



# **County Investments in State Justice System Agencies**

February 11th, 2025

# NC Constitutional Responsibility for the Courts

- Article IV, Section 20: “The operating expenses of the judicial department, other than compensation to process servers and other locally paid non-judicial officers, shall be paid from State funds.”



# NC Statutory Responsibility for the Courts

- GS 7A-300 provides: “The operating expenses of the Judicial Department shall be paid from State funds, out of appropriations for this purpose made by the General Assembly, or from funds provided by local governments pursuant to GS 153A-212.1 and GS 160A-289.1.”
- GS 7A-302 provides that the county shall be responsible for providing “courtrooms, office space for juvenile court counselors and support staff . . . and related judicial facilities (including furniture), as defined in this Subchapter”



# NC Statutory Provisions for Additional Local Support

- GS 153A-212.1 allows counties to appropriate funds under state contract to provide services for speedy disposition of cases involving drug offenses, domestic violence or other offenses involving threats to public safety



# NC Statutory Provisions for Additional Local Support

- GS 7A-44.1 allows the use of county or city funds for secretaries for superior court judges
- GS 7A-64 allows the use of county or city funds for temporary assistant district attorneys
- GS 7A-102(e) allows the use of county or city funds for additional assistant and deputy clerks and other employees of the clerk of court's office



# NC Statutory Provisions for Additional Local Support

- GS 7A-300.1 allows the use of county or city funds to supplement salaries of judicial officials other than elected officials (judges, DAs, clerks) and magistrates
- GS 7A-498.7(i) allows the use of county or city funds for temporary assistant public defenders



# NCAOC Workload Formula

- Developed by the National Center for State Courts
- Based on the most recent three fiscal years of court filings
  - District Attorney
  - Clerk of Court
  - Magistrates
  - Superior and District Court Judges
- Indigent Defense Services conducts workload analysis for Public Defender Offices



# Superior Court Filings & Dispositions

- 5,848 total superior court criminal cases filed in Mecklenburg County in FY2023-2024.
  - The number of superior court criminal case filings in Mecklenburg County **decreased 58.2% over the last five Fiscal Years**
- 10,834 total superior court criminal cases disposed in Mecklenburg County in FY2023-2024



# District Court Filings & Dispositions

- 68,619 total district court criminal cases (no infractions) filed in FY2023-2024. The number of district court criminal case (no infraction) filings in Mecklenburg County **decreased 35.5% over the last five Fiscal Years**
- 74,992 total district court criminal cases (no infractions) disposed in FY2023-2024



# Pending Court Cases

*From February 29, 2020 (start of pandemic) to December 31, 2024 (present)*

- *The number of **pending felony cases** and **pending superior court highest charge misdemeanor cases** in Mecklenburg County has **decreased***
- *The number of **pending district court criminal and infraction cases**, **pending district court criminal cases (no infractions)**, and **pending DWI cases** in Mecklenburg County has **increased***
- *The number of **pending criminal cases in each case category (felony, district court criminal and infraction, district court criminal (no infraction), DWI, and superior court highest charge misdemeanor)** in Mecklenburg County has **decreased**.*



# Court Partner Needs Based on Filings

	AOC Identified Need	State Funded	County Funded	Total
Clerks	249.05	212.60	8	220.60
District Attorney	84.6	62	25	87
DA Legal Assistants	58.1	26	23	49
Magistrates	50	38.5	N/A	38.5
District Court Judges	19.48	21	N/A	21
Superior Court Judges	10.8	8	N/A	8
Trial Court Administrator			14	



# Court Partner Needs Based on Filings

- Indigent Defense Services conducted an analysis of staffing needs of Public Defender Offices in 2019.
- It found that the Mecklenburg County Public Defender needed **93.97** attorneys but only had **60** funded positions.
- Currently, the County provides funding for 8 Assistant Public Defenders and 8 support staff positions.



