

Eau Claire City-County Board of Health

Resolution 19-01

REQUESTING SUPPORT FOR LEGISLATION AIMED AT REDUCING CHILD POVERTY AND RACIAL  
DISPARITIES IN THE STATE OF WISCONSIN

**WHEREAS**, policy experts and recent research has led to a consensus that poverty in Wisconsin is a moral crisis that demands action; and

**WHEREAS**, facts uncovered by a broad based team show that children are now the poorest Americans and that childhood poverty is expanding in every region of Wisconsin; and

**WHEREAS**, racial disparities also impact this issue in Eau Claire and across the state. In Wisconsin compared to white children, African American children are almost 5 times more likely to be poor; Latino children are 3 times more likely to be poor; and Native American children 4 times more likely to be poor. The poverty rate for our African American children is 8% above the national average for black childhood poverty; and

**WHEREAS**, the study concurred that high rates of poverty are not a result of individual moral failings, that children are clearly not responsible for their own plight and that poverty is a result of human-made economic and social structures; and

**WHEREAS**, 42% households in Eau Claire County struggle to cover the costs of living and working at the most basic level and 42% of children in the Eau Claire School District qualify for free or reduced price lunch; and

**WHEREAS**, childhood poverty contributes to the development of mental illness, substance abuse, incarceration, and chronic disease later in life; which deprives our society of the potential contributions of our citizens and creates significant burdens for our community; and

**WHEREAS**, the significant social and financial costs of childhood poverty could be decreased by investing in early childhood support; and

**WHEREAS**, out of these ongoing conversations on poverty emerged bold, but attainable, goals that every person in Wisconsin is invited to endorse.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Eau Claire City-County Board of Health requests and supports the efforts of the State of Wisconsin to endorse and support bills introduced into the Senate or Assembly that would achieve the following goals:

- Decrease the level of childhood poverty and racial disparities by 50% over the next 10 years
- Implement policies and programs at the scale necessary to achieve that goal
- Establish annual, evidence-based evaluation of progress for accountability.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Eau Claire City-County Board of Health supports and encourages ongoing education and opportunity for dialogue about childhood poverty and hunger in Wisconsin.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Eau Claire City-County Board of Health will forward a copy of this resolution to the Eau Claire County Board in support of their goals.

Approved by the Board of Health this 23<sup>rd</sup> day of January, 2019.

**EAU CLAIRE CITY-COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH**
