

**TO THE HONORABLE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF BERRIEN COUNTY, MICHIGAN:**  
Your County Administration Committee respectfully recommends the adoption of the following

**RESOLUTION**

**WHEREAS**, the Berrien County Trial Court-Family Division (“Court”) is currently utilizing the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (“MDHHS”) Title IV-E Child and Parent Legal Representation Grant which will expire September 30, 2021; and

**WHEREAS**, the funding can be used for high quality child and parent legal representation in child protective proceedings as well as the Parents as Partners Program and additional social workers; and

**WHEREAS**, national studies have strongly correlated high quality legal representation for children and parents with: increased party perceptions of fairness, party engagement, and visits and parenting time; more personally tailored and specific case service plans and services, expedited permanency, and ultimately a cost savings to state and county government due to reductions of time children spend in foster care; and

**WHEREAS**, both the Parent-Partner Program and the addition of a Social Worker(s) to the team have been very successful programs implemented in jurisdictions in Michigan and across the country and the funding will allow for a contract provider for the Parents as Partners program; a social worker representing parents to work with attorneys; quality trainings for attorneys providing legal representation; and ancillary legal services to expedite closure of child dependency proceedings; and

**WHEREAS**, on July 14, 2021, the court was invited to apply for the October 1, 2021 – September 30, 2022 grant cycle that would provide approximately \$146,343 in funding for projects related to quality legal representation, with no cash match required.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED** that the Berrien County Board of Commissioners authorizes the Court to submit a grant application to MDHHS for a renewal of the Title IV-E Child and Parent Legal Representation Grant.

**RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED**  
**BERRIEN COUNTY ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Jim Curran, Chairperson

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Don Meeks, Vice Chairperson

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David Vollrath

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Julie Wuerfel

RESOLUTION APPROVED AS TO FORM	
Administrator <u>[Signature]</u>	Date <u>7.21.21</u>
Comments Attached _____	
Corporate Counsel _____	Date _____
Comments Attached _____	