



BUDGET REVIEW COMMITTEE

Mayor Pro Tem R. Gary Allen – Chairperson
Councilor Toyia Tucker – Vice Chairperson

Councilors: John Anker, Travis L. Chambers, Joanne Cogle,
Charmaine Crabb, Glenn Davis, R. Walker Garrett, Byron Hickey and Bruce Huff

Muscogee County School Board Chambers
Public Education Center
2960 Macon Road, Columbus, Georgia 31906

May 19, 2026
9:00 AM

A G E N D A

CALL TO ORDER – Chairperson R. Gary Allen, Presiding

INVOCATION

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

PRESENTATIONS:

1. Sheriff's Office - Greg Countryman, Sheriff
2. Municipal Court Clerk - Reginald Thompson, Clerk
3. Superior Court Clerk - Danielle Forte', Clerk
4. Juvenile Court - Samantha Cannon, Court Clerk and Juvenile Court Judges
5. Facilities Maintenance - Allen Minton, Interim Facilities Director
6. Muscogee County Prison - Herbert Walker, Warden
7. Add/Delete List

The City of Columbus strives to provide accessibility to individuals with disabilities and who require certain accommodations in order to allow them to observe and/or participate in this meeting. If assistance is needed regarding the accessibility of the meeting or the facilities, individuals may contact the Mayor's Commission for Persons with Disabilities at 706-653-4492 promptly to allow the City Government to make reasonable accommodations for those persons.

File Attachments for Item:

