



**MAINE MUNICIPAL
ASSOCIATION SINCE 1936**

60 Community Drive | Augusta, ME 04330-9486

1-800-452-8786 (in state)

(T) 207-623-8428

(F) 207-624-0129

Testimony of the Maine Municipal Association

In Support For

LD 852 – *An Act to Reduce the Property Tax Burden by Adequately Funding County Jail Operations*

April 29, 2025

Senator Beebe-Center, Representative Hasenfus and distinguished members of the Criminal Justice and Public Safety Committee, my name is Rebecca Graham, and I am testifying in strong support of LD 852, *An Act to Reduce the Property Tax Burden by Adequately Funding County Jail Operations* which forms a significant platform initiative of the Maine Municipal Association for this session, and at the direction of our 70 member Legislative Policy Committee (LPC) which is comprised of municipal officials who are nominated and elected by their municipal peers in their respective senate districts.

We are deeply grateful to Representative Ducharme for championing this bill and to Representative Salisbury for advancing vital discussions through her County Administrator-led initiative. Both efforts underscore the necessity of addressing the financial strains imposed by state-mandated obligations on county and municipal governments. This bill also proposes vital statutory changes that address the needs of the County Corrections Professional Standards Council (CCPS) to solidify the relationship between the council and the Department of Corrections.

This past autumn, while the County Corrections Professional Standards Council (CCPS) presented evidence to state agencies including both the Department of Corrections and The Department of Administrative and Financial Affairs regarding the financial pressures on county jail operations and what would be placed in the biennial budget, MMA also held regional dialogues with municipal officials, candidates, and state partners. A recurring theme in these discussions was the unsustainable burden of state-imposed obligations on municipal property taxes.

County jail operations, in particular, account for a significant share of local property tax expenditures. These costs continue to rise due to state-driven pressures that municipalities and counties have no control over. While LD 852 proposes a viable approach to increasing the state's share of these costs, it also highlights the need to strengthen the structural and operational roles of the CCPS, which has been navigating constantly shifting goal posts and with only recently after 2 budget cycle requests supported resources.

The state's failure to adequately support state pressures on county jails has created a crisis. The recently passed biennial budget, now facing a People's Veto, leaves a glaring \$4 million gap in funding due to the removal of Medically Assisted Treatment funds this year alone. This shortfall directly impacts property taxpayers and forces local governments to divert funds from critical community programs to cover state-created deficiencies.

County jails are increasingly tasked with providing specialized care, such as mental health and substance use treatment, services they are neither equipped nor resourced to deliver, yet they are doing it. Facilities vary significantly in age and capacity, from York County's 396-bed jail to Aroostook County's 100-bed facility built in 1859. A one-size-fits-all solution is impractical and ignores the collaborative efforts that counties already undertake to optimize costs.

In FY2024, total jail expenses reached \$115.5 million, with revenues falling short at \$98.8 million—a statewide deficit of over \$11.9 million. Key examples include:

- York County: \$2.07 million deficit, overspending by 16.88% for necessary services to residents.
- Cumberland County: \$1.46 million revenue shortfall.
- Penobscot County: 24.53% revenue gap, reflecting widespread funding deficiencies.

Despite these challenges, the state's annual \$20.1 million allocation to county jails remains unchanged, covering less than 17% of operational costs. In stark contrast, the Maine Department of Corrections has received a 19% budget increase over three budget cycles. County jails are providing services to a much larger and more unhealthy population including contracting for pre-trial services and community release monitoring.

Municipal officials and their property taxpayers lack the authority to address systemic issues, such as delays in the prosecutorial system, judicial sentencing disparities, and the high costs of medical and mental health services. These are challenges only the state can resolve. Without additional funding, county jails will remain under-resourced and dependent on overburdened local property taxpayers.

While it is tempting to accept a frequently shared trope that the counties need to cooperate better and simply share bed space, this is a ridiculously over simplified narrative that fails to recognize the efforts that counties already cooperate under where there is a legitimate cost savings for everyone. It does not take much jail experience or a spreadsheet to understand the 396 bed jail in York County tasked with providing similar services does not have the same staffing and facility operation costs as the 100 bed Aroostook jail constructed in 1859.

