



## Legislation Text

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SUBSTITUTE 1

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Substitute resolution establishing an intergovernmental task force to evaluate site suitability for social service agencies, both for-profit and nonprofit, within the City of Milwaukee and Milwaukee County.

- Analysis -

This resolution establishes a 13-member intergovernmental task force for the purpose of evaluating site suitability and creating guidelines regulating the placement of social service agencies, both for-profit and nonprofit, within the City of Milwaukee to minimize overconcentration of services in any area of the city.

Whereas, Services provided by social services are needed by a number of citizens of the City of Milwaukee and Milwaukee County; and

Whereas, Social service agencies provide valuable and necessary assistance to the city and county and all of their citizens and need to be accessible to the clients whom they serve; and

Whereas, There is widespread concern that a concentration of these services is detrimental to a neighborhood's marketing and revitalization efforts; and

Whereas, The City of Milwaukee has no guidelines or policy regulating the siting of social service agencies; and

Whereas, Social service agencies do not pay property taxes and overconcentration of their presence may act as an obstacle to attracting new business and other private sector market rate activity into an area; and

Whereas, Social service agencies need to work more closely with neighborhood residents and neighborhood organizations to minimize the adverse impact their clients and services may have upon a neighborhood; and

Whereas, Certain areas of the City of Milwaukee and County of Milwaukee have become so engulfed by the NIMBY (Not In My BackYard) attitude that social service agencies never seek to locate in them or the areas never give fair consideration to the location of any social services within their boundaries; and

Whereas, In the Zoning Code of the City of Milwaukee, the definitions of "permitted uses" and "special uses" in the various zoning districts are obsolete and not well-defined relative to the current and future services provided by the full range of social services in the City and County of Milwaukee; and

Whereas, The County of Milwaukee primarily has the responsibility of contracting for mental health services and residential placement of persons with disabilities; and

Whereas, Certain agencies have the primary responsibility of advising clients who were recently incarcerated on how and where to find housing and other services; and

Whereas, The County and State have received little or no guidance from the City through its zoning regulations regarding location of social service agencies; and

Whereas, This lack of coordinated or cooperative effort has led to social service agencies being left to their own devices and often locating without consultation with organized neighborhood groups and without relation to any coordinated intergovernmental plan regarding siting of social services; and

Whereas, The location of social services is constrained by the City of Milwaukee's geography, with Lake Michigan preventing locations to the east of the central business district, and with the Menomonee Valley separating convenient north and south side locations with a vast divide; and

Whereas, Public transit service facilities are very important in siting of social service agencies and not all areas of the City and County are directly served by bus lines; and

Whereas, The Board of Zoning Appeals of the City of Milwaukee has been constrained by recent court decisions and is seeking guidance to aid in its deliberations as to how individual locational requests of social service agencies fit into a logical overall plan for such requests; and

Whereas, Other cities in this country are also experiencing problems of overconcentration of social service agencies in certain neighborhoods;

and

Whereas, The City of Portland, Maine, has a committee to review siting proposals and the background of the social service agencies, and the city also requires that neighbors be notified prior to beginning operations at that site; and

Whereas, The City of Hartford, Connecticut, imposed a temporary moratorium on the siting or expansion of all nonprofit social service facilities, and then created permanent zoning changes that have the effect of making it harder for additional social service providers to begin operation in certain areas; and

Whereas, A Franklin County, Ohio, task force recommended that homeless persons be dispersed throughout the county in "supportive housing" to avoid high concentrations of poverty and social services in any one neighborhood; and

Whereas, The Franklin County task force also recommended spreading out shelters and operating a centralized kitchen to prepare food for the homeless, rather than at numerous churches and synagogues; and

Whereas, The City of Milwaukee and Milwaukee County have never created a task force to examine siting of social service agencies on a city- and county-wide basis; and

Whereas, A task force would have the authority to work on a solution that would best serve the city and county as a whole, as well as plan for the continuance of needed social service assistance in an equitable manner; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, By the Common Council of the City of Milwaukee, that an intergovernmental task force is created, comprised of the following 13 members:

1. The President of the City of Milwaukee Common Council or designee.
2. The Chairperson of the City of Milwaukee Zoning, Neighborhoods and Development Committee.
3. The Milwaukee County Executive, or designee.
4. The Chairperson of the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors or designee.
5. A former State Assemblywoman from the 3rd Wisconsin Assembly district.
6. Commissioner of Department of City Development or designee.
7. A representative of the Wisconsin Correctional Service.
8. A representative from a community-based, nonprofit group serving a population in the area east of N. 40th Street and West of N. 12th Street, to be appointed by the Chairperson of the Zoning, Neighborhoods and Development Committee.
9. A representative from a private sector social service provider agency, to be appointed by the Milwaukee County Executive.
10. The Chair of the Combined Community Services Board or designee.
11. A representative from United Way.
12. A representative from Human Services Triangle.
13. A representative from the Milwaukee Center for Independence.

; and, be it

Further Resolved, That the position of chair shall be filled by a triumvirate composed of a task force member selected by the Milwaukee County Executive; the Chair of the Combined Community Services Board, or designee; and the former Assemblywoman from the 3rd Wisconsin Assembly district; and, be it

Further Resolved, That planning staff from the Department of City Development and staff from the City Clerk's Office shall staff this task force, along with any other offered assistance from Milwaukee County Board staff or Combined Community Services Board staff; and, be it

Further Resolved, That the Legislative Reference Bureau shall compile an inventory of all readily-known social service agencies, both for-profit and nonprofit, prior to the first meeting of this task force; and, be it

Further Resolved, That city departments are authorized and directed to provide assistance to this task force as needed; and, be it

Further Resolved, That the City Attorney or his or her designee shall provide counsel to the task force and shall assist the task force in the implementation of its duties; and, be it

Further Resolved, That the purpose of this intergovernmental task force shall be to:

- a. Make recommendations to the Common Council relating to alternative siting methods which would not result in overconcentration of social service agencies, both for-profit and nonprofit, in certain neighborhoods of the city.
- b. Make recommendations to the Common Council on methods which could be used to reduce the detrimental effect social service agencies, both for-profit and nonprofit, may have in a neighborhood.
- c. Act as a liaison with city and private agencies to resolve on-going problems with individual property owners or agencies whose behavior is detrimental to the neighborhood.

; and, be it

Further Resolved, That the task force shall develop its recommendations and submit a written report to the Common Council and the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors within 180 days of the adoption of this resolution and, upon submission of the report, shall be dissolved.

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