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110 EAST MAIN STREET, SUITE 215  
P.O. BOX 1688  
MADISON, WISCONSIN 53701-1688  
Telephone (608) 266-1880  
TTY: (800) 947-3529  
Facsimile (608) 267-0640  
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**DISTRICT II**

May 13, 2026

To:

Hon. Jodi L. Meier  
Circuit Court Judge  
Electronic Notice

Rebecca Matoska-Mentink  
Clerk of Circuit Court  
Kenosha County Courthouse  
Electronic Notice

Erica Reinke  
Electronic Notice

Steven Zaleski  
Electronic Notice

Mary A. Losey  
10505 Corporate Dr STE 105C  
Kenosha, WI 53158

J. G. M.

You are hereby notified that the Court has entered the following opinion and order:

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2026AP776-NM

State of Wisconsin v. J.G.M. (L.C. #2024TP67)

Before Neubauer, P.J.<sup>1</sup>

**Summary disposition orders may not be cited in any court of this state as precedent or authority, except for the limited purposes specified in WIS. STAT. RULE 809.23(3).**

J.G.M. (“John”) appeals from an order terminating his parental rights to his daughter, J.R.M. (“Julie”).<sup>2</sup> John’s appellate counsel filed a no-merit report pursuant to WIS. STAT. RULES 809.107(5m) and 809.32. John received a copy of the report, was advised of his right to

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<sup>1</sup> This appeal is decided by one judge pursuant to WIS. STAT. § 752.31(2)(e) (2023-24). All references to the Wisconsin Statutes are to the 2023-24 version.

<sup>2</sup> For ease of reading and to protect the confidentiality of these proceedings, we use pseudonyms to refer to all involved parties in this case.

file a response, and has elected not to do so. After reviewing the record and counsel's report, this court concludes that there are no issues with arguable merit for appeal. Therefore, we summarily affirm the order. WIS. STAT. RULE 809.21.

Julie was taken into protective custody immediately after her birth in December 2021. When Julie was born, both of her parents were incarcerated. Julie was subsequently found to be a child in need of protection or services (CHIPS). Three years later, in December 2024, the State petitioned to terminate John's parental rights alleging grounds of failure to assume parental responsibility and continuing CHIPS.<sup>3</sup>

John entered a no-contest plea to the continuing CHIPS ground. The court conducted the personal colloquy with John as required by WIS. STAT. § 48.422(7) and *Kenosha Cnty. DHS v. Jodie W.*, 2006 WI 93, ¶¶25, 293 Wis. 2d 530, 716 N.W.2d 845. While the court failed to address the identity of a proposed adoptive resource for Julie during the colloquy, *see* § 48.422(7)(bm), the no-merit report points out that this does not provide an arguably meritorious basis for postdisposition relief given that the State ultimately presented testimony about the proposed adoptive resources at the dispositional hearing.<sup>4</sup> *See Waukesha Cnty. v. Steven H.*, 2000 WI 28, ¶¶53, 58, 233 Wis. 2d 344, 607 N.W.2d 607 (providing that information necessary to support a no-contest plea may be presented through testimony at proceedings other than the plea hearing).

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<sup>3</sup> The petition also sought to terminate the parental rights of Julie's mother, who is not the subject of this appeal.

<sup>4</sup> The proposed adoptive resources were the foster parents Julie had been residing with for more than a year before the State filed the petition in this matter.

The circuit court additionally heard testimony in support of the continuing CHIPS ground, as required by WIS. STAT. § 48.422(3). The testimony established the necessary elements for that ground. For these reasons, the record does not show that there is arguable merit to any argument to withdraw John's no-contest plea.

The circuit court held a contested dispositional hearing and concluded that it was in Julie's best interest that John's parental rights be terminated. The court considered the proper standard and factors under WIS. STAT. § 48.426(2) and (3), did not consider improper factors, and reached a reasonable result. An argument that the court erroneously exercised its disposition discretion would lack arguable merit.

In addition to addressing the preceding issues, the comprehensive no-merit report discusses the following: the circuit court's competency to proceed and adherence to statutory deadlines; and trial counsel's effectiveness. This court is satisfied that the no-merit report correctly analyzes the issues it raises as without merit, and this court will not discuss them further.

An independent review of the record does not disclose any other potentially meritorious issues for appeal. Because there would be no arguable merit to any issue that could be raised on appeal, the court accepts the no-merit report and relieves Attorney Steven W. Zaleski of further representation in this matter.

Upon the foregoing reasons,

IT IS ORDERED that the order terminating J.G.M.'s parental rights is summarily affirmed. *See* WIS. STAT. RULE 809.21.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that Attorney Steven W. Zaleski is relieved of further representation of J.G.M. in this matter. *See* WIS. STAT. RULE 809.32(3).

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that this summary disposition order will not be published.

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*Samuel A. Christensen*  
*Clerk of Court of Appeals*