County jails now serve as the **state's de facto mental health and detox centers**, often housing individuals who would be better served in hospitals or treatment facilities. Yet jails are ill-equipped, understaffed, and structurally outdated for such roles.

- Many facilities lack basic infrastructure and modern amenities.
- High turnover rates strain workforce capacity.
- Jails are no longer short-term detention centers, but long-term care facilities for pretrial individuals with acute needs.

The needs of residents are not predictable for county jails who still manage not only to stabilize individuals for an eventual DOC residency, but they also provide the predictability of need for those individuals that the state is able to adequately budget to provide, while the state budget response is starving the emergency corrections waiting room of county jail operations.

Maine's county jails are critical to public safety and integral to both health and justice systems. LD 852 provides an opportunity to ensure the state becomes a better partner to local governments by addressing funding gaps, improving transparency, and strengthening collaboration between the DOC and the CCPS.

Officials respectfully ask that you consider all of these pieces of a complex system as you knit the path forward to enable the state to be a better partner to local government for these vital tasks. We urge the committee to support LD 852 and take decisive action to protect justice, public safety, and provide direct and measurable property tax relief to all of Maine's communities.

FY25 County Jail Operations Fund Disbursements

As of 12/31/2024

	DATE ISSUED	Andro	Aroost	Cumb	Frank	Hanc	Kenn	Knox	Oxford	Penob	Pisc	Somer	Linc	Sag	TBRJ	Waldo	Wash	York	Total
FY25 COUNTY JAIL OPERATIONS																			
CJOF PAYMENT	Q1	603,061	355,035	871,427	99,344	190,229	465,407	132,570	152,224	773,913	42,914	300,990	77,429	77,429		213,313	120,246	549,997	5,025,526
CJOF PAYMENT	Q2	603,061	355,035	871,427	99,344	190,229	465,407	132,570	152,224		42,914	300,990	77,429	77,429		213,313	120,246	549,997	4,251,613
CJOF PAYMENT																			-
CJOF PAYMENT																			-
CARA Funding							120,000												120,000
Supplemental																			-
		1,206,123	710,069	1,742,853	198,688	380,458	930,815	265,140	304,448	773,913	85,828	601,980	154,859	154,859	-	426,626	240,493	1,099,993	9,397,139
FY25 SURCHARGE																			
4th QTR FY24 OSR Payment		6,766	5,865	10,028	917	2,373	6,622	2,598	1,718	10,596	715	3,369	956	956		2,762	2,080	8,627	66,949
1st QTR OSR Payment		6,099	3,591	8,813	1,005	1,924	4,707	1,341	1,539	7,827	434	3,044	783	783		2,157	1,216	5,562	50,825
2nd QTR OSR Payment																			-
3rd QTR OSR Payment																			-
4th QTR OSR Payment																			-
		12,864	9,456	18,841	1,922	4,297	11,329	3,939	3,257	18,423	1,149	6,413	1,739	1,739	-	4,919	3,296	14,189	117,774
MAT FUNDING																			
	Sept. 2024		117,952	240,081	107,635	150,000	956,348	767,000	96,766	500,000	164,762	450,000	99,518					255,000	3,905,062
			117,952	240,081	107,635	150,000	956,348	767,000	96,766	500,000	164,762	450,000	99,518					255,000	3,905,062
RESERVE PAYMENTS																			
																			-
																			-
TOTAL		1,218,987	837,477	2,001,775	308,245	534,755	2,018,491	1,036,078	404,471	1,292,335	251,739	1,058,392	256,116	156,598	-	431,545	243,789	1,369,183	13,419,975

County Jail Operations Fund - FY24 Supplemental Request - Unfunded State Mandates

