

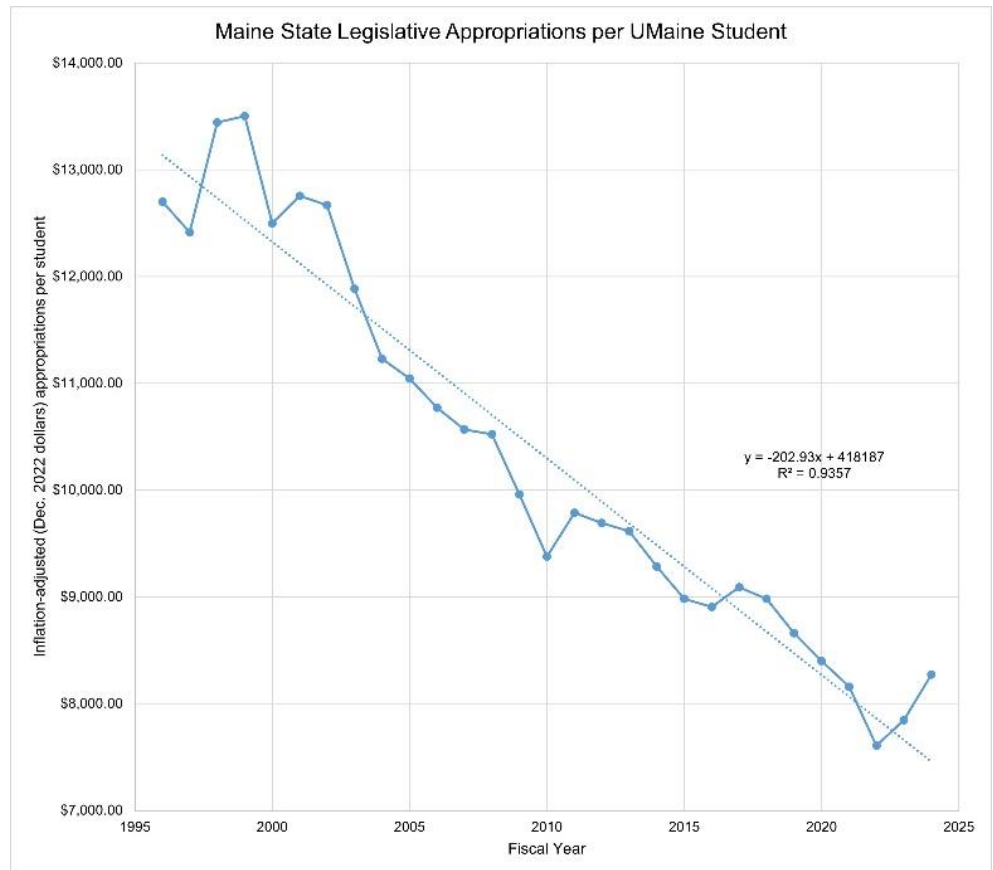
Senators, Representatives, honorable committee members, thank you for the opportunity to testify.

My name is Julie Gosse, I am an Associate Professor at UMaine and a resident of Orono.

I am here to testify in favor of “An Act to Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue to Develop Maine

Talent and Innovation by Improving the Infrastructure of the University of Maine System,” so that we can help our students succeed.

- In my submitted testimony, I graphed the Maine state legislative appropriations to UMaine over time, inflation-adjusted and divided by number of students. Strikingly, real appropriations per student at UMaine have decreased ~40% since the 1990s, a downward straight line.
- Thus, state appropriations have not kept up with inflation and enrollment. This is the underlying reason why infrastructure is in dire straits currently at UMaine.
- This sustained, decades-long appropriations decline is not cutting fat. At this point it's cutting deep into the bone, accumulating damage each year:



- Building maintenance is deferred due to lack of funding and results in major problems and greater costs. A few examples include:
- Long stretches of broken A/C in the summer forcing us to labor at 80 or 90 degrees in our labs to carry out our federally-funded research
- A million-dollar microscope was a critical resource used to bring in millions of federal grant dollars to Maine. It was destroyed by steampipes that burst in the lab.
- Cockroaches are an unfortunate reality in many buildings which have not received sufficient basic maintenance.

¹Enrollment data was obtained from UMaine’s Office of Institutional Research and Assessment and reflects total enrollment without duplicates, both undergraduate and graduate students. Calculator of inflation, adjusted to Dec 2022 dollars, was <https://data.bls.gov/cgi-bin/cpicalc.pl>. State appropriation (E&G) data are from UMS Finance and Administration. Note in the first 3 years of this data series, UMaine was combined with about 2000 students/yr at Bangor Community College. Starting with the FY22 data, the UMaine-Machias budget and number of students are included in the figures due to the merger of those two institutions. These values are state appropriation for E&G and does not count other sources of state revenue like MEIF, but E&G is by far the largest source of funding from the state.

²We are \$60 million in the hole each year (=11,760 students *\$5230 deficit compared to '90s)

³between required BS, PhD, and postdoctoral training

⁴ data are from 2018-2023; https://biomaine.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/2024-BIOME-SOTI_Digital-1.pdf

- At UMaine, we work hard to elevate students into good jobs where they make a positive difference in people's lives and earn a good wage. In my department, Molecular & Biomedical Sciences, we do research that improves human health. Nearly 100% of our graduates are employed in the biomedical sciences and healthcare fields. In fact, biotech jobs in Maine grew by 31% in the past 5 years⁴, far higher growth than other sectors. Industries such as biotech rely on UMaine to train the workers they need to fuel economic growth.
- Thank you for your time and consideration of this bond.

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