



100 BLACK MEN OF MADISON, INC.

P. O. Box 787, MADISON, WI 53701-0787
(608) 205-8572 || www.100blackmenmadison.com

17 March, 2015

Dear Supervisor,

OFFICERS:

PRESIDENT
Floyd Rose

VICE PRESIDENT
George Yelder

TREASURER
Amos Anderson

SECRETARY
William Greer

This correspondence has been initiated to encourage your support of Resolution 575, Access to Opportunities.

The Access to Opportunities plan, once implemented, will make meaningful changes in the lives of people impacted by racial disparities or other systemic inequalities. This resolution has been designed to aid residents of our County overcome significant obstacles of unemployment. Additionally, it has been created to help many of our impoverished citizens experience pathways of stability that will result in a meaningful and productive life.

The unemployment rate in Dane County, among African Americans, is 25.2%, compared to 4.8% for Caucasians. These numbers are unacceptable and embarrassing in a County that boasts of having the best quality of life in the nation.

We residents of Dane County possess the ability and responsibility to address this waste of humanity. While the problems that led to these inequalities are complicated and entrenched, there are meaningful, achievable actions that can be taken.

Actions of assisting the unemployed and the underemployed to obtain valid driver's licenses, experience meaningful job training, eliminate the barriers to employment from low level offences and provide proactive re-entry to ex-offenders are critical steps that must be taken.

The maxim of The 100 Black Men of Madison, Inc. is "You Are What You Do and What You Protect.

Supervisor, those impoverished residents of our Community, with no public voice, are crying out for assistance and justice. Please hear their call and support Resolution 575 Access to Opportunity.

Sincerely I am,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Floyd Rose", is written over a horizontal line.

Floyd Rose

AFFILIATED WITH 100 BLACK MEN OF AMERICA, INC.



WWW.NAACPDANE.CC.ORG

NAACP
DANE COUNTY BRANCH 36AB

March 17, 2015

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Dane County NAACP Statement on Access to Opportunity Resolution

Madison, WI—The Dane County NAACP applauds County Executive Parisi's action in addressing programs and services that increase poverty and reduce life options for many residents. We encourage members of the Public Protection and Judiciary, Health and Human Needs committees and the City Council to adopt the Resolution.

The NAACP Economic Department's objectives are to:

- **Empower** local communities with the necessary education, resources and partnerships to develop sustainable economic models that advance diversity and equity.
- **Ensure** that government and industry are knowledgeable, and committed to bridging racial inequality particularly as it relates to employment, wealth, lending and business ownership.
- **Grow** a movement of concerned citizens and organization who work together to produce an inclusive and strong middle class economy for the 21st century.

Efforts that address the development of employment programs relating to training and employment readiness have shown great success in creating meaningful opportunities for all people. Additionally, the Resolution addresses issues in the criminal justice system that restricts the financial resources of low income families.

This Resolution can remove barriers and eliminate disparities found in communities of color throughout Dane County. The Dane County NAACP is willing, able and ready to work with the County Executive, the County Board of Supervisors, the community and all justice seeking individuals who want to see our community grow and prosper.

Founded in 1909, the NAACP is the nation's oldest and largest nonpartisan civil rights organization. Its members throughout the United States and the world are the premier advocates for civil rights in their communities.

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For Additional Information Contact:

Mr. Greg Jones, President
NAACP Dane County
608-274-3997
Email: gcjones15@att.net



Joe Parisi
County Executive

COUNTY OF DANE OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

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County Executive Parisi: Access to Opportunity "Our Shared Challenge"

During 2015, Dane County Executive Joe Parisi wants to lead a community conversation to ensure all of the county's more than half-million citizens have the same opportunity to succeed.

We have an amazing quality of life in Dane County. Madison and surrounding areas are consistently ranked as premier communities in which to work, play and raise a family. For example, recent ratings include:

- Best City for Young Adults by Kiplinger – July 2012
- Most Educated City in America – Men's Health Magazine – Sep 2011
- City with the Best Job Market – Portfolio.com – July 2011
- Top 10 Best City to Raise a Family – Parenting Magazine
- Top 5 Happiest Cities in America – AARP – Aug 2012

We enjoy many successes. Together, we can strive to do better and address our shared challenges including:

*54% of African Americans in Dane County live in poverty. Nationally, the average is 28%. 8.7% of Caucasians in Dane County live in poverty.

*Dane County has the widest disparity in poverty between African American and Caucasian children in the country - - 74% versus 5.5%. Black children are 13 times more likely to be in poverty than white children in Dane County.