County	Unfunded Mandate	FY24 Fiscal Impact	Justification
Aroostook	Public Law 732 (5/5/22) - Medication Assisted Treatment	\$ 117,952	Public Law 732, May 5, 2022, Sec. C-1. 34-A MRSA §1208-B, sub-§4B; Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) "shall" requirements. PL 732 mandated seven "shall" requirements with no fiscal note to fund these requirements: 1. Screening on intake using evidence-based tools to assess the risk of overdose or withdrawal and the person's history of substance use disorder and to determine initial treatment options; 2. Medically managed withdrawal treatment consistent with evidence-based medical standards; 3. All forms of medication for addiction treatment, including at least one of each formulation of each United States Food and Drug Administration-approved medication-assisted treatments for substance use disorder, including alcohol use disorder and opioid use disorder, to ensure that each person receives the particular formulation found to be the most effective at treating and meeting the person's individual needs. Medication under this subparagraph must be offered for the duration of the person's incarceration; 4. Behavioral treatment options, such as group and individual counseling, and clinical support; 5. Peer support services; 6. Reentry planning and transitional support such as coordination with community-based treatment and case management service providers and recovery organizations to ensure reentry and continuity of care after release, including appointments for services made prior to release; and 7. Assistance in obtaining health insurance prior to release.
Cumberland	PREA A.6 Mandatory	\$ 93,526	The Administrator shall maintain a system to monitor facility operations and programs to ensure compliance with written policies and procedures and standards. Facility compliance monitoring should be managed by a supervisory level staff person.
Cumberland	PREA A.7 Mandatory		The Administrator shall employ or designate a supervisory level Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) Coordinator with sufficient time and authority to develop, implement, and oversee facility efforts to comply with the PREA standards.
Cumberland	Medical Assisted Treatment Staffing & Supplies	\$ 240,081	The clinical management of chemically dependent inmates with a substance use disorder includes at a minimum the following: a.) A standardized diagnostic needs assessment; b.) An individualized treatment plan, which must include medication-assisted treatment (MAT) for inmates with a substance use disorder if determined necessary by the responsible health care provider; c.) Prerelease relapse prevention education, including risk management; and d.) Inmate involvement in aftercare discharge plans, including referrals for continuity of care in the community. This number does not include transitional wrap-around services upon release from the jail.
Cumberland	State Sanctioned Stats 7/2022-6/2023*	\$ 1,404,100 \$ 147,075 \$ 133,000	Classes A, B, C & MU 56,164 Judgement & Commitment 5,883 Probation 5,320
Cumberland	State Sanctioned Stats 7/2023 - 10/2023*	\$ 557,500 \$ 37,725 \$ 41,125	Classes A, B, C & MU 22,300 Judgement & Commitment 1,509 Probation 1,645
	*Note \$25.00 is used as it is in State Statute. Current per day rate for County is \$85.00		
Franklin	Medical Services (MAT)	\$ 48,500	Public Law 732, May 5, 2022, Sec. C-1. 34-A MRSA §1208-B, sub-§4B; Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) "shall" requirements. Increased cost associated with mental health, SUD(Substance Use Disorder), pharmaceutical servicer contract. Old vendor was not fulfilling the terms and we had to get a new servicer in April that came with this increase.
Franklin	state sanctioned inmates	\$ 550,200	From October 1, 2022 to October 23, 2023 Franklin County housed 677 inmates for a total of 6,784 days. Out of those 677 inmates, 96 are considered "State Sanctioned". However that 96 accounted for 5,552 days served. If we were able to receive compensation at 100 dollars per day per inmate. The county would have recieved \$555,200.
Franklin	inmates served over 9 months	\$ 73,600	Out of the total amount, two of our inmates served over 9 months, one for 294 days, the other for 442 days. The cost for both would have been 73,600 dollars at 100 dollars per day.
Franklin	MAT	\$ 59,135	Cost of annual mental Health and Suboxone perscription coverage required by the State to provide the inmates.
Hancock	Medical Services	\$ 150,000	Increased cost associated with mental health, substance use disorder, pharmaceutical 34-A MRSA §1208-B,sub 4B; mandated requirements
Kennebec	Public Law 732 (5/5/22) - Medication Assisted Treatment	\$ 956,348	See Aroostook Justification
Knox	Increased Medical & Mental Health Care Costs	\$ 728,331	The mandate to provide robust MAT services, having a daily population of approximately 70% that are exhibiting/experiencing mental health concerns, and increases in all health care costs, that are higher than the average cost of living adjustments, are significantly impacting our ability to maintain a budget that is under our corrections cap.
Oxford	Increased Medical & Mental Health Care Costs	\$ 96,766	Increasing jail medical costs (PL 732).
Penobscot	Inmate Medical & Counseling	\$ 500,000	Mandated increased level of SUD and Mental Health programming (PL 732).
Piscataquis	Public Law 732 (5/5/22) - Medication Assisted Treatment	\$ 131,250	See Aroostook Justification
Piscataquis	Title 34A §3031Rights	\$ 33,512	Outside of medical contract.1.Hospitalization Costs i.e. X-Rays, CAT Scans, Lab Work 2. ER or Madical Specialists 3. Dental 4. non-suboxone RXs

