

1 **2023 RES-159**

2 **IN SUPPORT OF HIGH-QUALITY, AFFORDABLE, ACCESSIBLE CHILD CARE**

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4 Families in Dane County rely on child care providers as an essential service for early learning,
5 development, and social supports for children. The availability of high-quality child care options
6 provides critical infrastructure that enables employment for working families. Access to
7 affordable child care is necessary for employers to build and retain a robust workforce and is an
8 important component of supporting entrepreneurship, building capacity, and improving
9 education in working-age adults.

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11 A May 2023 report from the Wisconsin Policy Forum highlights that the annual cost of child care
12 in a licensed group center is double the recommended federal guideline at 7%, more expensive
13 than in-state tuition at any University of Wisconsin campus and equates to up to 29% of the
14 median household income for an infant and 22% of median household income for a four-year-
15 old. Additionally, a study of 2021 child care rates by the non-profit Community Coordinated
16 Child Care, Inc. showed that the median cost of child care for 2 year old in Dane County was
17 \$245 per week; for a family with a gross income of \$90,000, which represents over 14% of the
18 family income before taxes for a single child. An August 2023 survey from the Wisconsin Early
19 Childhood Association found that 86 percent of program directors and owners already are or
20 are considering raising parent fees, 47 percent of early educators are considering leaving the
21 field, and 32 percent of programs are considering closing without further investment in the
22 Child Care Counts program.

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24 The state Child Care Counts program received a significant federal infusion of funding that will
25 expire in January 2024 without further action by the legislature. Governor Tony Evers called for
26 a special session of the Legislature at the Capitol on Wednesday, September 20, 2023, to
27 consider and act upon LRB-4085/LRB-4086, relating to: fall workforce package, including
28 investments in Child Care Counts. Without investments to address the child care industry's
29 looming fiscal cliff, The Century Foundation estimates that statewide, 2,110 child care programs
30 could close, resulting in a loss of 4,882 child care jobs, leaving 87,425 kids without child care,
31 and resulting in approximately half a billion dollars in economic impacts between parents leaving
32 the workforce and reduced employer productivity. Many child care providers, families,
33 employers, community-based organizations, and local public agencies in Dane County are
34 already collaborating to innovate, identify creative solutions, and address a broken child care
35 systems.

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37 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Dane County Board of Supervisors supports
38 initiatives that improve access to high-quality, affordable child care for all families in Dane
39 County.

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41 **BE IF FINALLY RESOLVED**, that a copy of this resolution be sent to Governor Tony Evers and
42 the Dane County legislative delegation.