*Dane County's African American unemployment rate is 25.2%. That compares to 4.8% for whites. African-Americans are almost five and a half times more likely to be jobless than their white neighbors.

The County Executive recognizes that the quickest most reliable vehicle out of poverty and toward upward mobility is having and maintaining a family sustaining job. His 2015 plan is focused on breaking down barriers along the path to gainful employment.

When we ensure that barriers to employment are broken down for everyone, we automatically impact racial disparities. Sadly, the highest rates of poverty in the county are experienced by those who represent racial minorities.

Grigsby, Tamara

From: Marc Herstand <marcherstand@naswwi.org>
Sent: Tuesday, March 17, 2015 4:06 PM
To: Schauer, Andrew; Bayrd, Carouse; Krause, Dorothy; Pan, Leland; McCarville, Maureen; Willett, Michael; Rusk, Paul; Clausius, Bill; Wegleitner, Heidi; Dye, Jennifer; Levin, Jeremy; Veldran, Matthew; Zweifel, Nick; Ferrell, Ronn
Cc: Grigsby, Tamara
Subject: Access to opportunity plan

Dear Dane County board members:

I am writing to strongly encourage you to support County Executive Joe Parisi's Access to Opportunity plan. I believe this plan can help reduce economic barriers for low income communities of color in Madison and therefore hopefully begin to reduce some of our racial disparities in employment and in the criminal justice system in Dane County. I also believe this plan should be a template for statewide action on reducing racial disparities in our state.

Sincerely yours

Marc

Marc Herstand, MSW CISW
Executive Director
National Association of Social Workers, Wisconsin Chapter
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BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

County of Dane

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MADISON, WISCONSIN 53703-3342
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TTY: Call Wisconsin Relay 7-1-1



Dane County Board Res. 556: Smart Justice in Dane County

Dane County has made significant progress in reducing its jail population from a daily high of over 1100 individuals in 2003 to a daily average of 745 today. Additionally, the county has been involved in innovative diversion efforts including creating a neighborhood community restorative court and funding peer-based restorative justice in middle and high schools.

Yet, troubling issues persist: people of color are jailed at a higher rate than whites; inmates with mental illness are found throughout the jail; and jail conditions exacerbate mental health issues and are a threat to the physical well-being of many inmates. Res. 556 is designed to address these issues.

No new jail or expanded capacity: Res. 556 is focused on reducing incarceration and addressing immediate health and safety issues in the jail. The resolution looks for innovative community-based alternatives to incarceration and addresses needed modifications to the existing facilities to protect the physical and mental health of inmates. There are no provisions for a new or expanded jail.

The goal of Res. 556 is to ensure public safety while reducing disproportionate incarceration of people of color, providing support for people with mental illness, and, when incarceration is required, providing physical conditions that protect the health and safety of everyone.

Innovative workgroups established: Res. 556 establishes workgroups with members representing the criminal justice system, community members (particularly members of the African-American community and communities of color), and elected officials to:

- Develop recommendations for reducing minority incarceration;
- Provide appropriate services for those affected by mental illness; and
- Divert offenders from the jail through alternatives to incarceration.

The workgroups will be asked to develop tangible steps that will form the foundation of Mead & Hunt's work and future County budget proposals. Tangible steps include eliminating or greatly reducing the use of solitary confinement, developing a plan to establish and fund a stand alone mental health facility, and expanding alternatives to incarceration both pre- and post-booking.

Health & safety addressed: Res. 556 takes action to remediate the immediate health and safety issues in the jail, authorizing capital funds to immediately address urgent safety needs such as:

- The sixth and seventh floors of the City-County Building pose serious safety problems and cannot be evacuated quickly in an emergency;
- Dane County has no special needs beds and is forced to use solitary confinement for inmates in mental health crisis; and
- Due to the lack of appropriate housing, Dane County youthful offenders charged as adults are housed along with the general population. This is out of compliance with the federal Prison Rape Elimination Act and needs to be remediated.

Res. 556 lays out a plan for the community to develop strategies that keep our communities safe, to treat people humanely, to reduce the jail population by focusing on alternatives to incarceration, and to give all members of our communities an opportunity to be successful.

Supervisors Stubbs-Bayrd-Pan-Rusk-Dye-Corrigan



March 17, 2015

Letter to Dane County Health and Human Needs Committee

Dear Committee Members,

The Race to Equity Project, a project of the Wisconsin Council on Children and Families' (WCCF) is writing this letter in support of the Resolution for Access to Opportunity proposed by County Executive, Joe Parisi.

Race to Equity is a Wisconsin Council on Children and Families' initiative aimed at identifying, analyzing and addressing the profound and persistent racial disparities between African Americans and whites in health, education, child welfare, criminal justice, employment, and income that are prevalent both in Dane County and the state of Wisconsin.