County Jail Operations Fund - FY24 Supplemental Request - Unfunded State Mandates

County	Unfunded Mandate	FY24 Fiscal Impact	Justification
Piscataquis	Title 25 §2804 Basic Corrections Training	\$ 4,487	Academy Training/Certification 7 people per year at \$641 each.
Somerset	Public Law 732 (5/5/22) - Medication Assisted Treatment	\$ 300,000	See Aroostook Justification
Somerset	Public Law 732 (5/5/22) - Mental Health Case Work	\$ 150,000	Public Law 732, May 5, 2022, Sec. C-1. 34-A MRSA §1208-B, sub-§4B; Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) "shall" requirements. PL 732 mandated the following "shall" requirement with no fiscal note to fund this requirement: C. Each jail shall provide mental health treatment, including at a minimum providing a licensed clinician or licensed professional organization that will be available to assist an inmate who is a person receiving mental health treatment. Mental health treatment required by this paragraph may be provided at the jail at which the person resides or at another jail or correctional facility or by a service provider or entity working under a contract with the jail at which the person resides.
Somerset	State Sanctioned Inmates	\$ 885,000	State-sanctioned prisoner means a person committed to the custody of the sheriff and held in a county jail or regional jail because the person: Is being held as a result of an arrest, indictment or conviction of murder or a Class A, B or C crime; Is being held for the purposes of a mental examination or treatment pursuant to Title 15, section 101-D; Is being held pursuant to an order of the court finding the person in contempt of court pursuant to Maine Rules of Civil Procedure, Rule 66 or Maine Rules of Unified Criminal Procedure, Rule 42; or is being held in execution of consecutive sentences that together exceed 9 months in duration. (Calculation based on 25% of increased costs from FY20 to FY24 due to increases in employee costs, medical coverage for inmates and utility costs)
TBRJ	Inmate Medical/RX	\$ 99,518	Increase in boarders drive consumption Boarding contract does not cover actual expenses MAT Program cost in excess of State funding
York	MAT/SUD treatment - increased costs	\$ 255,000	PL 732 Mandates
Unfunded State Mandates Request		\$ 7,793,731	

County	SSI Percentage	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22
Androscoggin	71.0%	62,661	63,023			
Aroostook	72.0%	36,128	40,114			
Cumberland	51.0%	118,998	114,259			
Franklin	70.0%	8,996	10,179			
Hancock	72.0%	16,557	16,393			
Kennebec	84.0%	54,940	54,040			
Knox	76.0%	21,175	19,991			
Lincoln	81.0%	13,096	12,403			
Sagadahoc	80.0%	10,715	10,148			
Oxford	71.0%	17,342	15,094			
Penobscot	78.0%	86,993	84,463			
Piscataquis	76.0%	3,323	4,557			
Somerset	58.0%	24,057	23,297			
Waldo	65.0%		20,292			
Washington	79.0%	14,595	11,396			
York	70.0%	72,963	70,833			
TOTALS	72.1%	562,538	570,482	-	-	-

Maine County Jails
Summary of
State Sanctioned Inmate/Prison
For
State Fiscal Year 2019

