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County Board Poised to Make a Commitment to End Child Poverty in Dane County Resolution Announces Support for Statewide Vision 2020 Campaign

The Dane County Board of Supervisors will vote this evening (Thursday, December 6) on a resolution announcing its support of the Vision 2020 Campaign to end child poverty in Wisconsin, and committing itself to eliminating child poverty in the county. The resolution calls for the creation of an 11-member task force charged with gathering and analyzing data on poverty in Dane County, and identifying public policy solutions for addressing the problem. The resolution was introduced by Sup. Richard Brown and has subsequently gained 34 co-sponsors among the Board's 37 members.

“Poverty is at the core of so many of the problems our communities face, from homelessness to crime to inadequate school readiness” said Sup. Brown. “Making a commitment to attack these problems at their roots is a crucial, and long overdue, first step.”

Vision 2020, a project of the Wisconsin Council on Children and Families (WCCF), the Wisconsin Community Action Program Association, and the Wisconsin Head Start Association, is a new campaign aimed at ending poverty statewide. Its aim is to organize a network of anti-poverty advocates across Wisconsin committed to tackling poverty on the public policy front. The initiative specifically targets four policy areas: family-supporting jobs, early childhood care and education, affordable housing, and health. To date over 50 organizations and 300 individuals have pledged their support of Vision 2020. If the resolution is approved tonight, Dane will become the second Wisconsin county to come on board, joining La Crosse, which earlier passed a similar resolution.

“The Board's Health and Human Needs Committee has long recognized the importance of addressing poverty in Dane County on several fronts,” said Sup. Dave Worzala, chair of the committee. “We hope other counties across Wisconsin join the Vision 2020 Campaign and the lives of Wisconsin children are improved.”

“It means a lot to have the County Board declare its support for such an ambitious goal,” said Vicky Selkove, Mobilization Strategies Manager at WCCF. “By passing this resolution, the Board is acknowledging that there's a lot we can do to improve outcomes for kids, and that if we do it successfully we can effectively end child poverty in the county. We have the tools to make this a reality.”

About 9% percent of Dane County children were living in poverty in 2006, up from 7.2% in 2000. More than one out of every five kids in the county was in a low-income household—defined as at or below 200% of the federal poverty line—in 2006. That translates to well over 20,000 low-income children in the county.

For more information about the Vision 2020 campaign, visit www.2020wi.org, or contact Vicky Selkove at (608) 284-0580, ext. 326.