

Testimony to the  
**ADVISORY COMMISSION ON INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS**  
Prepared July 9, 2014  
by the North Dakota Association of Counties  
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## **CONCERNING COUNTY JAIL COSTS**

Madam Chair and Commission members, thank you for the invitation to provide the ACIR with an analysis of county jail costs.

Last week, counties were asked to provide their CY2014 corrections budgets or estimated expenditures if they anticipate (after 6 months) a significant deviation from the budgets. As the attached chart indicates, despite the short response time, we were able to get data from almost every county that operates a jail, and about two-thirds of those that contact for jail services.

For the missing data, an estimate was made based on the costs of counties of similar size that are also served by similar contracts. In the larger jails which provide the majority of contract space, costs equal to the fees received from other counties were removed to avoid double-counting.

The counties were asked to specifically break out their debt or capital costs. Figures for two counties are reported in this category. Grand Forks County is servicing bonds approved for their facility a number of years ago. Burleigh County has a \$2.1 million construction fund to launch the new joint Burleigh-Morton jail construction project and they have expended \$300,000 to-date on (primarily) architect's fees – the \$500,000 is clearly a guess at this point. Nothing is reflected in this category for McKenzie County, however they recently reopened their jail after spending \$1.8 million on renovations; however they are also in discussion of a possible new jail.

We are confident that the \$38 million in overall expenditures is a reasonably accurate picture of the annual costs of county jails to North Dakota property taxpayers.

Anecdotally, a dozen or more counties provided information contrasting their CY2014 costs to those of CY2013. Western counties appear to be seeing one-year increases in the neighborhood of 30%, while the counties in the rest of the state are seeing about 15% increases.

## County Jail Cost Analysis - June 30, 2014

		Adult Jail Facilities		Juv. Detention	CY2014 Budgets/Costs	
County	Co. Pop.	Grade	Capacity	Capacity	Operating	Capital/Debt
Adams	2,343	2	7		\$175,000 *	
Barnes	11,066	1	30		\$829,345	
Benson	6,660				\$63,651	
Billings	783				\$72,048	
Bottineau	6,429	1	9		\$500,000 *	
Bowman	3,151				\$142,576	
Burke	1,968				\$80,000 *	
Burleigh	81,308	1	138		\$3,015,243	\$500,000 ?
Cass	149,778	1	352	11	\$7,350,133	
Cavalier	3,993	2	9		\$1,286,827	
Dickey	5,289				\$76,000 *	
Divide	2,071				\$150,612 *	
Dunn	3,536				\$75,000 *	
Eddy	2,385				\$50,000 **	
Emmons	3,550	3	1		\$99,000	
Foster	3,343				\$65,000 **	
Golden Valley	1,680				\$71,000	
Grand Forks	66,861	1	248	25	\$5,005,604	\$1,352,000
Grant	2,394				\$46,000 *	
Griggs	2,420				\$164,702	
Hettinger	2,477				\$65,000 *	
Kidder	2,435				\$30,000	
LaMoure	4,139				\$75,000 **	
Logan	1,990	3	2		\$20,000 **	
McHenry	5,395				\$160,000	
McIntosh	2,809	2	4		\$20,000	
McKenzie	6,360	1	10		\$1,161,663	
McLean	8,962	1	30		\$622,628	
Mercer	8,424	1	24		\$709,000	
Morton	27,471	1	40		\$1,286,827	
Mountrail	7,673	2	12		\$500,000 **	
Nelson	3,126				\$61,000	
Oliver	1,846				\$61,440	
Pembina	7,413	2	18		\$350,000 *	
Pierce	4,357	1	142		\$200,000 *	
Ramsey	11,451	1	71	38	\$345,000	
Ransom	5,457				\$60,000 *	
Renville	2,470				\$75,000 **	
Richland	16,321	1	33		\$736,948	
Rolette	13,937	2	25		\$437,728	
Sargent	3,829				\$132,760	
Sheridan	1,321				\$75,464	
Sioux	4,153				\$15,000 *	
Slope	727				\$15,000 **	
Stark	24,199	1	84	6	\$1,335,000	
Steele	1,975				\$45,000	
Stutsman	21,100	1	94		\$2,908,357	
Towner	2,246				\$42,000	
Traill	8,121	2	13		\$232,050	
Walsh	11,119	2	21		\$448,390	
Ward	61,675	1	104	8	\$2,366,526	
Wells	4,207				\$65,000 **	
Williams	22,398	1	112	2	\$2,420,600	
	672,591		1633	90	\$36,396,122	\$1,852,000

Grade 1 Jails (16) have a 1-year maximum. Grade 2 Jails (7) have a 30-day maximum. Grade 3 Jails (3) have a 36-hour Maximum  
 \* Actual costs are greatly exceeding budget - projections used      \*\* Estimates based on size and location of county