County	SSI per County	Non-SSI per County	SSI Percentage	NOTES:	Total by County	Total Population
Androscoggin	45,568	18,661	71%		\$ 2,278,400.00	64,229
Aroostook	17,288	6,634	72%	6 mos, data = 11961/3317	\$ 864,400.00	23,922
Cumberland	75,000	71,930	51%	6 mos, data = 37500/35965	\$ 3,750,000.00	146,930
Franklin	5,855	2,504	70%		\$ 292,750.00	8,359

Hancock	13,685	5,353	72%		\$ 684,250.00	19,038
Kennebec	52,966	10,213	84%	Calander Year 2019	\$ 2,648,300.0 0	63,179
Knox	20,554	6,370	76%		\$ 1,027,700.0 0	26,924
Lincoln	9,123	2,179	81%		\$ 456,150.00	11,302
Sagadahoc	7,275	1,869	80%		\$ 363,750.00	9,144
Oxford	10,565	4,254	71%		\$ 528,250.00	14,819
Penobscot	66,325	18,688	78%		\$ 3,316,250.0 0	85,013
Piscataquis	1,325	410	76%		\$ 66,250.00	1,735
Somerset	9,057	6,476	58%		\$ 452,850.00	15,533
Waldo	8,438	4,579	65%		\$ 421,900.00	13,017
Washington	7,982	2,177	79%		\$ 399,100.00	10,159
York	58,810	24,978	70%		\$ 2,940,500.0 0	83,788
TOTALS			72%			597,091
FY 19 Total SSI Bed Days:		409816				
					\$ 20,490,800.0 0	

409,816 187,275
597,091
0.69

Submitted by: Sheriff Todd Brackett 3/12/2020

County	Original Proposal		New Proposal	
	SSI per County	Funding	SSI Per County	Funding
Androscoggin	45,568	2,278,400	44,746	2,237,317
Aroostook	17,288	864,400	28,882	1,444,104
Cumberland	75,000	3,750,000	58,272	2,913,605
Franklin	5,855	292,750	7,125	356,265
Hancock	13,685	684,250	11,803	590,148
Kennebec	52,966	2,648,300	45,394	2,269,680
Knox	20,554	1,027,700	15,193	759,658
Lincoln	9,123	456,150	10,046	502,322
Sagadahoc	7,275	363,750	8,118	405,920

Oxford	10,565	528,250	10,717	535,837
Penobscot	66,325	3,316,250	65,881	3,294,057
Piscataquis	1,325	66,250	3,463	173,166
Somerset	9,057	452,850	13,512	675,613
Waldo	8,438	421,900	13,190	659,490
Washington	7,982	399,100	9,003	450,142
York	58,810	2,940,500	49,583	2,479,155
	409,816	20,490,800	394,930	19,746,478

**Maine County Jails
Summary of
State Sanctioned Inmate/Prisoner Data
For
State Fiscal Year 2019**

County	SSI per County	Non-SSI per County	SSI Percentage	NOTES:	SSI Funding Total by County	Total Population
Androscoggin	45,568	18,661	71%		\$ 2,278,400.00	64,229
Aroostook	17,288	6,634	72%	6 mos, data = 11961/3317	\$ 864,400.00	23,922
Cumberland	75,000	71,930	51%	6 mos, data = 37500/35965	\$ 3,750,000.00	146,930
Franklin	5,855	2,504	70%		\$ 292,750.00	8,359
Hancock	13,685	5,353	72%		\$ 684,250.00	19,038
Kennebec	52,966	10,213	84%	Calander Year 2019	\$ 2,648,300.00	63,179
Knox	20,554	6,370	76%		\$ 1,027,700.00	26,924
Lincoln	9,123	2,179	81%		\$ 456,150.00	11,302
Sagadahoc	7,275	1,869	80%		\$ 363,750.00	9,144
Oxford	10,565	4,254	71%		\$ 528,250.00	14,819

