideration; and

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117 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Office of Government Affairs is authorized to
118 advocate to state and federal partners to provide the funding necessary for disaster
119 relief and to help Milwaukee County transition to a proactive flood-management
120 model.

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