



MAINE MUNICIPAL ASSOCIATION SINCE 1936

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Testimony of the Maine Municipal Association (MMA)

LD 2212, An Act Making Unified Supplemental Appropriations and Allocations for the Expenditures of State Government, General Fund and Other Funds, and Changing Certain Provisions of the Law Necessary to the Proper Operations of State Government for the Fiscal Years Ending June 30, 2026, and June 30, 2027

Neither For Nor Against Initiatives Relating to Criminal Justice & Public Safety

February 25, 2026

Senator Rotundo, Senator Beebe-Center, Representative Gattine, Representative Hasenfus and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committees on Appropriations and Financial Affairs and Taxation, my name is Amanda Campbell, and I am submitting testimony neither for nor against sections related to criminal justice and public safety of LD 2212 on behalf of the Maine Municipal Association's 70-member Legislative Policy Committee (LPC).

For the 132nd Legislature, the LPC proposed a slate of priority platform bills aimed at reducing property taxes for all Maine property owners. Included in this platform was LD 852, *An Act to Reduce the Property Tax Burden by Adequately Funding County Jail Operations*. The association thanks Representative Ducharme for his sponsorship of this bill and his commitment to funding county jails. Although the bill's language changes were removed during the committee amendment process, LD 852 maintains a funding request and currently sits on the appropriations table with a fiscal note of \$8 million, appropriating \$4 million in FY 2026 and an additional \$4 million in FY 2027. The bill in its original form, the committee amendment, and the current fiscal note are attached to this testimony.

In response to the directive provided in Resolve 2025, c. 73 (LD 719), the County Corrections Professional Standards Council (CCPSC), on which MMA holds a seat, submitted a supplemental budget request attempting to close the increasing gap in state funding for county jails. On Wednesday February 4, 2026, the Criminal Justice and Public Safety Committee received a presentation of a report required by the resolve, which directed the council to report back to the committee on several factors involving county jail operations, including "future needs for state support for county and regional jail operations." The council's supplemental request included \$4 million in FY 2026 and \$9.4 million in FY 2027. This funding would bring current state funding to 20% of actual costs, the original calculation used when the current baseline funding was added to statute in 2021.

The state's baseline budget for county and regional jail operations has stagnated at 2021 levels – now representing only 15% of the total \$115 million in 2025 jail costs -- although almost 80% of jail operations are dictated by the state.

It is important for legislators to understand the impacts of county services on the municipal budget. In a presentation to the Real Estate Property Tax Relief Task Force*, on September 30, 2025, MMA shared an overview of the property taxation process from a municipal perspective. Of note in that presentation were the three main cost drivers in a municipal budget, of which the county budget is one. Due to limited state resources across all areas of county government, and in particular the functional decrease in county jail funding, counties rely heavily on property taxpayers to fund operations.

County officials also presented information to the task force, which was considered impactful enough on property taxes that the interim report**, just released by the task force, recommends that the Tax Committee review the report from LD 719 and that the entire Legislature enact legislation to increase funding for county jails.

Increased ongoing funding for jails is critical to maintaining optimum levels of service at Maine's fifteen county jails and to reduce the reliance on, and the burden to, the local property taxpayers. The LPC urges the committees to include either the appropriations of LD 852 or the CCPSC funding request in this supplemental budget.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you and share the municipal perspective on this important issue. Please feel free to contact me or any member of the MMA Advocacy team with questions related to municipal operations.

*Recording of the Real Estate Property Tax Relief Task Force presentation. MMA portion begins at 10:11 a.m.
<https://legislature.maine.gov/audio/#127?event=95582&startDate=2025-09-30T10:00:00-04:00>

*MMA presentation materials begin on page 3 of the meeting packet. <https://legislature.maine.gov/doc/12045>

**Interim Report of the Real Estate Property Tax Relief Task Force (recommendations 8 & 10 pertain to county jails):
<https://legislature.maine.gov/doc/12345>



132nd MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2025

Legislative Document

No. 852

H.P. 538

House of Representatives, March 4, 2025

An Act to Reduce the Property Tax Burden by Adequately Funding County Jail Operations

Reference to the Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety suggested and ordered printed.

Robert B. Hunt

ROBERT B. HUNT
Clerk

Presented by Representative DUCHARME of Madison.
Cosponsored by Senator BERNARD of Aroostook and
Representatives: CARUSO of Caratunk, CRAY of Palmyra, MCINTYRE of Lowell, QUINT
of Hodgdon, SALISBURY of Westbrook, STOVER of Boothbay, THORNE of Carmel,
Senator: RENY of Lincoln.

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Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:

Sec. 1. 34-A MRSA §1208-B, sub-§4, as amended by PL 2023, c. 135, §3, is further amended to read:

4. Requirements; rulemaking by commissioner. The jails shall operate in accordance with best practices applicable to facilities of their type and size, including the mandatory standards, policies and procedures established by rules adopted by the commissioner under subsection 1 and standards adopted under section 1208, and with the following requirements as set forth in rules adopted by the commissioner. In adopting rules and standards for the jails, the commissioner shall ~~consider~~ incorporate the advisory input of the County Corrections Professional Standards Council established pursuant to Title 5, section 12004-G, subsection 6-D.

A. Each jail shall participate in coordination of inmate transportation. Coordination of transportation may be provided by the jail at which the inmate resides, by another jail or correctional facility or by a person or entity working under a contract with the jail at which the inmate resides.

