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Wisconsin Counties Association: Applauds additional funding for income maintenance fraud program

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Commends Representatives Loudenbeck, Felzkowski, and Krug for Efforts

The Wisconsin Counties Association (WCA) is applauding today's unanimous vote by the Joint Committee on Finance (JCF) to increase income maintenance (IM) fraud funding by $500,000 annually. The budget motion was promoted by Representatives Amy Loudenbeck, Mary Felzkowski, and Scott Krug.

Currently county income maintenance consortia are required to operate a Fraud Prevention and Investigation Program (FPIP). The FPIP model "focuses on fraud prevention, using investigative staff dedicated to provide all investigation activities under a single funding source, utilizing local agency and/or private contracted investigators."

The action by JCF will result in savings to the state and federal government, as well as the taxpayers. In 2016, county IM consortia generated future savings of over $18 million, and established benefit overpayments of almost $22 million. The return on investment on FPIP was 23:1. Additionally, as of 2016, there were 9,012 backlogged referral cases and 37,034 backlogged overpayment referrals.

"Our local income maintenance staff has forged relationships at the local level that have helped in identifying and investigating suspected fraud within the FoodShare, Medical Assistance, and Child Care programs," said WCA Executive Director Mark D. O'Connell. "Fraud funding is below historical funding levels, while

workloads/caseloads have continued to increase. Today's action will help county IM consortia get at these backlogged cases and allow state and federal benefit dollars to best serve those in need."

Ten multi-county consortia administer income maintenance programs. Administration of IM is a shared cost between local county levy, federal revenue, and GPR, with typically a 50-50 split between federal revenue and the state's share of cost (funded through GPR and county tax levy).

"We commend Representatives Loudenbeck, Felzkowski, and Krug for their leadership and vision on this issue. The action today of the entire committee will assist counties in addressing fraud, while getting services to our state's most vulnerable," said O'Connell.