2. Municipal Court Clerk - Reginald Thompson, Clerk



Municipal Court Clerk's Office

FY27 Council Budget Review

May 19, 2026

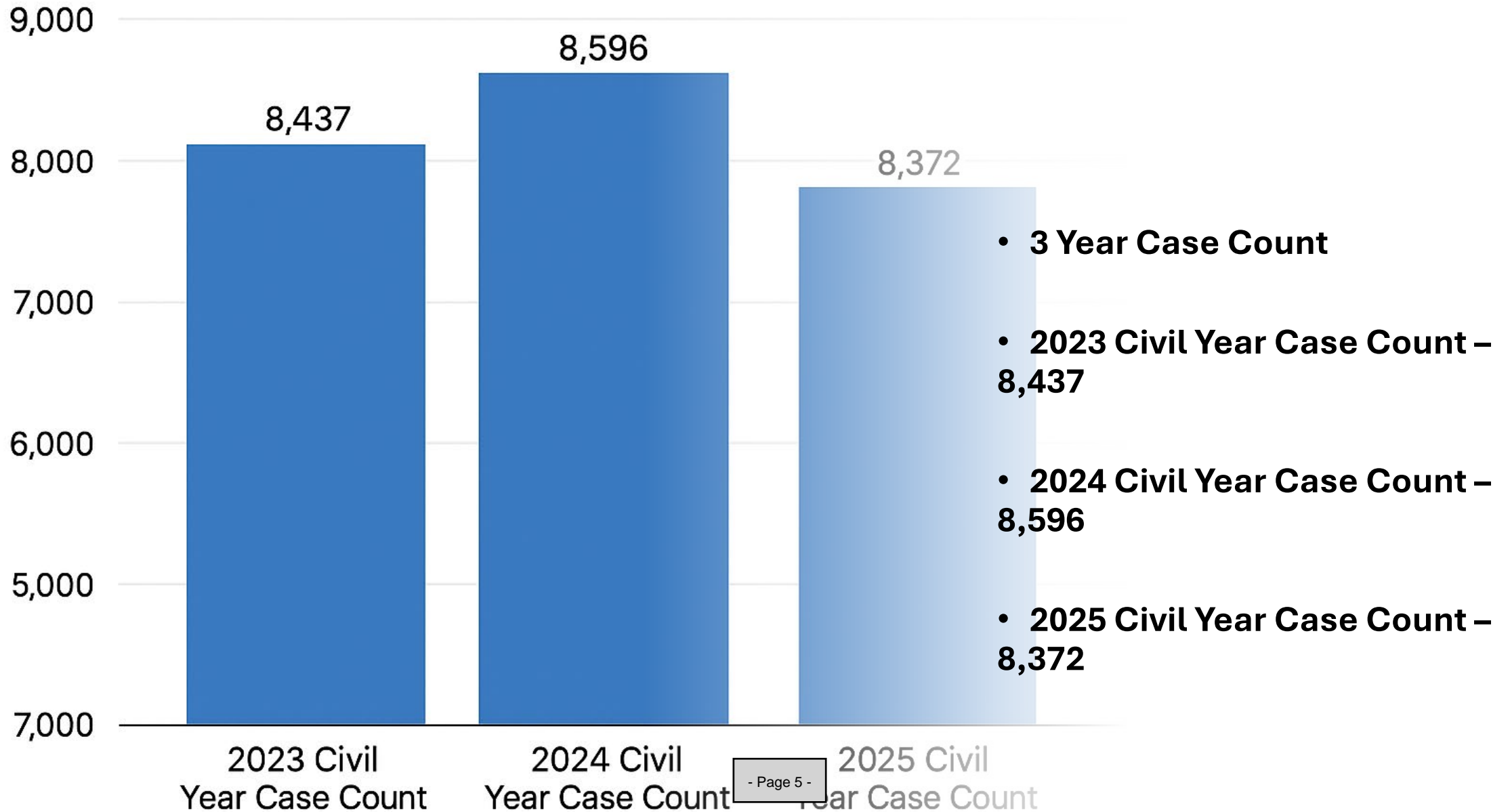
Busiest Office in Government Center

2023 Citizens Served – 15,570

2024 Citizens Served – 15,709

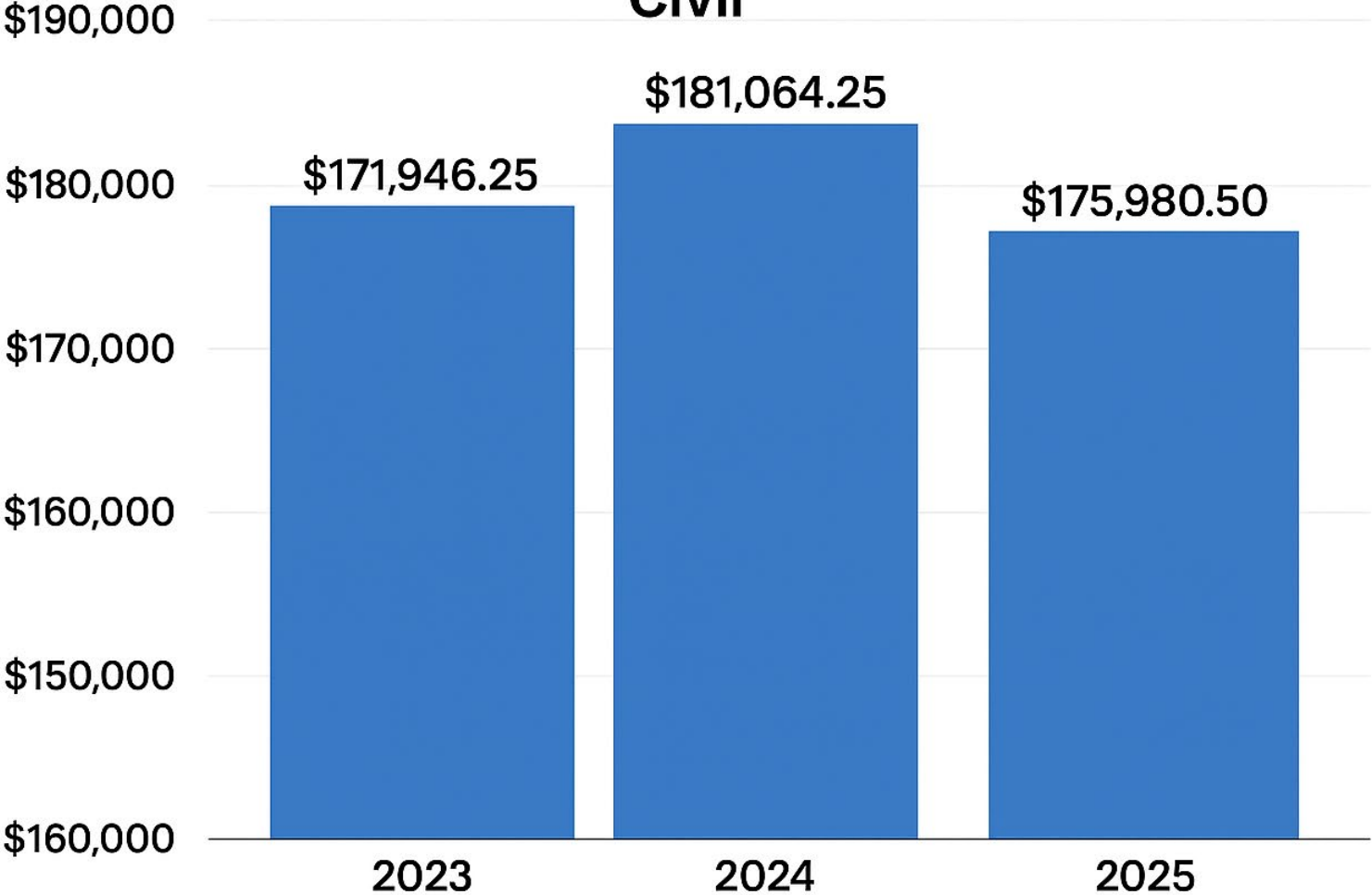
2025 Citizens Served – 15,829

3 Year Case Count



Yearly Contributions to CCG

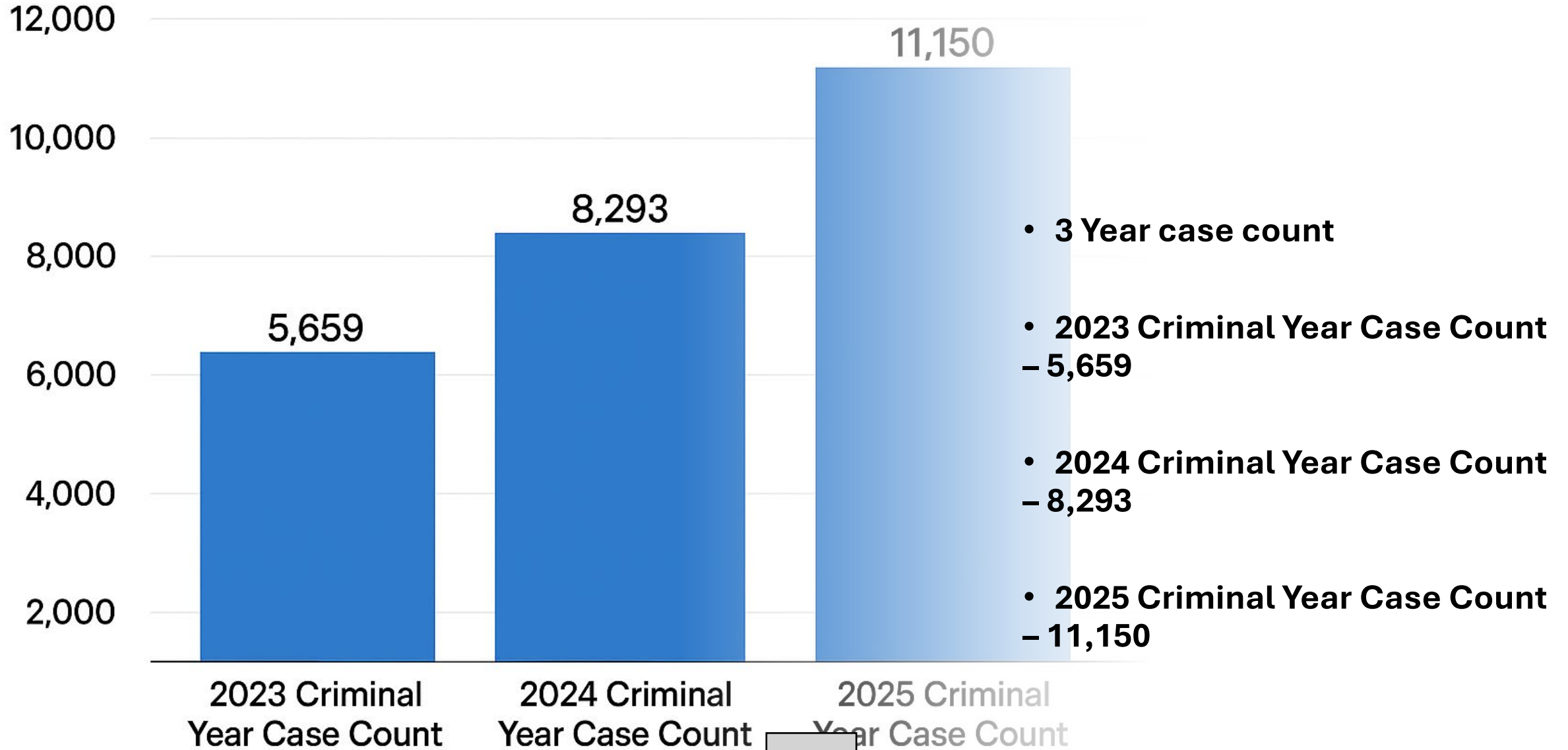
Civil



Civil

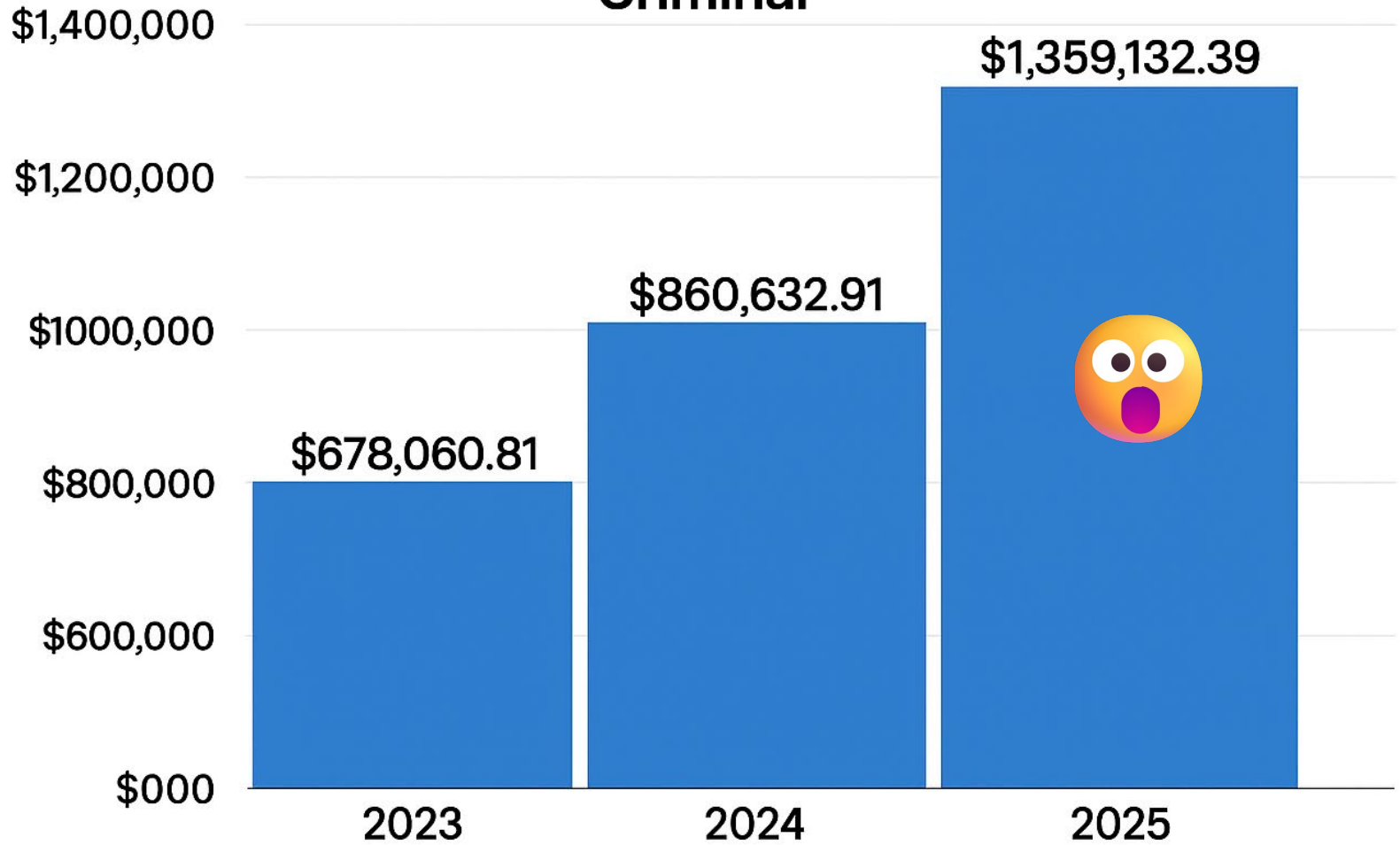
2023 \$171,946.25
2024 \$181,064.25
2025 \$175,980.50

3 Year Case Count



Yearly Contributions to CCG

Criminal



Criminal
2023 \$678,060.81
2024 \$860,632.91
2025 \$1,359,132.39

- **Monthly Payouts for Civil**

- CCG
- Law Library
- Sheriff's Retirement Fund
- GSCCCA – GA Superior Court Clerk's Cooperative Authority
- Office of Dispute Resolution

- **Monthly Payouts for Criminal**

- CCG
- Law Library
- Sheriff's Retirement Fund
- GSCCCA
- Peace Officer's Annuity and Benefit Fund

Item #2.

Municipal Court Chief Deputy Clerk (G126) – \$61,910.16 (Current Salary)

Item #2.

Salaries of Comparable Positions

- **Clerk of Superior Court**
 - Chief Deputy Clerk (G126) – \$80,189.72
- **Recorder's Court**
 - Chief Clerk (G126) - \$78,609.70
- **Juvenile Court**
 - Court Director/Clerk of Court (G126) - \$74,053.72

Request to Budget Review Committee:

Increase Municipal Court Chief Deputy Clerk (G126) salary to \$74,053.72 to be in-line with other comparable positions.

Questions???

