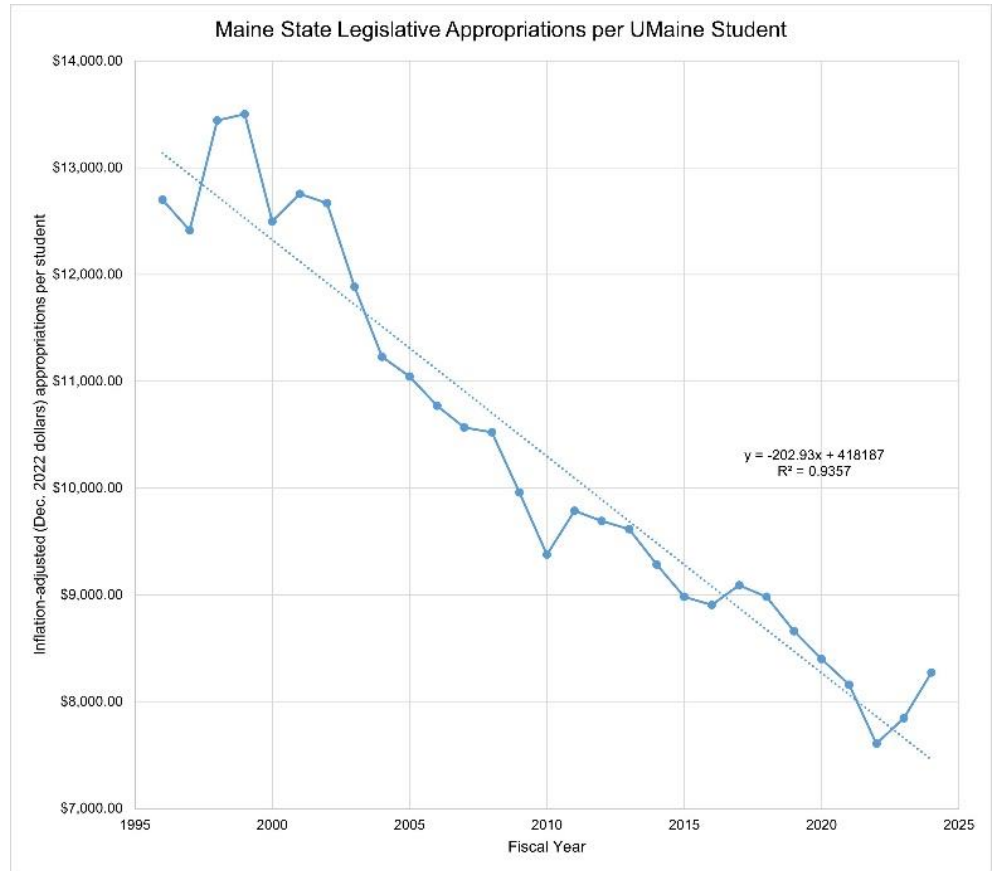


Senator Rafferty, Representative Murphy, esteemed committee members, thank you for the opportunity to testify today.

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 LD **1219**. My focus today is on the flagship of UMS, UMaine.

- 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 line¹. If the trend continues, within another 35 years the state appropriation to UMaine will be zero dollars and the University will be either fully privatized or defunct.
- Thus, state appropriations have not kept up with inflation and enrollment. We appreciate the increases over the past 2 years, but we are still 40% too low².
- 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. An example is equipment and costly experiments destroyed due to steam pipe leaks and overheating, directly caused by deferred maintenance.
 - The meager pay of graduate student teaching assistants was cut by 25%
 - We have 25% fewer professors at UMaine than before the Great Recession despite equivalent enrollment

