

Court urges General Assembly to pass HB 557

Staff Report

At a recent meeting of the Clark County Fiscal Court, magistrates and Clark County Judge-Executive Les Yates voted unanimously in favor of a resolution urging the Kentucky General Assembly to pass House Bill 557.

Text of the resolution is included below:

WHEREAS, county governments across the Commonwealth of Kentucky have increased general fund transfers to county jails by approximately 76 percent from fiscal year 2019 through fiscal year 2025, diverting limited local resources from essential public services; and

WHEREAS, county governments are required to house felony defendants for extended periods while cases await trial, often for months or years, without reimbursement from the Commonwealth for individuals who later receive credit for time served, effectively shifting state incarceration costs to county governments; and

WHEREAS, the Commonwealth currently reimburses county governments \$35.34 per day for housing state prisoners, which is significantly below the statewide average cost to counties of \$63.44 per day, forcing county taxpayers to subsidize a core state responsibility; and

WHEREAS, House Bill 557, introduced by State Representative Michael Meredith (House District 18) on February 4, 2026, proposes meaningful reforms to address the growing financial burden of jail operations on county governments and to rebalance the shared responsibility between the Commonwealth and counties; and WHEREAS, House Bill 557 would incentivize the creation or expansion of regional jail authorities to improve the economies of scale for operating jails by providing grants to county fiscal courts that create or join a regional jail authority; and

WHEREAS, House Bill 557 would clarify the financial

responsibility for the cost of detaining inmates charged with felony offenses prior to trial by requiring the Commonwealth to reimburse counties at a rate based on actual costs when a criminal defendant held in a county or regional jail pending trial is convicted of a felony and receives credit for time served; and WHEREAS, House Bill 557 would redefine the state inmate housing model by requiring the Commonwealth to contract with county fiscal courts or regional jail authorities to house state inmates in county or regional jails and to reimburse the county or jail authority for the actual costs of housing those

inmates; and WHEREAS, House Bill 557 would strengthen jail accountability by requiring inmate programming and daily medical professional presence in the jail and limiting the transfer of state inmates between facilities without prior approval of the Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, House Bill 557 is a legislative priority of the Kentucky Association of Counties and is supported by the Kentucky County Judge/Executive Association, the Kentucky Magistrates & Commissioners Association, and the Kentucky Jailers Association.

Friends of CC Animal Shelter receives donation



FRIENDS OF CLARK COUNTY ANIMAL SHELTER FACEBOOK PAGE

Thanks to Judge-Executive Les Yates for choosing us for his donation! The Kentucky Judge Executives Association randomly chose a number of County Judge Executives that were awarded \$1,000 to give away to a nonprofit of their choosing. Judge Executive Yates was selected and he chose FOCCAS! We are grateful for this gift and are happy to guarantee it will be used to support needs of families and pet owners in our community.

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