Over a year and a half ago, we released our Race to Equity Baseline Report which revealed two key realities about racial disparities in Dane County on over 40 well-being measures: first, Dane County is home to some of the widest black/white disparities of any place in America; second, African Americans here in Dane County not only lag far behind whites, but also fare less well and endure more negative life outcomes than blacks elsewhere in the nation. Since its release, the Race to Equity report has helped to catalyze a resurgence of awareness, commitment and engagement across almost every sector of the county around the urgent need to achieve greater racial justice. This resurgence has inspired a myriad of important initiatives from the public sector, the private and non-profit sector, as well as the community at large. The Race to Equity Project believes this encouraging community mobilization is the first significant step in a long journey towards improved racial equity, and it is our intention to support, broaden and enhance these developing efforts every step of the way. Moreover, the Race to Equity project believes that some of the most fundamental steps that can be taken as a community to combat these inequities is through governmental policy changes and investments that address poverty.

The Access to Opportunity plan is an important step forward. It encompasses critical components for advancing greater equality of opportunity in Dane County. The plan seeks to address systemic barriers by increasing resources, broadening access to jobs and job training, and by dismantling practices that repeatedly thwart those seeking stable and living wage employment. Furthermore, the County Executive's proposals seek to chip away at many of the root causes of persistent poverty and inequity by increasing support, resources and evaluation of job training, mental health services, transitional housing, transportation access, as well as improving the county's own hiring practices.



More specifically, the Access to Opportunity plan's approach to address transportation challenges by providing driver's education programs to high-schoolers and supporting the Driver's License Recovery Program of the YWCA directly addresses an often overlooked, but necessary, component to becoming or remaining employed. Moreover, the plan's recommendation that county municipalities "ban the box" for prospective employees and increase job training opportunities (like the Big Step program) are key steps to bringing more folks into the workforce, and thereby, reducing poverty and child poverty in the county. In addition, the plan's proposal to reduce and modify fines for marijuana possession is an important means of interrupting a cycle that disproportionately impacts low-income individuals and often funnels them into a revolving door of fines that cannot be paid. Lastly, the plan's proposals to invest in transitional housing, and to review the effectiveness and need for increased mental health services are also important responses to some of the critical driving forces behind poverty, family instability, justice system and other negative outcomes that fall disproportionately on families of color.

The Race to Equity Project supports this plan without hesitation and encourages the Committee to pass a resolution embracing the plan as an integral, and necessary step toward broad, concrete and lasting change to provide greater equity and opportunity for all Dane County residents. We congratulate the ongoing efforts of the County Executive's Office and those of the County Board of Supervisors.

Sincerely,

Erica Nelson
Race to Equity Project Director

Ken Taylor
WCCF Executive Director



MOSES Position Statement for Resolution 556 on Dane County Jail and Criminal Justice System (March 7, 2015)

MOSES (Madison Organizing in Strength, Equality, and Solidarity) appreciates the work done by many Supervisors on the County Board in creating and sponsoring Resolution 556. We commend the County Board for taking action to provide solutions to racial disparities and mental health challenges in our communities, while reducing unnecessary incarceration in the County jail. To make these actions as effective as possible, we support the MOSES Jail Task Force's requests that the County Board strengthen Resolution 556 in the following ways:

- 1. Create Crisis Intervention and Restoration Centers:** We agree that incarceration in the County jail, as well as placement in solitary confinement, often exacerbates the conditions of people with mental health needs, not to mention those with substance abuse issues or developmental disabilities. We must therefore ensure that these people, whether diagnosed or not, are moved out of the criminal justice system and the County jail, and into diversion systems. We call on the County Board to use capital funds to create community-based jail alternatives including one or more crisis intervention or restoration centers. Such community-based centers must be located geographically to provide equitable access to people with the greatest need for such services, especially people of color. The County should commit to increasing funding for mental health services, and also use BadgerCare, Medicaid, and all existing insurance available through the Affordable Care Act to expand County mental health and substance abuse treatment systems.
- 2. Expand Alternatives and Diversions:** Current diversion programs and alternatives to incarceration, including electronic monitoring (home detention), drug courts, and restorative courts, must be expanded without delay and to the fullest extent possible, while also increasing racially equitable access and participation. Alternatives and diversions save the County money and strengthen our communities by reducing the negative effects of incarceration. The charge of the Length of Stay Work Group should also include: how to expand existing alternatives and diversions and implement other alternatives not currently listed in Resolution 556, including home detention, abolishing cash bail, creating a revolving bail loan program, work release (Huber), and expediting release of those alleged to have violated the terms of state DOC community supervision.
- 3. Achieve Racial Equity:** The County Board is right to recognize that the persistence of racial disparities in the criminal justice system indicates that the system is not working fairly for all community members. Beyond "[prioritizing the] needs of communities of color," it is critical to have specific mechanisms for achieving racial equity. The County Board must set measurable and concrete goals for increasing racial equity in access to and participation in all services and programs discussed in Resolution 556, and must include achievement of racial equity in the missions of all three work groups. Resolution 556 should also fully incorporate the racial equity lens—by, for example, specifying "racial equity" rather than just "equity," and including specific racial equity goals in all sections of the resolution.
- 4. Address Life and Safety Concerns:** Immediate and pressing life and safety concerns in the City-County Building or other parts of the County jail must be addressed. To this end, the County Board