# Wake County Needs Based on Filings

	AOC Indicated Need	State Funded
Clerk	213.32	187.50
District Attorney	65	45
District Attorney Legal Assistants	51	32.75
Magistrates	40.7	32
District Court Judges	18.92	20
Superior Court Judges	7.6	6
Public Defenders*	56.08	31



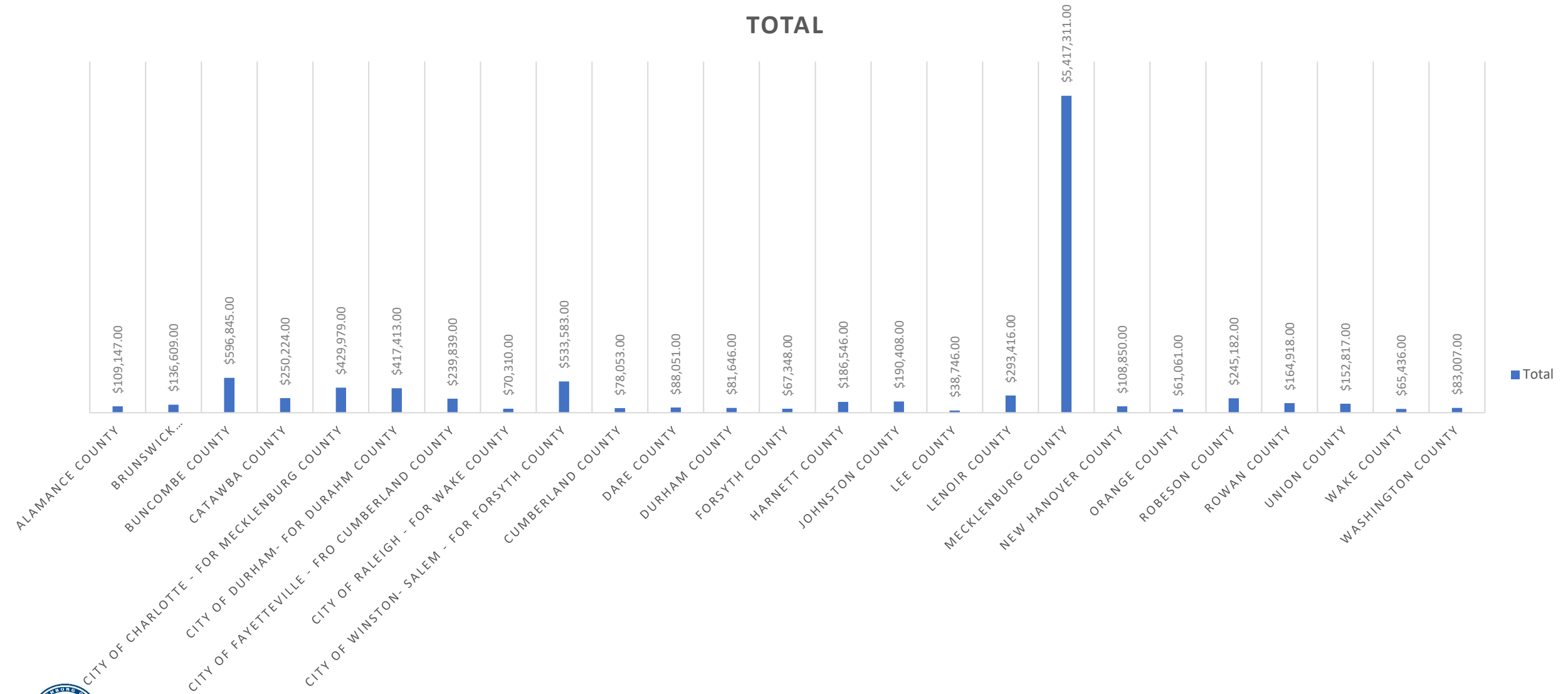
# State Partners' County Budget Breakdown

