

**MADISON COUNTY FISCAL COURT  
MADISON COUNTY, KY  
RESOLUTION 2026-010**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE MADISON COUNTY FISCAL COURT URGING THE  
KENTUCKY GENERAL ASSEMBLY TO PASS HOUSE BILL 557**

**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;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE MADISON COUNTY FISCAL COURT (HEREINAFTER REFERRED TO AS THE "FISCAL COURT"):**

1. That the Fiscal Court recognizes the urgent financial challenges associated with operating county jails and housing inmates and commends State Representative Michael Meredith for his leadership in addressing this issue.
2. That the Fiscal Court respectfully urges Kentucky House of Representatives Josh Bray, Deanna Gordon, Timmy Truett, and Bill Wesley representing parts of Madison County, to co-sponsor House Bill 557 and support its passage during the 2026 Regular Session.
3. That the Fiscal Court respectfully urges the Kentucky General Assembly to pass House Bill 557 during the 2026 Regular Session.
4. The Madison County Clerk is directed to transmit a copy of this resolution to members of the Kentucky House of Representatives and Kentucky State Senate representing Madison County.

Motion made by Bathie, seconded by Combs.

| Vote:                          | YES      | NO            | ABSTAIN       | ABSENT        |
|--------------------------------|----------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Magistrate James Brian Combs   | <u>✓</u> | <u>      </u> | <u>      </u> | <u>      </u> |
| Magistrate Stephen Lochmueller | <u>✓</u> | <u>      </u> | <u>      </u> | <u>      </u> |
| Magistrate Billy Ray Hughes    | <u>✓</u> | <u>      </u> | <u>      </u> | <u>      </u> |
| Magistrate Tom Botkin          | <u>✓</u> | <u>      </u> | <u>      </u> | <u>      </u> |
| Judge/Executive Reagan Taylor  | <u>✓</u> | <u>      </u> | <u>      </u> | <u>      </u> |

**Signed:**

R - 22  
Reagan Taylor  
Madison County Judge/Executive

2-24-2026  
Date

**Attested:**

Kenny Barger  
Kenny Barger  
Madison County Clerk

2-24-2026  
Date