



BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
OF THE COUNTY OF GUNNISON, COLORADO

RESOLUTION NO: 2016-32

A RESOLUTION ACCEPTING THE RURAL IMPACT COUNTY CHALLENGE:  
A NATIONAL EFFORT TO COMBAT RURAL CHILD POVERTY

WHEREAS, small towns and rural communities are home to millions of Americans and are a vibrant part of our nation's economy; and

WHEREAS, in 2014, approximately 1.4 million children in rural areas were poor and over 700,000 children lived in rural families with cash incomes that fell below half of the poverty line; and

WHEREAS, high rates of poverty have persisted for generations, including over 300 rural counties with poverty rates of over 20 percent in every Census since 1980; and

WHEREAS, investing in poor children and their families not only reduces poverty in the near term, but also improves children's education, health, and earnings outcomes later in life; and

WHEREAS, rural and tribal communities face distinct challenges, including limited access to critical services, fewer job prospects, and in some places, relative lack of institutional capacity; and

WHEREAS, no matter where they live, all families aspire for the cornerstones of economic security: a well-paying job, child care, a college education, health care, a home, and retirement; and

WHEREAS, Gunnison County and all counties recognize that a child's zip code should not determine her destiny, and that every child should have the opportunity to succeed; and

WHEREAS, Gunnison County Health and Human Services has prioritized child poverty in their Healthy Families, Healthy Communities Strategic Result and Gunnison County Community Development has lead the One Valley Prosperity Project (OVPP) with a workgroup focused specifically on social services and Community Health that are developing innovative strategies to increase access to essential health and human services through community engagement, physical colocation and greater alignment of different programs; and

WHEREAS, through The Rural Impact County Challenge, the National Association of Counties and the White House Rural Council are encouraging public, private and nonprofit leaders to reduce the number of children living in poverty in rural areas;



NOW, THEREFORE, LET IT BE RESOLVED, THAT WE, the Board of County Commissioners of Gunnison County, do hereby sign on to the Call to Action to reduce the number of children living in poverty, commit to sharing lessons learned with other counties in my state and across the country to support a national initiative and encourage all county officials, employees and residents to participate in The Rural Impact County Challenge. We resolve to utilize the resources available through The Rural Impact County Challenge to:

- Draw on the diverse OVPP team of leaders and decision makers from multiple agencies committed to reducing the number of children and families in rural areas living in poverty.
- Develop a plan within OVPP Social Services and Community Health group with measurable outcomes that improves access, participation, and/or impact of evidence-based and other promising practices in one or more of the following areas: early childhood education, nutrition, workforce development, and health and human services.
- Implement research-based approaches that advance the plan.
- Create a process to track progress using data and information systems, and to report on successes.

INTRODUCED by Commissioner Chamberland, seconded by Commissioner Houck, and adopted this 16<sup>th</sup> day of August, 2016.

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By: Paula Swenson  
Paula Swenson, Chairperson

By: Phil Chamberland  
Phil Chamberland, Vice Chairperson

By: Jonathan Houck  
Jonathan Houck, Commissioner

ATTEST:

[Signature]  
Deputy County Clerk

