

OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE Milwaukee County

CHRIS ABELE • COUNTY EXECUTIVE

DATE: February 6, 2019

TO: The Honorable Milwaukee Board of Supervisors

FROM: Chris Abele, Milwaukee County Executive

RE: County Board File No. 18-898

I am returning File No. 18-898 signed to the Clerk’s Office and wanted to provide my rationale.

First and foremost, Milwaukee County must demonstrate its commitment to treating people with dignity and respect. This is particularly true when it comes to providing medical services at the House of Correction and the Milwaukee County Jail.

In response to the Board’s clear desire to pursue insourcing medical services for residents of the House of Correction and jail, my administration has brought in national experts to perform a thorough and studied analysis of what resources we would need, what options we have, what choices we must make and what principles we must follow in order to create a new insourcing model. The last time the County provided these services in-house led to a court order to outsource, so we have a tremendous amount of due diligence that must be performed in order to get this right.

We have also learned a lot about how to improve outcomes when working with an outside provider and have put many more safeguards in place to avoid future deficiencies.

I am in full agreement with the Board of Supervisors that this is a critical opportunity to get this right. There are literally lives on the line with the decisions we make, and I know that none of us take that fact lightly.

I sign this resolution today to affirm my understanding that the will of the Board is insourcing these services, as well as to demonstrate our shared values in regards to the importance of this service.

As we complete the thorough process of analyzing and creating a model for insourcing these medical services, I am entirely optimistic that the Board will join me in making future decisions based on the best possible option that exists. Moving forward, I will, as always, pursue the policy that is set by the County Board. I also commit to continued full engagement with the County Board as we move through the analysis period and receive information on how to most responsibly, ethically, and feasibly provide inmate medical services that will clearly create the best outcomes for the County and for the people in our care. I believe this process will help us collectively make the best possible decisions about how to move forward.

Again, I am confident that the Board shares those goals, and I look forward to continuing to work with our excellent staff and my esteemed colleagues on the Board of Supervisors and in the Milwaukee County Sheriff’s office as we forge the best path forward.