must obtain from the Sheriff accurate, up-to-date, and specific information about the immediate facilities needs that are both related to life and safety, and unable to be addressed by the existing facilities budget or resources. To ensure racial equity in how these issues are addressed, the Sheriff's Office should also provide the County Board and the public with racially disaggregated data about the people most at risk due to these life and safety issues. Broader jail space planning or renovations must wait until the implementation of the work groups' proposed policy changes have decreased the average daily number of people in the County jail.

5. **Strengthen the Work Groups:** We applaud the proposed creation of work groups to engage the public and formalize community input to transform the Dane County criminal justice system. Several changes would increase the effectiveness of the work groups. We ask that the County Board: (1) make a substantive commitment to act on the work group's policy recommendations; (2) solicit participation in the work groups from national experts and leaders, such as Leon Evans from San Antonio, who have proven experience in community transformation, reducing incarceration, and/or decreasing racial disparities; (3) charge the work groups to not only "[investigate] possibilities," but also to identify how specific policy changes can be implemented, in order to clarify the process by which Dane County can reduce both racial disparities and unnecessary incarceration; and (4) provide the work groups, including at their own request, with racially disaggregated data about categories of people relevant to the areas they are considering.
6. **Implement Better Data Systems:** We appreciate the County Board's recognition that accurate and up-to-date data about who is in the criminal justice system and why, are critical for achieving criminal justice system reform. The lack of a reliable data system should be addressed by redirecting capital funds to immediately build a Dane County Criminal Justice Dashboard that pulls data from existing systems. Information from this Dashboard, disaggregated by relevant factors such as race, ethnicity, gender, age, and mental health status, must be made available to the general public on a monthly basis in order to ensure the accountability of the criminal justice system. This information must also be easily accessible to all parts of the criminal justice system and other coordinating agencies or organizations that provide social services.
7. **Connect People to BadgerCare and FoodShare:** We support helping all people who qualify for BadgerCare, Affordable Care Act health insurance, FoodShare, and/or FoodShare Employment and Training to apply for and enroll in these programs, including those who are incarcerated in the County jail. In order to strengthen our communities, the County should make it a priority to facilitate helping people to apply for these programs, including providing trained staff and volunteers to offer and deliver direct resources for application and enrollment.
8. **Refocus Planning to Reduce Jail Space Needs:** Any jail space planning done by Mead and Hunt or another firm must take into account policy changes recommended by the work groups that would decrease the average daily number of people in the County jail. Any such short- or long-term planning should consider three or more scenarios of policy reforms that lead to different reductions in the jail population. Resolution 556 should also make clear that jail space planning is primarily an architectural concern, and that a jail space planning analysis firm, such as Mead and Hunt, should not have input into or control over the three work groups' policy recommendations. For the sake of transparency, any contract or agreement with a jail space planning firm must be made available for public review before being adopted by the County Board.

If you have questions, please contact the MOSES Jail Task Force at mosesjailtaskforce@googlegroups.com.

MOSES (Madison Organizing in Strength, Equality, and Solidarity) is one of ten affiliates of WISDOM, a statewide interfaith community organization. WISDOM's 11x15 campaign seeks to reduce Wisconsin's prison population by half by the end of 2015. See <http://mosesmadison.org>, <https://www.facebook.com/groups/mosesmadison/>, and <http://prayforjusticeinwi.org/>.



Joe Parisi
County Executive

COUNTY OF DANE
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County Executive Parisi: Access to Opportunity
Community Solutions: Breaking Down Barriers for Success

Dane County Executive Joe Parisi's comprehensive plan for reducing poverty and better ensuring opportunity and success for all:

Under a new partnership between Dane County, the Madison Metropolitan School District, and the local Cooperative Educational Service Agency (CESA), fund a pilot program to help kids afford to take driver's education. Access to transportation is integral to obtaining employment.