File Attachments for Item:

4. Juvenile Court - Samantha Cannon, Court Clerk and Juvenile Court Judges

LAW OFFICE OF AMY C. WALTERS, LLC
936 SECOND AVENUE, SUITE 102
COLUMBUS, GEORGIA 31901

PLEASE ADDRESS MAIL TO:
POST OFFICE BOX 2126
COLUMBUS, GEORGIA 31902

TELEPHONE:
(706) 984-8424

May 11, 2026

Via Email Only

Columbus City Council
c/o Finance Director
Angelica Alexander
aalexander@columbusga.org

Dear Council Members,

I am the incoming Presiding Judge of the Juvenile Court of the Chattahoochee Judicial Circuit, having been selected by the Superior Court Judges for the term beginning July 1, 2026. The Superior Court has also appointed Mr. Christopher Williams as the other incoming full-time judge and Mr. Thomas Tebeau as the incoming part-time Judge, both of whom will also take office July 1, 2026.

The Juvenile Court is requesting additional funds in the budget to move our current part time Judge, who is listed as a 3 day a week part-time position, to full-time. A third full time Judge will provide the children and families in the Court with a faster and more efficient path to permanency in dependency cases, increased focus by the Court to each family during the pendency of a case, and a more manageable caseload in line with national model rules.

The outgoing Juvenile Court Judges planned to come to council to ask for an added full-time judicial position, in addition to the 2 full-time and one part-time position we have now, but we are not asking for an entirely new position to be created at this time. We are simply requesting that part-time position be moved to a full-time position, which is not as financially impactful to the city as an entirely new position.

The Juvenile Court handles dependency and delinquency proceedings involving children in our area. Dependency proceedings involve children that have been removed from the care of their parents or legal custodians and placed in the legal custody of the Department of Family and Children Services. Delinquency proceedings involve children that have been charged with a crime as well as children charged with CHINS offenses (Children in Need of Services), which are status offenses (truancy, unruly/ungovernable, and runaway).

Currently in Muscogee County alone there are approximately 430 children in foster care. In the Chattahoochee Judicial Circuit, there are almost 500 children in care. We have averaged well over 500 children in care for over a year if not longer, even approaching 560 children in March of last year.

Our dependency caseload far exceeds that of comparable jurisdictions. In 2025, Savannah had an average of 291 foster children and the Hall County Circuit in Gainesville averaging 272 children in care. These circuits have comparable child populations to our area, but half the number

of children in care. These circuits also have more judges on the bench, with Savannah having 3 full time Judges and 3 part-time Judges and Gainesville having three full time Judges. Moving the part-time position to full-time is needed to address the backlog and to move cases and children towards permanency in a timely fashion.

Local delinquency numbers are also much higher than comparable jurisdictions. In 2024, Muscogee County filed 1,298 petitions for delinquency compared to 647 petitions in Savannah and 409 petitions in the Hall County Circuit. With three full time Judges, each Judge will have their own docket, allowing the Court to provide more attention to each child and family. The Court will also be working to partner with local school districts to provide services to children and families both before and after they have a case before the Court.

For the past 15 years, one Judge has handled all dependency cases, and one has handled all delinquency cases. Model rules suggest that this does not provide for a Judge to truly know the case or the child, when there are so many cases before them each week. With one Judge handling all cases there is simply not enough time to address all concerns in each case and to adequately move the case through the judicial process. The incoming Juvenile Court bench wishes to move to a schedule that each Judge has their own delinquency and dependency docket, which will allow a better distribution of cases so that each Judge can better manage their docket and be more involved with each family. However, for this plan to be implemented and be successful, we need 3 full time Judges.

We understand that each department in the city comes before council each year asking for additional funds. However, we believe these funds to support the bench in Juvenile Court are vital to the community, to allow the personnel to implement programs both inside and outside of the courtroom to serve the children in our area. Thank you for your consideration.