Penobscot	66,325	18,688	78%		\$ 3,316,250.0 0	85,013
Piscataquis	1,325	410	76%		\$ 66,250.00	1,735
Somerset	9,057	6,476	58%		\$ 452,850.00	15,533
Waldo	8,438	4,579	65%		\$ 421,900.00	13,017
Washington	7,982	2,177	79%		\$ 399,100.00	10,159
York	58,810	24,978	70%		\$ 2,940,500.0 0	83,788
						597,091
FY 19 Total SSI Bed Days:				409816		
FY 19 SSI Total Cost:					\$ 20,490,800.0 0	

409,816 187,275
597,091
0.69

Submitted by: Sheriff Todd Brackett 3/2/2020

FY23

53,549

46,425

79,370

7,261

18,785

52,413

20,563

13,597

83,864

5,661

26,664

21,862

16,465

68,285

514,764**er Data****County of Origin - BAR**

FY19	FY18	SSI Percenta	SSI Funding Total by County
63,023	62,661	44,746	\$ 2,237,316.50
40,114	36,128	28,882	\$ 1,444,104.00
114,259	118,998	58,272	\$ 2,913,604.50
10,179	8,996	7,125	\$ 356,265.00

	16,393	16,557	11,803	\$	590,148.00	
	54,040	54,940	45,394	\$	2,269,680.00	
	19,991	21,175	15,193	\$	759,658.00	
	20,446	12,403	13,096	\$	502,321.50	
	(22,551)	10,148	10,715	\$	405,920.00	22,551
55%	15,094	17,342	10,717	\$	535,837.00	
45%	84,463	86,993	65,881	\$	3,294,057.00	
	4,557	3,323	3,463	\$	173,166.00	
	23,297	24,057	13,512	\$	675,613.00	
	20,292		13,190	\$	659,490.00	
	11,396	14,595	9,003	\$	450,142.00	
	70,833	72,963	49,583	\$	2,479,155.00	
	570,482	562,538	394,930	\$	19,746,477.50	

WALDO	13,363	14,411
ME COASTAL	6,929	8,533
	20,292	22,944

Change		Smoothed		Change from Original Proposal	
SSI	Funding	SSI	Funding	SSI	Funding
(822)	(41,084)	45,157	2,257,858	(411)	(20,542)
11,594	579,704	23,085	1,154,252	5,797	289,852
(16,728)	(836,396)	66,636	3,331,802	(8,364)	(418,198)
1,270	63,515	6,490	324,508	635	31,758
(1,882)	(94,102)	12,744	637,199	(941)	(47,051)
(7,572)	(378,620)	49,180	2,458,990	(3,786)	(189,310)
(5,361)	(268,042)	17,874	893,679	(2,680)	(134,021)
923	46,172	9,585	479,236	462	23,086
843	42,170	7,697	384,835	422	21,085

152	7,587
(444)	(22,193)
2,138	106,916
4,455	222,763
4,752	237,590
1,021	51,042
(9,227)	(461,345)
(14,886)	(744,323)

Under the current
proposal there will be a
reduction of 15K bed
days which equals \$744K

10,641	532,044	76	3,794
66,103	3,305,154	(222)	(11,096)
2,394	119,708	1,069	53,458
11,285	564,232	2,228	111,382
10,814	540,695	2,376	118,795
8,492	424,621	510	25,521
54,197	2,709,828	(4,613)	(230,673)
402,373	20,118,639	(7,443)	(372,161)