B. Each jail shall provide access to substance use disorder screening, assessment, medication, treatment, recovery and reentry services, including at a minimum:

- (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.

Substance use disorder services 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.

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

1 an inmate who is a person receiving mental health treatment. Mental health treatment
2 required by this paragraph may be provided at the jail at which the person resides or at
3 another jail or correctional facility or by a service provider or entity working under a
4 contract with the jail at which the person resides.

5 D. Each jail shall provide community programs and services as required by this
6 subchapter, including at a minimum pretrial or conditional release, alternative
7 sentencing or housing programs and electronic monitoring.

8 E. Each jail shall provide initial and ongoing training and technical assistance for
9 facility staff and health care practitioners on screening, assessment, medication and
10 treatment protocols for substance use disorder.

11 **Sec. 2. 34-A MRSA §1210-E, sub-§2**, as enacted by PL 2021, c. 732, Pt. A, §3
12 and affected by §5, is amended to read:

13 **2. County Jail Operations Fund.** The County Jail Operations Fund is established to
14 provide funding for county jails and the regional jail. State Prior to July 1, 2025, state
15 funding must be appropriated annually for the fund in the amount of \$20,342,104 plus any
16 additional amount the Legislature may appropriate. Beginning July 1, 2025 and prior to
17 July 1, 2026, state funding must be appropriated annually for the fund in the amount of
18 \$25,445,838 plus any additional amount the Legislature may appropriate. Beginning July
19 1, 2026, state funding must be appropriated annually for the fund in an amount equal to
20 20% of the total General Fund appropriation to the department for the costs of all
21 correctional facilities under the department plus any additional amount the Legislature may
22 appropriate. The department shall administer the fund and shall distribute funds to the jails
23 in accordance with this section for the purposes set forth in subsections 3 and 4 and in
24 accordance with the distribution formula set forth in subsection 9.

25 **Sec. 3. 34-A MRSA §1210-E, sub-§2-A** is enacted to read:

26 **2-A. Additional state appropriation to support standards compliance.**
27 Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, in addition to the state funding
28 requirements under subsection 2, beginning July 1, 2026, state funding must be
29 appropriated annually for the fund in an amount equal to 90% of the costs incurred by
30 county jails and the regional jail in the prior fiscal year in complying with the mandatory
31 standards established by the commissioner pursuant to section 1208-B. Funding
32 appropriated to the fund under this subsection must be administered and distributed in the
33 same manner as the funding appropriated to the fund under subsection 9.

34 **Sec. 4. 34-A MRSA §1210-E, sub-§5**, as enacted by PL 2021, c. 732, Pt. A, §3
35 and affected by §5, is amended to read:

36 **5. Quarterly payments to counties.** The department shall distribute funding payable
37 to the counties for operation of the jails quarterly if the jails have reported on a timely basis
38 as required by subsection 6 and rules adopted pursuant to subsection 7. Failure to report
39 as required may result in delayed payment of funds required to be paid by this section.
40 Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, if a jail fails to report as required by
41 the end of a fiscal year, the department shall distribute the quarterly funding payment for
42 that jail between all other jails that are in compliance with the reporting requirement of
43 subsection 6 for that quarter using the formula under subsection 9 or a different formula as
44 established by the council.

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Date: (Filing No. H-)

CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND PUBLIC SAFETY

Reproduced and distributed under the direction of the Clerk of the House.

**STATE OF MAINE
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
132ND LEGISLATURE
FIRST SPECIAL SESSION**

COMMITTEE AMENDMENT “ ” to H.P. 538, L.D. 852, “An Act to Reduce the Property Tax Burden by Adequately Funding County Jail Operations”

Amend the bill by striking out everything after the enacting clause and inserting the following:

Sec. 1. Appropriations and allocations. The following appropriations and allocations are made.

**CORRECTIONS, DEPARTMENT OF
County Jail Operations Fund Z227**

Initiative: Provides one-time funding for the County Jail Operations Fund.

GENERAL FUND	2025-26	2026-27
All Other	\$4,000,000	\$4,000,000
GENERAL FUND TOTAL	<u>\$4,000,000</u>	<u>\$4,000,000</u>

Amend the bill by relettering or renumbering any nonconsecutive Part letter or section number to read consecutively.

SUMMARY

This amendment replaces the bill. It provides one-time General Fund funding for the County Jail Operations Fund in the amount of \$4,000,000 in each year of the biennium.

FISCAL NOTE REQUIRED
(See attached)

COMMITTEE AMENDMENT



132nd MAINE LEGISLATURE

LD 852

LR 999(02)

An Act to Reduce the Property Tax Burden by Adequately Funding County Jail Operations

Fiscal Note for Bill as Amended by Committee Amendment " "

Committee: Criminal Justice and Public Safety

Fiscal Note Required: Yes

Fiscal Note

	FY 2025-26	FY 2026-27	Projections FY 2027-28	Projections FY 2028-29
Net Cost (Savings)				
General Fund	\$4,000,000	\$4,000,000	\$0	\$0
Appropriations/Allocations				
General Fund	\$4,000,000	\$4,000,000	\$0	\$0

Fiscal Detail and Notes

The bill includes General Fund appropriations to the Department of Corrections of \$4,000,000 in fiscal year 2025-26 and fiscal year 2026-27 for one-time funding for the County Jails Operation Fund.