Sincerely,



Amy C. Walters



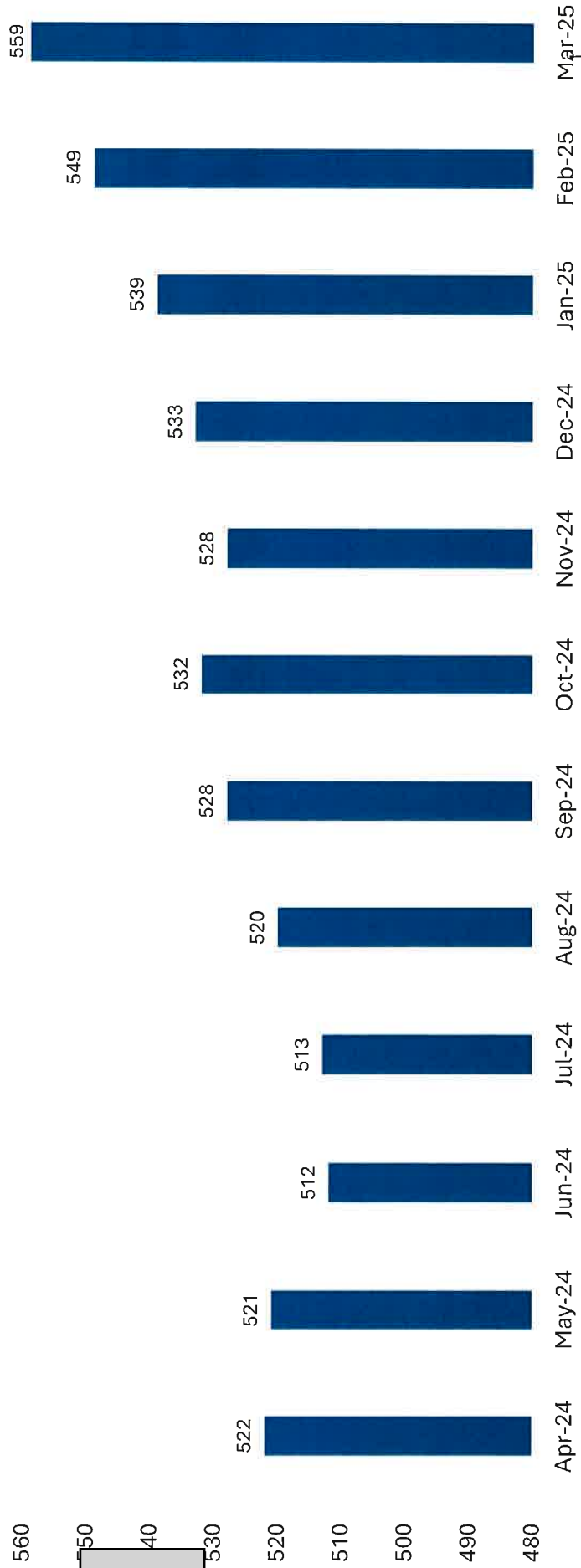
Christopher Williams



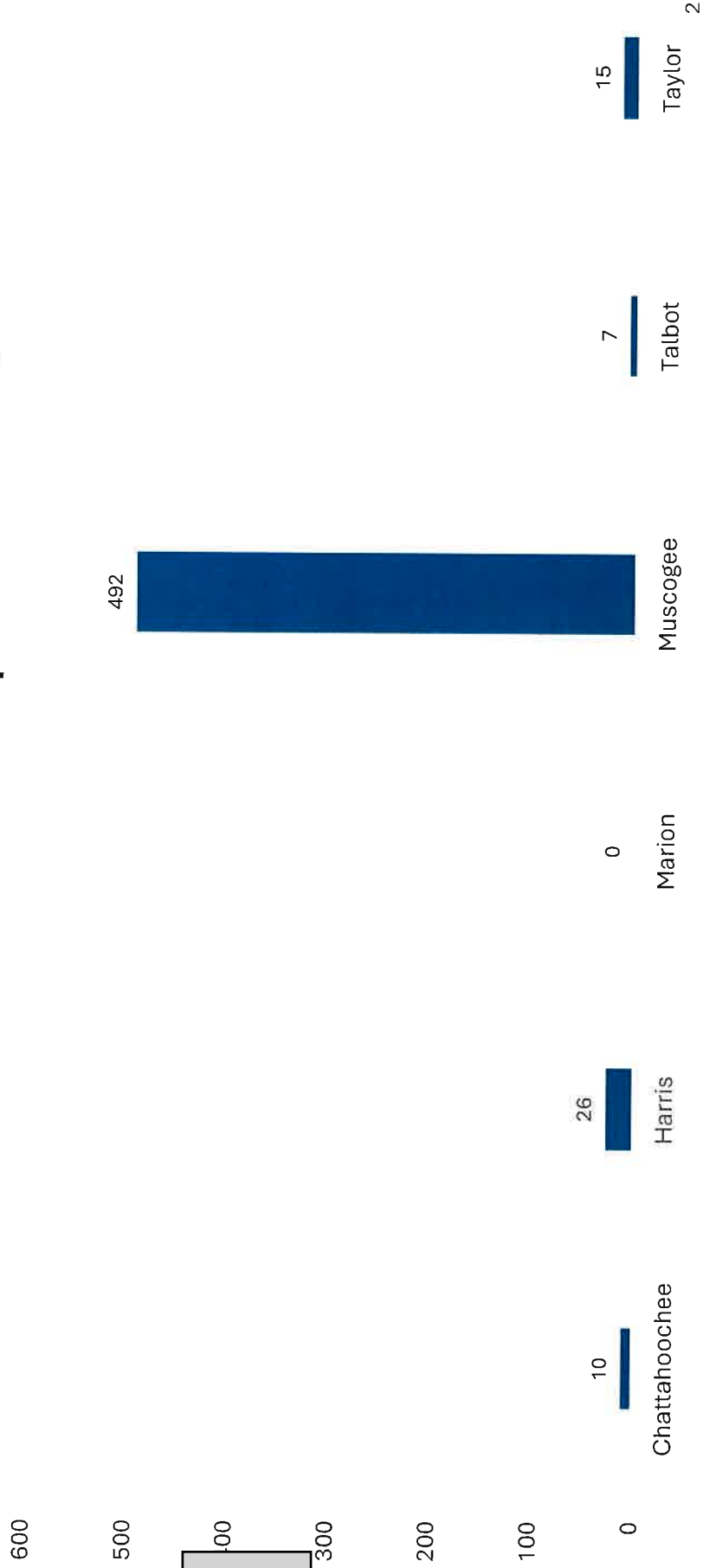
Thomas Tebeau

AVERAGE DAILY CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE IN ACTUAL NUMBERS CHATTAHOOCHEE JUDICIAL CIRCUIT

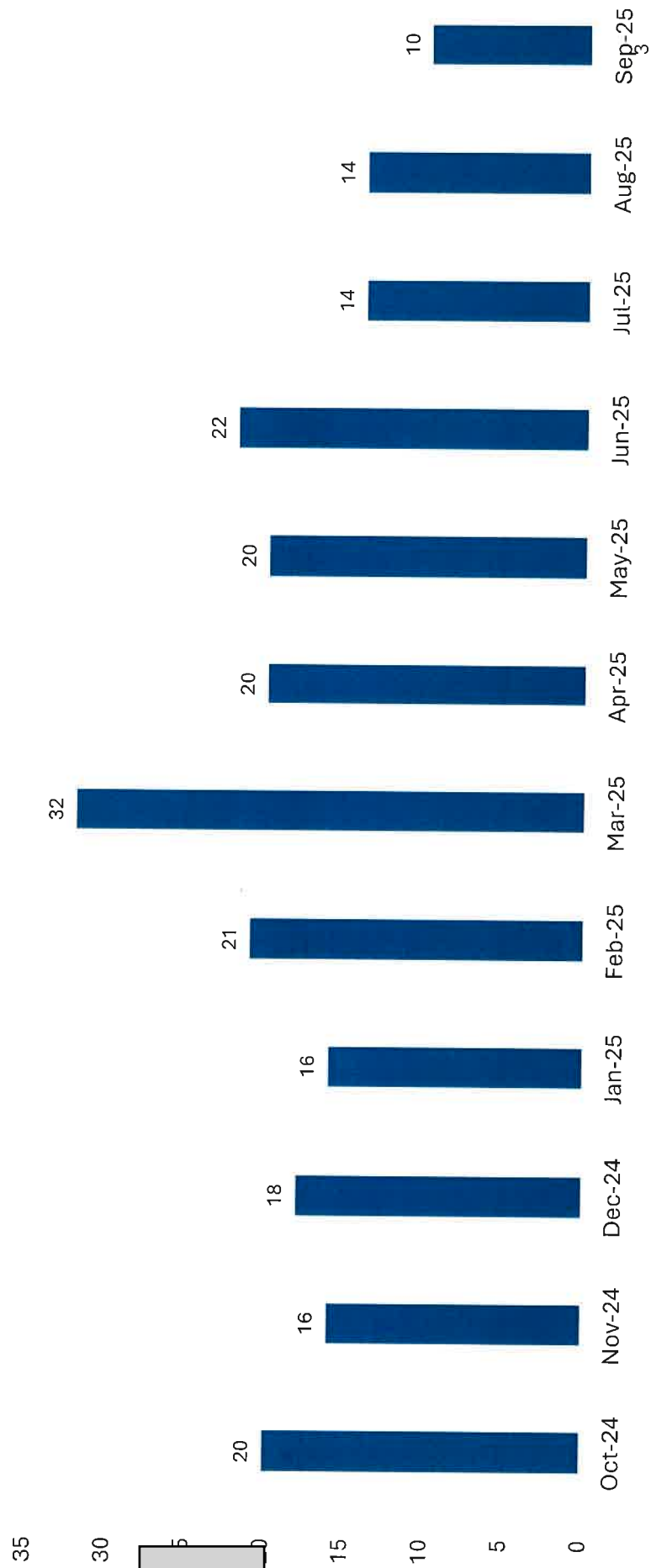
April 2024 – March 2025



AVERAGE DAILY CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE BY COUNTY – CHATTAHOOCHEE JUDICIAL CIRCUIT October 2024 – September 2025