Smoothing tempers
the reduction to
\$372,

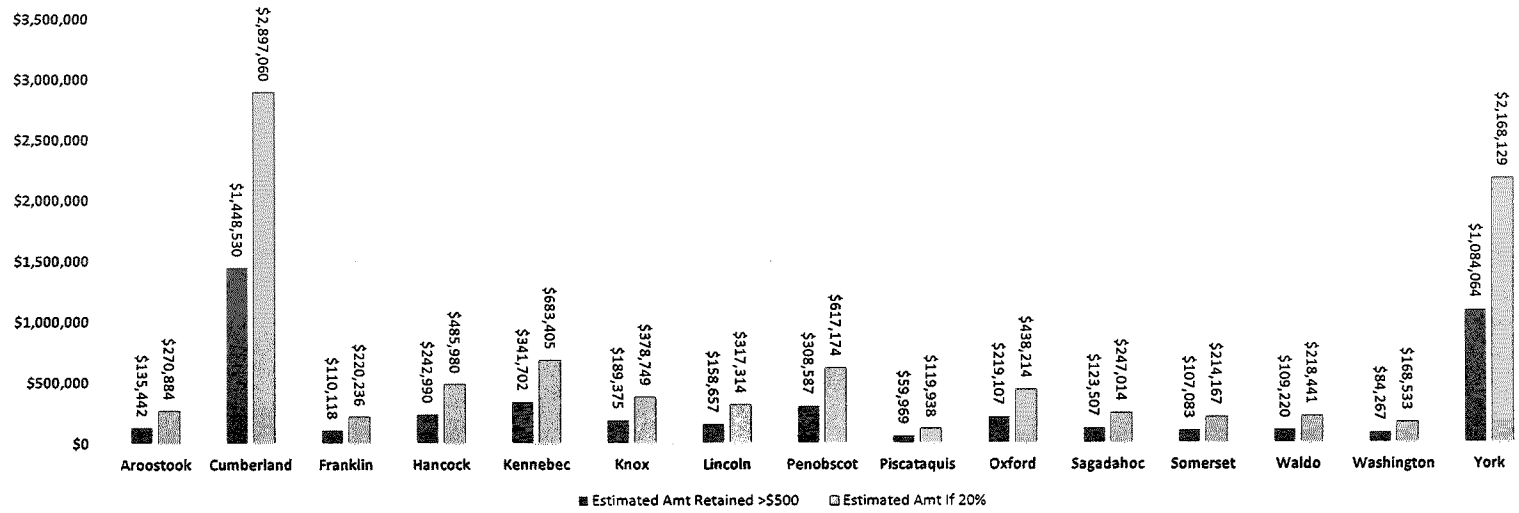
County of Origin - BARS

	FY19	FY18
	63,023	62,661
	40,114	36,128
	114,259	118,998
	10,179	8,996
	16,393	16,557
	54,040	54,940
	19,991	21,175
20,446	22,551	23,810
	15,094	17,342

	84,463	86,993
	4,557	3,323
	23,297	24,057
	11,396	14,595
	70,833	72,963
	550,190	562,538

WALDO	13,363	14,411
ME COASTAL	6,929	8,533
	20,292	22,944

Current County Retained vs. 20% Increase
Value of sales = \$8.9 Billion



Property Tax Facts

General Overreliance on Property Tax

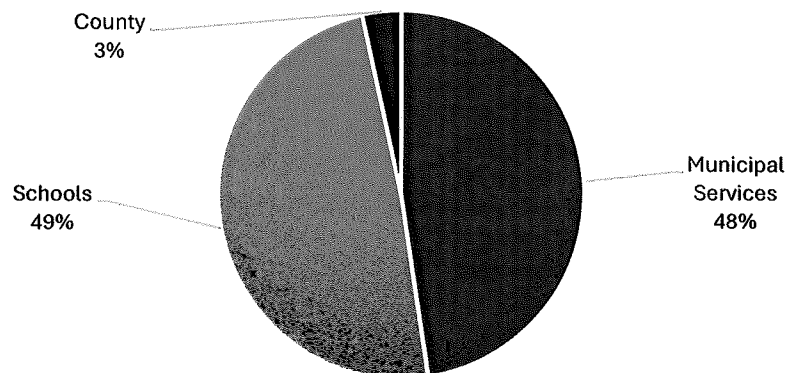
- Of the three major sources of tax revenue, property taxes generate 38%.

2023 Tax Mix

Municipal Property	\$3,165,770,288	38%
State Income	\$2,924,690,003	35%
State Sales	\$2,224,510,428	27%

\$8,314,970,719

2023 Statewide Municipal Expenditures



Expenses

- On average, 52% of municipal spending supports school and county services, which municipal officials generally cannot control.
- In smaller communities, however, schools and county services account for 60-70% of total municipal expenses.

2023 Avg Budget Expenditure by Population > 5,000

