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(ITEM) A resolution by Supervisors Bowen, Johnson, Jr., Rainey, Broderick, and Dimitrijevic expanding the criteria for the existing Free Birth Certificate Program to include individuals between the ages of 15 to 21 years who are in need of birth certificates to assist in securing employment opportunities, by recommending adoption of the following:

A RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, in 2011, a resolution (File No. 11-488) was adopted by the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors to urge the Wisconsin State Legislature to waive the statutorily required fees for individuals to obtain a birth certificate in order to secure a photo identification to vote; and

WHEREAS, by State statute, the Register of Deeds must charge \$20 for the first copy (and \$3 for additional copies of the same record) of a certified birth certificate; and

WHEREAS, the 2012 Adopted Budget established the Free Birth Certificate Program in the Office of the Register of Deeds in order to assist individuals in obtaining birth certificates for the purpose of securing photo identification in lieu of proposed "Voter ID" legislation restrictions; and

WHEREAS, the Free Birth Certificate Program appropriated \$100,000 to give 5,000 birth certificates to individuals who provide a written statement affirming that the birth certificate is being obtained for the purpose of obtaining a photo identification for voting purposes; and

WHEREAS, the program has remained active in both the 2013 and 2014 Adopted Budgets due to the remaining free birth certificates that have not yet been issued, which as of March 2014 consisted of 3,373 birth certificates; and

WHEREAS, younger individuals who are seeking employment also require birth certificates during the hiring process to take advantage of job opportunities; and

WHEREAS, agencies such as the Milwaukee Area Workforce Investment Board's youth program offers employment opportunities and training to individuals between the ages of 16 to 24 years; and

WHEREAS, an expansion of the existing Free Birth Certificate Program to allow individuals of 21 or less years of age to obtain a free birth certificate for the purpose of seeking employment would be a benefit to young residents by assisting them in securing job opportunities as well as a benefit to Milwaukee County's overall economy; now, therefore,

45 BE IT RESOLVED, that the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors authorizes and
46 directs the Register of Deeds to include individuals between the ages of 15 to 21 years in
47 the existing Free Birth Certificate Program for the purpose of seeking employment with the
48 existing resources in place; and

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50 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that one-third of the remaining free birth certificates
51 under the existing program shall be earmarked for young residents between ages 15 to 21
52 years who are able to provide written proof at the time of application submission that said
53 birth certificate is necessary for employment verification and securing purposes; and

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55 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Register of Deeds, in conjunction with
56 Corporation Counsel, shall develop a form that job-seeking individuals must sign to verify
57 that they qualify with the prescribed age criteria and that they are obtaining said birth
58 certificate for employment purposes; and

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60 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that expansion of this program will not require any
61 additional funding, and will conclude when all remaining birth certificates have been
62 issued, unless authorized and funded by the County Board; and

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64 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that if pending litigation regarding "Voter ID" in either
65 Federal or Wisconsin Supreme Court results in the elimination of photo identification
66 requirements, the Register of Deeds shall request action by the County Board to either
67 discontinue the Free Birth Certificate Program or to reprogram remaining birth certificates
68 to be utilized for youth seeking employment opportunities.

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