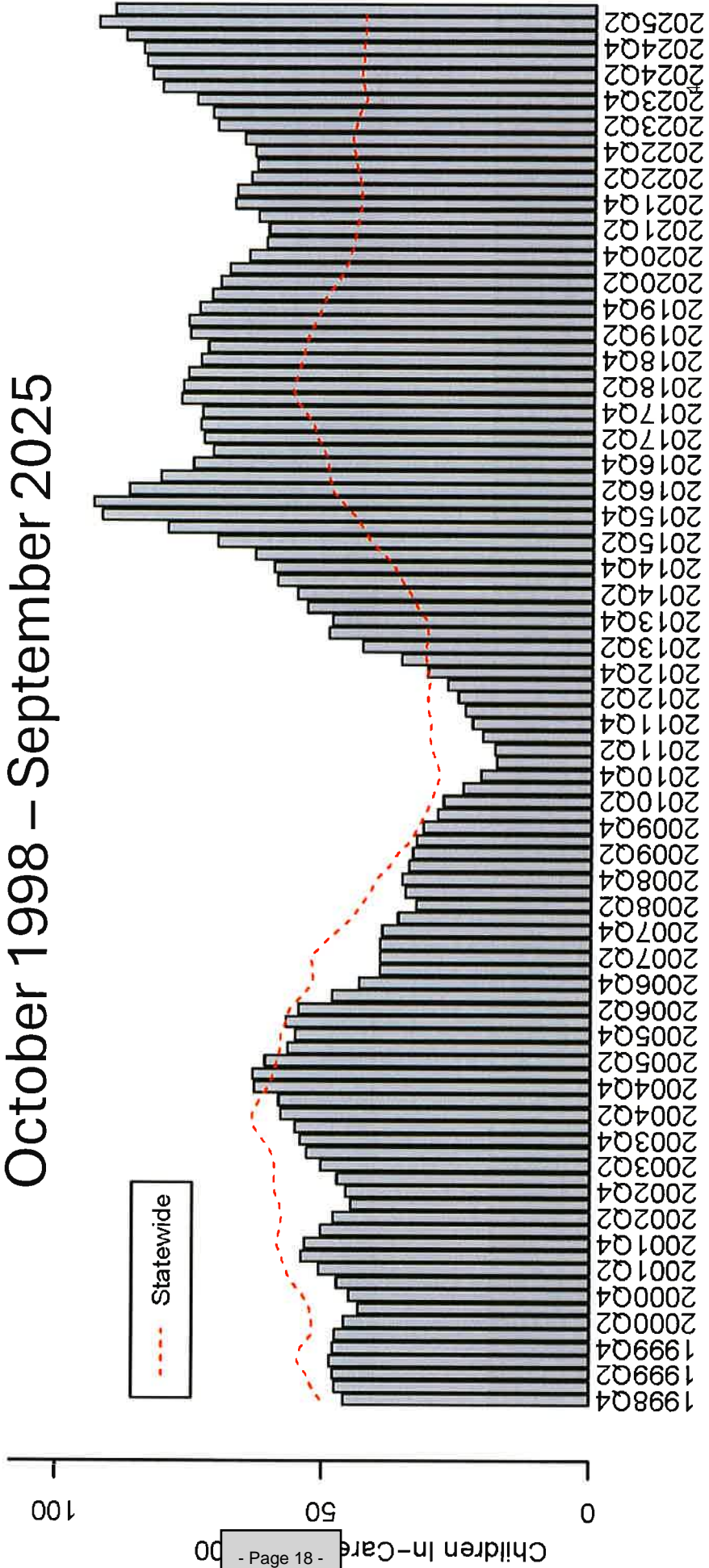


MONTHLY REMOVALS IN ACTUAL NUMBERS CHATTAHOOCHEE JUDICIAL CIRCUIT October 2024 – September 2025

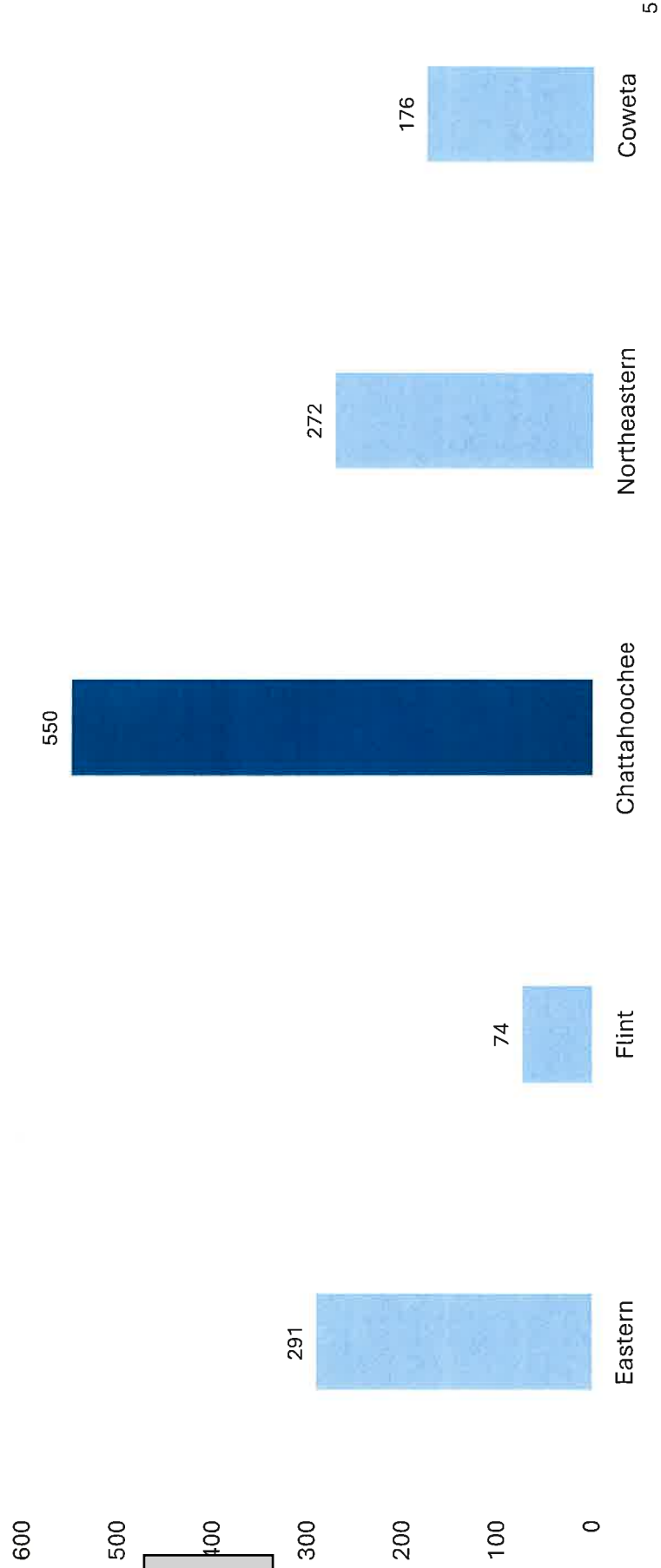


AVERAGE DAILY CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE CHATTAHOOCHEE JUDICIAL CIRCUIT

October 1998 – September 2025