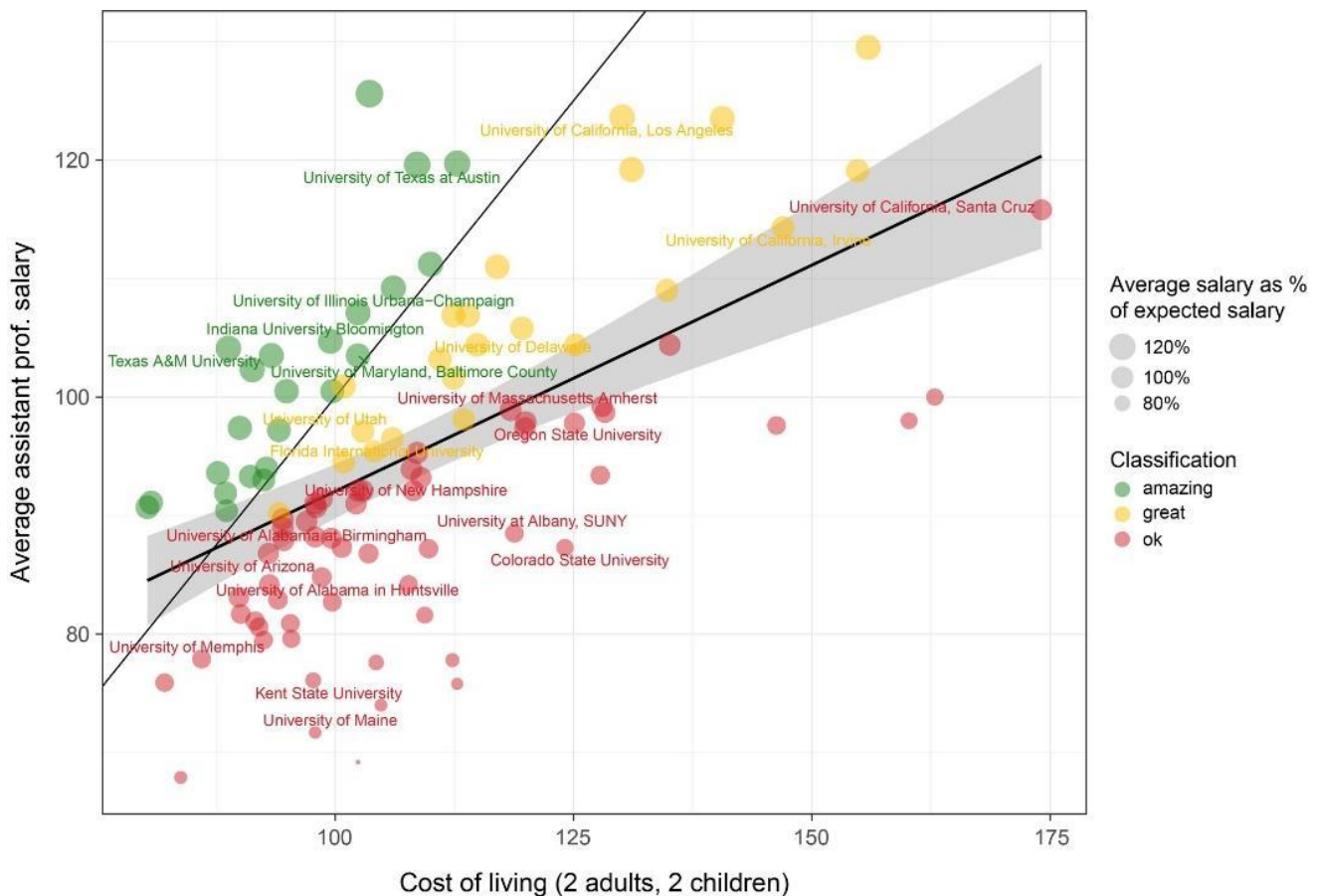


¹Enrollment data was obtained from UMaine's Office of Institutional Research and Assessment and reflects total enrollment without duplicates, both undergraduate and graduate students. Calculator of inflation, adjusted to Dec 2022 dollars, was <https://data.bls.gov/cgi-bin/cpicalc.pl>. State appropriation (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)

³ data are from 2018-2023; https://biomaine.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/2024-BIOME-SOTI_Digital-1.pdf

- A 25% cut in professors of course means fewer course offerings and also 25% fewer opportunities for students to be trained in research, the essential work experience they need to get a job or get into medical school.
- The cuts are not due to overpaying of professors. In fact, UMaine is an outlier low on assistant professor salaries among R1 universities in the U.S. (see graph). (I am not asking that



professors earn more, this statistic is simply to point out that salaries at UMaine are not extravagant, not the cause of the funding shortfalls.)

- 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 years³, 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 request for increased funding to the Universities of Maine.

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.

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