



NATIONAL CORRECTIONAL EMPLOYEES UNION

195 Russell Street, Suite B-13, 2nd Floor, Hadley, MA 01035



March 18, 2026

Joint Standing Criminal Justice and Public Safety Committee
100 State House Station, Rm. 436
Augusta, ME 04333
By email to CJPS@legislature.maine.gov

RE: LD2232 –AN ACT TO INCREASE JAIL FUNDING

Senator Beebe-Center, Representative Hasenfus, and Distinguished Legislative Members of the Criminal Justice and Public Safety Committee;

My name is William Doyle. Currently I serve in the role of Executive Director for the National Correctional Employees Union (NCEU). The National Correctional Employees Union (NCEU) represents nine (9) County Correctional Units in the State of Maine comprising of approx. five hundred (500) members from York to Aroostook County. We have been advocating for correctional, communication, and law enforcement officer salaries and benefits since 2010 in the State of Maine.

The NCEU would like to thank the committee for your ongoing efforts and support for the law enforcement community. The NCEU wholeheartedly supports this legislation aimed at increasing the County Jail Operations Fund. The County jail system has been handcuffed ever since the jail consolidation efforts of 2008. Our organization believes the increase in funding will help substantially with the recruitment and retention of correctional officers at the County level. All across Maine, County budgets are facing significant push back or outright rejection. From national inflationary measures, local unfunded mandates, and highly competitive employer market, County Jail Budgets are facing pressure to increase beyond what's normally projected or accepted.

With the abundance of employment options paying similarly or better, the evolving Maine Criminal Justice Academy Standards, and general lack of stable scheduling it's becoming increasingly more difficult to attract and retain correctional personnel. Regardless of linear or direct supervision, the correctional personnel are imperative toward the Care, Custody, and Control of inmates. When you look at other professionals in the same departments or offices, the communications and patrol bargaining units are not barred by the funding cap of the jails. Cumberland County currently has approx. 70 vacancies and York County has approx. 30 vacancies for corrections officers.

Providing additional funding for the County Jails and rehabilitation programs like the Community Corrections Program will go a long way toward helping Counties navigate the competing interests during budget time. However I would be remiss if I didn't point out the following; during last year's session the committee voted and passed a resolve to add four (4) million dollars per year for next two years whilst studying the County Jail funding. While an important step, the County of Knox received approx. \$125,000 dollars toward the 1.5 million additional dollars they would need to keep operations going. The County of Knox faced some other logistical challenges this past year and had to lay off staff and reduce services to essentially become a sub-station for Two Bridges Regional Jail.

In closing, the NCEU would like to reiterate our support for LD2232 and urge the committee and full legislature pass this important piece of legislation. Thank you very much for your time and I'm happy to answer any questions.

In Solidarity,

William Doyle
Executive Director

Office: 413-788-6238

Fax: 413-273-1023

www.nceu.org