AVERAGE DAILY CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE IN ACTUAL NUMBERS October 2024 – September 2025

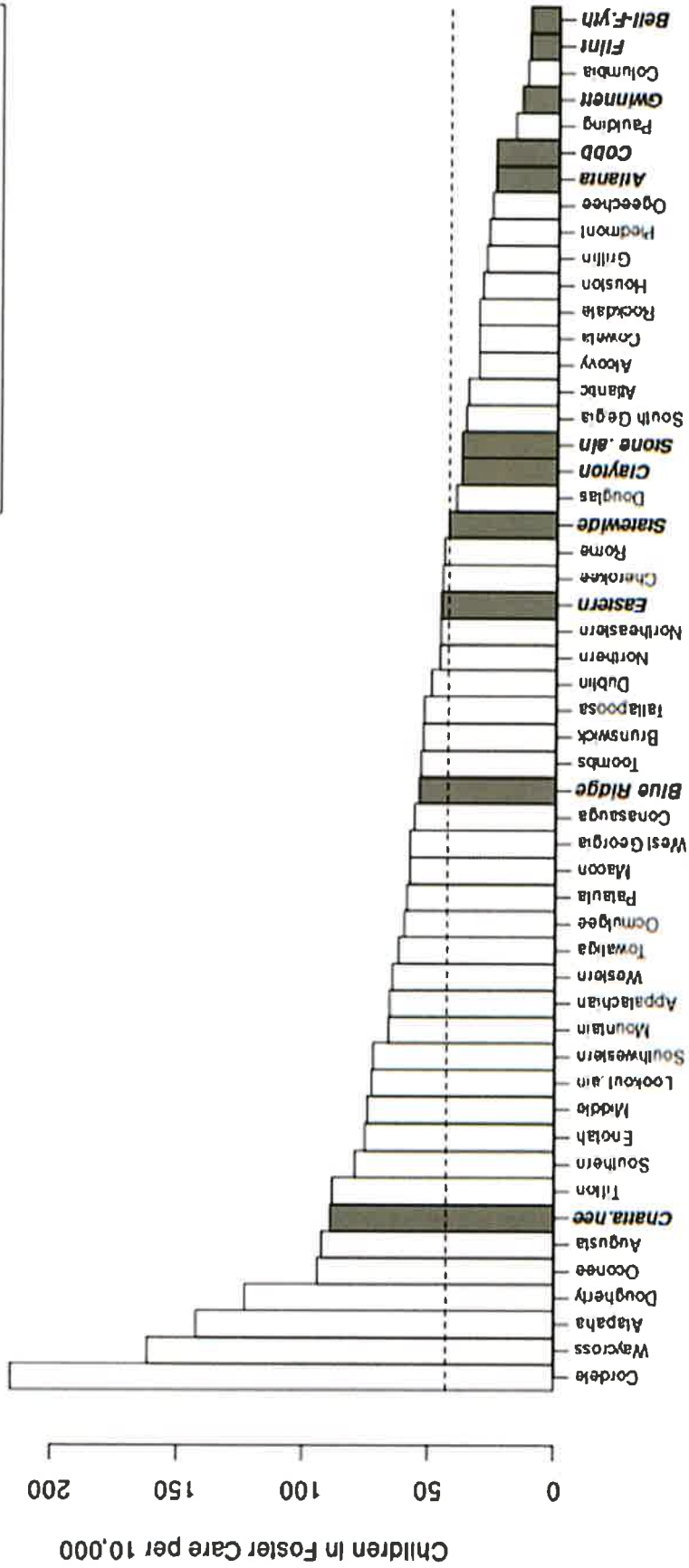


5

Circuit Rankings: Average Daily Children In Care per 10,000 in the Population During October 2024 through September 2025

