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A resolution by County Executive Abele and Supervisor Nicholson, requesting approval to recognize April 1st- 7th as National Public Health Week, and supporting Milwaukee County’s commitment to achieve racial equity and transform systems and institutions impacting the health of our community, by recommending adoption of the following:

A RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, National Public Health Week is sponsored by the American Public Health Association to raise awareness of the relationship between the health of individuals and the health of their communities; and

WHEREAS, National Public Health Week focuses on a different public health topic every day of the week including: healthy communities, violence prevention, rural health, technology, public health, climate change, and global health; and

WHEREAS, the promotion of healthy communities is directly related to the health of individuals, and encourages expanding public health support networks to decrease racial disparities in health outcomes; and

WHEREAS, communities of color are disproportionately impacted by social determinants of health, such as: increased exposure to lead, poor air quality, lack of safe places to walk, bike, or run, and inadequate health education; and

WHEREAS, the City of Milwaukee is considered one of the most segregated cities in the United States, resulting in wide health disparities among its racial populations; and

WHEREAS, race is a social construction with no biologic basis; and

WHEREAS, racism is a social system with multiple dimensions, including individual racism, which is internalized or interpersonal, and systemic racism, which is institutional or structural, and is a system of structuring opportunity, and assigning value based on the social interpretation of how one looks; and

WHEREAS, systemic racism unfairly disadvantages some individuals and communities, unfairly advantages other individuals and communities, and depletes the strength of the whole society through the waste of human resources; and

WHEREAS, racism causes persistent racial discrimination in housing, education, employment, transportation, and criminal justice, and an emerging body of research demonstrates that racism is a social determinant of health; and

45 WHEREAS, African Americans comprise 26.2 percent of Milwaukee County's
46 (the County) total population, the largest throughout the State of Wisconsin's counties;
47 and
48

49 WHEREAS, more than 100 studies have linked racism to negative health
50 outcomes; and
51

52 WHEREAS, the Wisconsin Department of Health Services determined that
53 African Americans and Native Americans have the highest excess death rates at every
54 stage in the life course, and the infant mortality rate of non-Hispanic black infants is the
55 highest in the nation; and
56

57 WHEREAS, the 2016 infant mortality rate in the County among African American
58 mothers was 13.1 deaths per 1,000 births, compared to their white counterparts, a rate
59 of 4.9 deaths per 1,000 births; and
60

61 WHEREAS, in 2016, the rate of African American mothers in the County starting
62 prenatal care during their first and third-trimesters were 59.8 percent and 9.7 percent
63 respectively, while the rate of white mothers starting prenatal care during their first and
64 third-trimesters were 78.6 percent and 3.3 percent; and
65

66 WHEREAS, County Health Rankings (using 2016 data) place County residents in
67 a tie for 70th out of 72 Wisconsin Counties, indicating that residents averaged four
68 "physically unhealthy days" in the past 30 days; and
69

70 WHEREAS, Healthiest Wisconsin 2020 states that, "Wisconsin must address
71 persistent disparities in health outcomes and the social, economic, educational, and
72 environmental inequities that contribute to them;" and
73

74 WHEREAS, the Wisconsin Public Health Association is committed to achieving
75 health equity and convened a Racial Equity Workgroup in 2017; and
76

77 WHEREAS, while there is no epidemiologic definition of "crisis," the health
78 impact of racism clearly rises to the definition proposed by Galea: "The problem must
79 affect large numbers of people, it must threaten health over the long-term, and it must
80 require the adoption of large-scale solutions;" and
81

82 WHEREAS, the County created the Office on African American Affairs to serve in
83 an integral role in recognizing and aiding in the resolution of the County's racial
84 inequities for the benefit of all of its citizenry, and for the region to achieve its full
85 potential; and
86

87 WHEREAS, with support from community partners and the Office on African
88 American Affairs, it is the County's responsibility to address racism, including seeking
89 solutions to reshape the discourse and actively engaging all citizens in racial justice
90 work; and

91
92 WHEREAS, the Committee on Health and Human Needs, at its meeting of
93 April 17, 2019, recommended adoption of File No. 19-397 (vote 5-0); now, therefore,
94

95 BE IT RESOLVED, Milwaukee County (the County) will:
96

- 97 • Assert that racism is a public health crisis affecting our entire society
- 98 • Assess internal policy and procedures to ensure racial equity is a core
99 element of the County, led by the County Executive and the Milwaukee
100 County Board of Supervisors (County Board), in collaboration with the
101 Office on African American Affairs, Racial Equity Ambassador Workgroup,
102 and other relevant parties
- 103 • Work to create an inclusive organization identifying specific activities to
104 increase diversity across its workforce and in leadership positions
- 105 • Incorporate inclusion and equity into organizational practices, offer
106 educational trainings/activities to expand employees' understanding of
107 how racism affects individuals, and the health of marginalized populations,
108 and provide tools to assist members to engage actively and authentically
109 with communities of color
- 110 • Advocate for relevant policies that improve health in communities of color,
111 and support local, State, and Federal initiatives that advance social
112 justice, while encouraging individual employee advocacy
- 113 • Encourage other local, State, and national entities to recognize racism as
114 a public health crisis

115
116 ; and
117

118 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the County Board hereby supports the County's
119 efforts to address public health disparities due to racial inequities throughout the
120 County.

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123 ars
124 04/17/19
125 S:\Committees\2019\April\HHN 041719\Resolutions\19-397 National Health Week Racial Equality.docx