Provide \$20,000 to eliminate wait lists for a successful program coordinated by the YWCA that helps those who have lost their driver's license, regain their licenses. The YWCA's "Driver's License Recovery Program helps those eligible to have their licenses reinstated, navigate an otherwise complicated process to regain the ability to legally drive - - and get to work.

Request county policymakers modifying the County Ordinance violation fine for having less than an ounce of marijuana. Too often the current fine of \$500-\$1,000 (not including court fees) goes unpaid, creating a criminal record for individuals who are unable to pay the fine due to poverty. This begins an unnecessary spiral into the criminal justice system. It is also out of line with the fine for equally or more serious offenses such as disorderly conduct where the forfeiture amount is higher.

Request Dane County Dane County's 26 cities and villages review municipal ordinances and modify fines and forfeitures as needed for non-violent offenses. Currently, the City of Fitchburg charges \$1,000 for a simple marijuana possession ticket with over \$300.00 in court fees. Left unpaid by families struggling with poverty, these fines can escalate and result in further barriers to maintaining gainful employment - - including keeping or earning a driver's license.

People re-entering society after conviction and incarceration face a unique set of barriers that make it extremely difficult to achieve success outside of the prison walls. Over ¾ of these inmates will be returning to the communities from which they originated. Challenges such as lack of affordable housing, mental health and other support services, and employment make it difficult, if not impossible, for many of these individuals to successfully reintegrate back into the community and avoid recidivism. In addition, addressing challenges early on is an

effective strategy in preventing people from entering the criminal justice system in the first place. To address these barriers, County Executive Parisi commits to:

Dedicate \$500,000 from the Dane County budget for re-entry housing. Partner with a provider to operate housing the county would acquire for sole purposes of transitional housing for those who have served their sentences and are trying to successfully integrate back into the community.

Create a new Dane County re-entry work group consisting of staff from the Department of Human Services and the Sheriff's Office to coordinate services for those looking to leave jail and re-enter the workforce and locate stable housing. The County Executive's Office will convene the first meeting of this group in March with the goal of streamlining services to reduce recidivism.

Request Dane County communities and employers adopt "Ban the Box" similar to Dane County and the City of Madison, in order to prevent employers from discriminating solely based on acts that occurred many years previously.

Request Dane County law enforcement agencies voluntarily track traffic stop data contacts to monitor for disproportionate policing.

Direct the Director of Dane County Human Services to report back a plan to assess all Juvenile Delinquency referrals for dyslexia by September 1, 2015. Dyslexia is a highly underreported problem that leads to poor educational outcomes, disruptive behaviors and oftentimes entrance into the criminal justice system. An estimated 50% of all prison inmates are dyslexic.

Direct the Director of Dane County Human Services to conduct a comprehensive review and make recommendations to the County Executive prior to September 1st on how the County can most effectively enhance mental health services. This review will include assessing the feasibility of expanding the "School Mental Health Crisis Intervention Teams" Parisi created in 2014 Dane County budget.

Gainful employment is the most effective vehicle out of poverty and towards upward mobility. All efforts to achieve prosperity for all must begin with access to a family sustaining job. The County Executive's efforts in this area will be to:

Create a new partnership with Orchard Ridge Church, Commonwealth Development and Dane County government to help get 100 people into transitional jobs. Working through Dane County's popular Joining Forces for Families sites on the southwest side, this effort will provide job training and temporary employment to those seeking job experience.

Bring the newly established BIG STEP Program created by County Executive Parisi in his 2014 budget and modeled off of the successful program in Milwaukee to full scale. Supported by public, private, and philanthropic investments, BIG STEP's mission is to assist economically disadvantaged minorities, women, and youth develop the skills needed to participate

meaningfully in the workforce and share in the area economy while ensuring that member companies have the skilled workers needed to prosper and grow in a competitive global economy.

Dane County can lead by example in efforts to reduce inequities and break down barriers to employment. In 2015, Dane County will take undergo an extensive internal analysis to identify areas of needed improvement around hiring practices, contracting and service provision. County Executive Parisi will:

- Request the recently created "Dane County Racial Equity and Social Justice" group to evaluate current county hiring processes, rules, and regulations that may represent barriers to diversifying the county workforce and make recommendations for changes.
- Identify positions in County government where apprenticeship opportunities exist to help workers gain skills and certifications helpful to them in securing gainful employment. This could include training to receive commercial driver's licenses and commits continued county support for the County Executive's "Project Big Step" effort linking minority workers with opportunities to work in the skilled trades.