

RESOLUTION # 2018-10

In Support of Increased Public Defender Access and Pay

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1 To the Honorable members of the Burnett County Board of Supervisors;

2
3 **WHEREAS**, criminal cases continue to rise due to a variety of factors including increased drug
4 crimes; and

5
6 **WHEREAS**, both the United States Constitution the Constitution of the State of Wisconsin
7 provide that persons accused have the right to counsel; and

8
9 **WHEREAS**, in Wisconsin the Office of the Public Defender provides counsel to those persons
10 meeting income eligibility guidelines for services; and

11
12 **WHEREAS**, judges are being forced to appoint counsel at county expense for persons for whom
13 the public defender cannot find representation due to a lack of available counsel as a result of the
14 low compensation rate; and

15
16 **WHEREAS**, this results in costs to counties to appoint counsel, increased costs to jail persons
17 held pre-trial pending appointment of counsel, inefficiency for courts and law enforcement and a
18 delay in obtaining justice for victims; and

19
20 **WHEREAS**, the rate of compensation for private bar attorneys has not been increased since
21 1995 and currently is the lowest hourly rate in the nation; and

22
23 **WHEREAS**, this has created a burden on the courts and Wisconsin counties.

24
25 **NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Burnett County Board of Supervisors does
26 hereby urge the State of Wisconsin to provide sufficient resources to the Office of the Public
27 Defender to ensure that the criminal justice system operates effectively and efficiently; and

28
29 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the State of Wisconsin increase the rate of reimbursement
30 for assigned counsel attorneys to a market rate that will ensure the prompt appointment of
31 counsel and that cases are handled in a timely and efficient manner; and

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33 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the County Clerk is directed to send a copy of this
34 resolution to the Governor of the State of Wisconsin, the Wisconsin Counties Association, the
35 Wisconsin Towns Association, the Wisconsin League of Municipalities, all members of the
36 state legislature and to each Wisconsin county.

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1 Respectfully submitted and recommended for adoption by the Administration Committee.
2 Signed and dated this 19th day of March, 2018.

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4 State of Wisconsin
5 County of Burnett

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7 I, Wanda Hinrichs, the duly elected and qualified County Clerk in and for Burnett County, do
8 hereby certify that the attached Resolution 2018-10, "In Support of Increased Public Defender
9 Access and Pay" was adopted by the Burnett County Board of Supervisors at a legally assembled
10 meeting at which a quorum was present and acted throughout. The date of passage was March
11 22, 2018.

12
13 *Wanda Hinrichs*

14 _____
15 Wanda Hinrichs,
16 Burnett County Clerk
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