

RESOLUTION NO. 2014-54

RESOLUTION BY THE GOVERNMENT SERVICES COMMITTEE EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR STATE FUNDING FOR COUNTY 911 SERVICES/DESIGNATED PUBLIC SAFETY ANSWERING POINT PER COUNTY

To the Honorable Members of the Racine County Board of Supervisors:

WHEREAS, 911 emergency dispatch services are among the most vital services that counties provide and Wisconsin residents expect a consistent level of service throughout the state, regardless of where their emergency occurs; and

WHEREAS, in 2003 the State of Wisconsin established a fee on all wireless phones to fund grants to counties to pay for enhanced 911 services, such as wireless call-locating software and equipment; and

WHEREAS, in 2009 the enhanced 911 grant program expired and, in its place, the Wisconsin Counties Association (WCA) and the state's telecommunications providers advocated establishing a permanent grant program to fund equipment purchases and training for employees of county designated Public Safety Answering Points (PSAP), each county to designate one PSAP per county by resolution, to be funded with a monthly fee of up to 75-cents on all devices capable of dialing 911; and

WHEREAS, instead of funding grants to county (PSAPs), in 2009 the Wisconsin Legislature and the Governor re-designated the funding as a 75-cent monthly Police and Fire Protection Fee for all such devices and directed the revenue from the fee to fund the county and municipal aid (shared revenue) account to meet the other state financial obligations; and

WHEREAS, without the intended state funding counties must rely almost entirely on property taxes to pay for equipment, training and consolidation of municipal and county 911 services with many counties unable to upgrade needed equipment to receive texts, video and still photographs to provide necessary training to 911 system operators, and to foster further consolidation of services; and

WHEREAS, eliminating the Police and Fire Protection Fee and restoring the funding for 911 without replacing the lost revenue would result in an approximate \$50 million annual reduction in shared revenue payments to municipalities and counties; and

WHEREAS, under current law each county must individually contract with a telecommunications provider for telephone lines running into each county 911 center and counties must depend on a maximum 40-cent monthly fee on only landline telephones to pay telecommunications providers for the cost of this service; and

WHEREAS, revenues from the 40-cent landline telephone fee that Racine County is receiving are declining due to the increased use of cellular telephones and the decreased use of landline telephones resulting in fees often being insufficient to cover the costs of these services, thereby requiring any difference to be paid with property taxes.

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6 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Racine County Board of Supervisors
7 hereby urges the Wisconsin Legislature and Governor to support legislation and state budget
8 action that accomplishes all of the following goals:

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- 10 1. Fully fund the County and Municipal Aid Program (shared revenue) with the
- 11 state General Purpose Revenue, rather than the Police and Fire Protection
- 12 Fee;
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- 14 2. Establishes a technology-neutral fee on all cellular telephones, landline
- 15 telephones and other devices capable of dialing 911;
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- 17 3. Uses the revenue from this fee to fund a grant program to pay for
- 18 equipment purchases and training for one Public Safety Answering Point
- 19 (911 center) per county, as designated by the County Board of each
- 20 county, and to develop financial incentives to encourage consolidation of
- 21 911 services;
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- 23 4. Provides a sustainable source of funding for costs associated with
- 24 providing all telephone lines (land and cellular) into county Public Safety
- 25 Answering Points; and,
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29 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** by the Racine County Board of Supervisors that the Racine
30 County Clerk is directed to transmit a copy of this Resolution to the Wisconsin Counties
31 Association (WCA) for consideration at the 2014 Annual Business meeting, all counties within the
32 State of Wisconsin, all municipalities within Racine County, the Racine County legislative
33 delegation and the Governor of the State of Wisconsin, urging their support for this resolution and
34 restoration of State funding for this vital public safety service.

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37 Respectfully submitted,

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39 **Government Services Committee**

40 1st Reading _____

41 2nd Reading _____

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43 BOARD ACTION

Pamela Zenner-Richards, Chairman

44 Adopted _____

45 For _____

46 Against _____

47 Absent _____

Ronald Molnar, Vice-Chairman

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6 VOTE REQUIRED: Majority John A. Wisch, Secretary

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8 Prepared by: Kiana K. Johnson
9 Corporation Counsel

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12 Thomas Roanhouse

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15 Robert Grove

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18 Janet Bernberg

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21 **The foregoing legislation adopted by the County Board of Supervisors of**
22 **Racine County, Wisconsin, is hereby:**

23 **Approved: _____**

24 **Vetoed: _____**

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26 **Date: _____,**

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29 James A. Ladwig, County Executive

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