

5 **A RESOLUTION**
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7 Calling upon the State of Wisconsin and all Wisconsin counties to make positive policy
8 changes which will work toward eliminating systemic poverty and inequality
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11 WHEREAS, the May 25, 2020 murder of George Floyd has reignited the national
12 conversation on race, poverty, and inequality; and Wisconsin Counties, as arms of the
13 State of Wisconsin, fulfilling many vital State-mandated services, are on the frontlines in
14 addressing the social ills facing many Wisconsinites; and
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16 WHEREAS, the Pew Research Center’s “Race in America 2019” report
17 uncovered the following statistics regarding racial bias in the United States:
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- 19 • Approximately 65 percent of Blacks “say someone has acted suspicious of them
20 or as if they weren’t smart” compared with 37 percent of Latinos, 34 percent of
21 Asians, and 25 percent of Whites
- 22 • Approximately 78 percent of Blacks, “say we haven’t gone far enough in giving
23 blacks equal rights with whites” compared with 37 percent of Whites agreeing
- 24 • Approximately 64 percent of Blacks are pessimistic toward the notion “we will
25 eventually achieve equality”
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27 ; and
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29 WHEREAS, in 2018, in the University of Wisconsin – Madison “Supplement to
30 the 2016 Wisconsin Poverty Report”, university researchers found:
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- 32 • Using the Wisconsin Poverty Measure, in 2016 30.3 percent of Blacks and 18.5
33 percent of Latinos and other minorities lived in poverty compared to 10 percent of
34 Whites
- 35 • Overall poverty in Milwaukee County is significantly higher than the rest of
36 Wisconsin, 17.5 percent versus 10.8 percent in 2016
- 37 • “These data suggest that improving economic and social outcomes for
38 individuals and families in Milwaukee, especially for blacks, would reduce poverty
39 rates within the county and overall in the state.”
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41 ; and there is a well-established common understanding of the correlation between
42 poverty, crime, and social achievement; and

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44 WHEREAS, Wisconsin Superintendent Carolyn Stanford Taylor issued a press
45 release on October 30, 2019 relating to Wisconsin’s 2019 National Assessment of
46 Educational Progress (NAEP), noting, “Wisconsin’s scores reflected a wider gap
47 between the performance of black and white students than any other state or jurisdiction
48 except one, the District of Columbia.”; and

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50 WHEREAS, Milwaukee County has worked toward addressing the societal ill of
51 racial inequality by:

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- 53 • Creating the Office of African American Affairs in April 2017 (File No. 16-726)
- 54 • Declaring racism a public health crisis in April 2019 (File No. 19-397)
- 55 • Prioritizing federal Community Development Block Grant dollars toward projects
56 which improve local community and economic development rather than routine
57 public works maintenance in April 2019 (File No.19-153)
- 58 • Co-creating the Milwaukee City-County Joint Taskforce on Climate and
59 Economic Equity in July 2019 (File No. 19-582)
- 60 • Creating Chapter 108 – Achieving Racial Equity and Health in the Milwaukee
61 County Code of General Ordinances in April 2020 (File No. 20-174)

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63 WHEREAS, the Reverend Doctor Martin Luther King Jr. once said at the 1963
64 March on Washington, “We are now faced with the fact that tomorrow is today. We are,
65 confronted with the fierce urgency of now. In this unfolding conundrum of life and
66 history, there ‘is’ such a thing as being too late. There is no time for apathy or
67 complacency. This is a time for vigorous and positive action”, and

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69 WHEREAS, the Committee on Finance, at its special meeting of July 21, 2020,
70 recommended adoption of File No. 20-576 (vote 6-0); now, therefore,

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72 BE IT RESOLVED, Milwaukee County calls upon the State of Wisconsin and all
73 Wisconsin counties to seize the moment to constructively work toward positive change
74 against systemic racism and inequality; and

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76 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Government Affairs staff is authorized and
77 directed to provide this resolution to the Wisconsin Counties Association for distribution
78 to member counties with an invitation to work collaboratively toward positive change
79 against systemic racism and inequities.

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84 Inequality - no edits.docx