## FY25 County Funding \$8,588,698

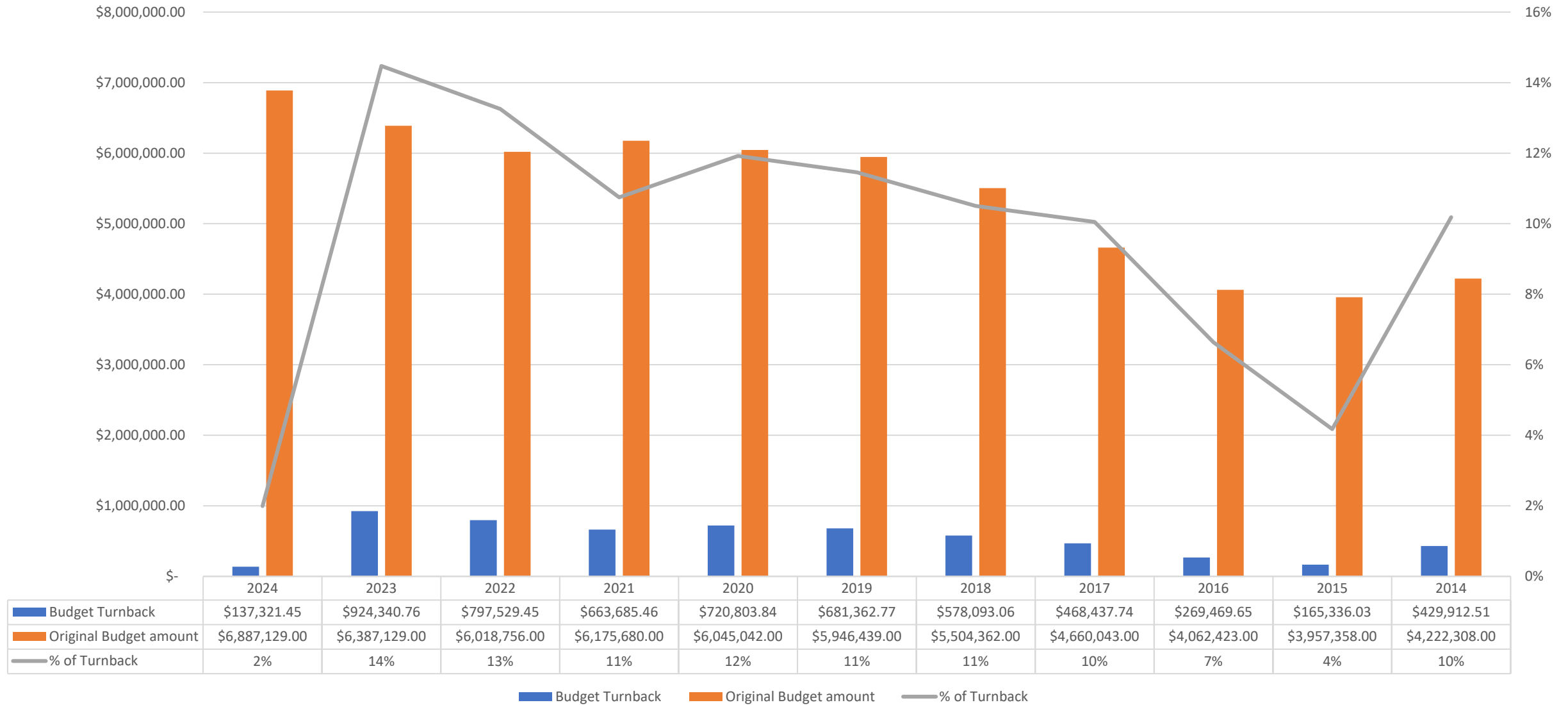
- \$144,393 is one-time funding
- \$95,053 is for the salary and benefits of one FT employee
- \$7,525,989 is to fund three State contracts (AOC, IDS, & Supplement)
- The remaining \$823,263 is under other object codes for operational expenses



# Local Support Comparison: FY 2022



# Unexpended Budget FY14 through FY24



## Salary Amount

- 86 positions funded
  - 79 filled positions (as of February 2025)
    - 26 are paid under the contracted budgeted amount
    - 18 are paid at the contracted budgeted amount
    - 35 are paid over the contracted budgeted amount



# Questions?

