

RESOLUTION: Veteran Benefits Funding

TO THE WINNEBAGO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS:

**WHEREAS**, Winnebago County veterans receive the majority of their state veteran benefits through the Wisconsin Department of Veteran Affairs (WDVA); and

**WHEREAS**, the Veterans Trust Fund (VTF) is WDVA's primary means of financing the multitude of benefits provided to the veterans of Polk County; and

**WHEREAS**, the VTF, started in 1947 with proceeds from a statewide liquor tax, and later funded by periodic infusions of general purpose revenue and proceeds from WDVA loan programs, has steadily decreased in size due to declining interest rates and investment earnings, along with increased demand for programs/services; and

**WHEREAS**, the cost to provide and administer benefits provided through the VTF is almost entirely funded by proceeds from WDVA loan programs, resulting in a situation whereby the veterans of our state are essentially funding their own benefits and services; and

**WHEREAS**, the VTF is forecasted to be into a negative cash flow and completely insolvent as early as late FY-2012/early FY-2013; and

**WHEREAS**, this will result in cessation of vital and in many cases mandated services to our veterans during an unprecedented time of financial need, to include Aid to Needy Veterans Grants, Veteran Retraining Grants, Military Funeral Honors Program, County Veteran Service Officer Grant Program, Personal Loan Program, Federal Claims Assistance, VetEd Reimbursement Grants, Aid to Indigent Veterans, Disabled American Veterans Transportation Grant, County Transportation Grant, Veterans Assistance Program, Outreach Programs, State Veteran Cemeteries, and Veteran's Museums; and

**WHEREAS**, it is only right that our veterans should continue to have the services they have earned and the support they need, particularly in this time of war and economic crisis, to enable them to contribute to Winnebago County's economy as productive, independent citizens.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that Winnebago County Board of Supervisors fully supports any and all efforts to provide additional state funding to forestall any VTF insolvency within the next biennium, including, but not limited to, the exploration of permanent state funding for WDVA and the veteran programs and benefits that WDVA oversees.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that Winnebago County Board of Supervisors directs the county clerk to forward a copy this resolution to the Office of the Governor Scott Walker,

respective State of Wisconsin legislative representatives of Winnebago County, the Wisconsin Counties Association and the Wisconsin Department of Veteran Affairs.

Submitted by:

**JUDICIARY & PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE**

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Committee Vote: **5-0**

Vote Requirement for Passage:

**Majority of those present**

Approved by the Winnebago County Executive this \_\_\_\_\_ day of April, 2011.

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Mark L. Harris