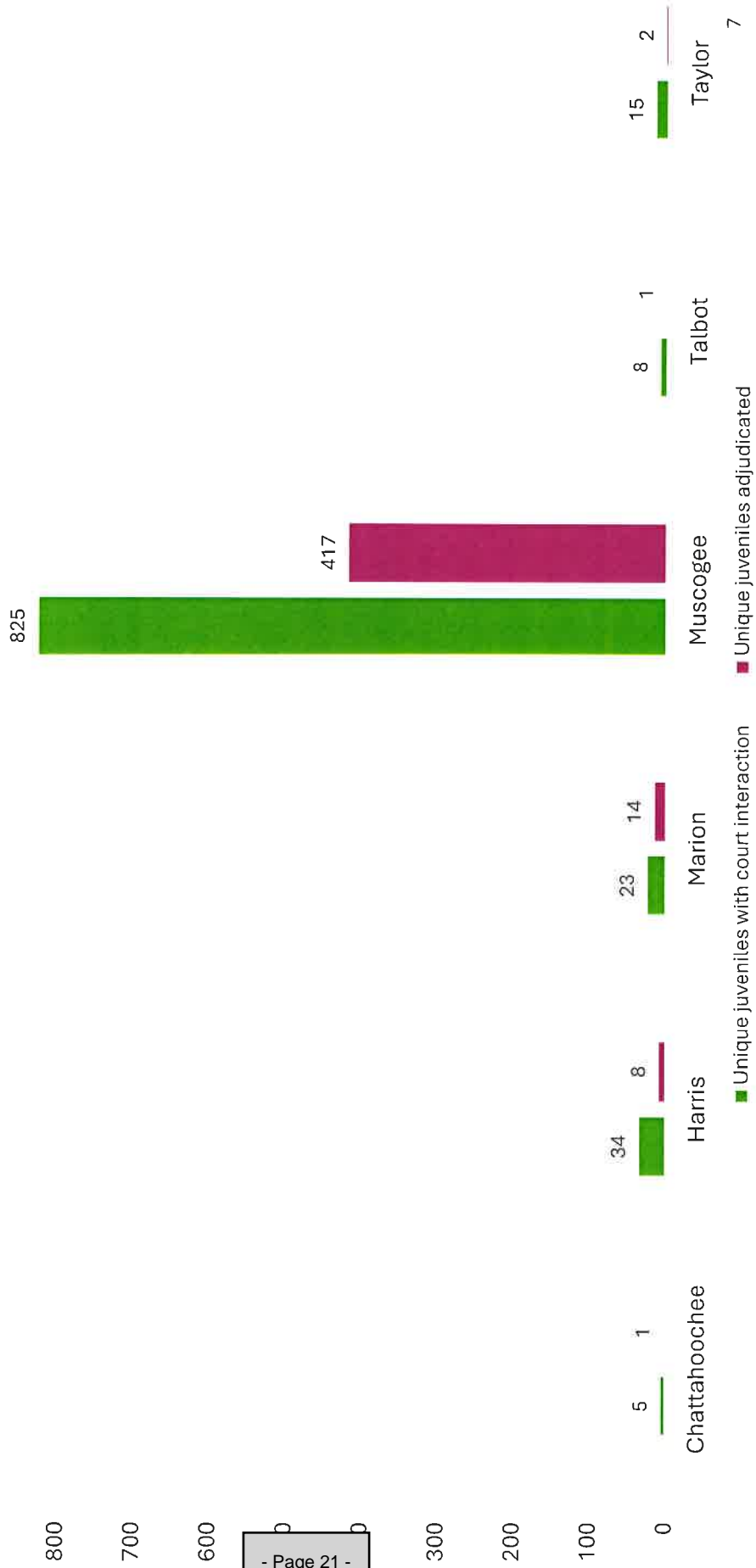
■ Regions with more than 60,000 children in the population.

--- Statewide Average=43.08



CHATTAHOOCHEE JUDICIAL CIRCUIT

October 2024 – September 2025



Comparison of Delinquent Filings with Comparable Circuits

Muscogee

Savannah



Select Calendar Year	Select Gender	Select Race	Select County	Select Judicial Circuit	Select Judicial District
2024	All	All	Muscogee	All	All

At-Risk Population*	Referrals	Secure Detentions	Diversions	Secure Detentions	Delinquent Adjudications	Commitments	Secure Confinements	Superior Court Transfers
45,160	1,359	275	388	1,298	1,314	194	13	0

At-Risk Population*	Referrals	Secure Detentions	Diversions	Secure Detentions	Delinquent Adjudications	Commitments	Secure Confinements	Superior Court Transfers
55,858	918	64	265	645	531	47	4	4

Select Your Decision Point

Petitions

Petitions Count

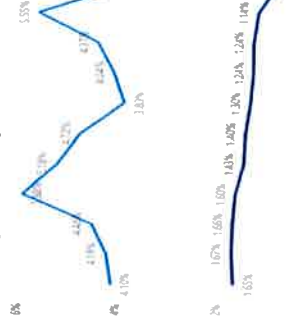
1,298

Petitions Percentage*

2.87%

Decision Point Trend*

At-Risk Percentage



Select Your Decision Point

Petitions

Petitions Count

645

Petitions Percentage*

1.15%

Decision Point Trend*

At-Risk Percentage



Comparison of Delinquent Filings with Comparable Circuits

Muscogee



Clayton

Select Calendar Year	2024	Select Gender	All	Select Race	Clayton	Select Judicial Circuit	All	Select Judicial District	All
At-Risk Population*	45,160	Secure Detentions	388	Secure Detentions	245	Delinquent Adjudications	662	Secure Commitments	3
Referrals	1,359	Diversion	275	Secure Detentions	223	Petitions	770	Secure Commitments	3
At-Risk Population*	74,125	Referrals	1,202	Secure Detentions	245	Delinquent Adjudications	642	Secure Commitments	3
		Secure Detentions	13	Secure Detentions	223	Petitions	770	Secure Commitments	3
		Delinquent Adjudications	194	Secure Detentions	223	Delinquent Adjudications	642	Secure Commitments	3
		Secure Detentions	13	Secure Detentions	223	Petitions	770	Secure Commitments	3
		Superior Court Transfers	0	Secure Detentions	223	Delinquent Adjudications	642	Secure Commitments	3
		Superior Court Transfers	0	Secure Detentions	223	Petitions	770	Secure Commitments	3
		Superior Court Transfers	0	Secure Detentions	223	Delinquent Adjudications	642	Secure Commitments	3
		Superior Court Transfers	0	Secure Detentions	223	Petitions	770	Secure Commitments	3

Decision Point Trend*

Select Year Decision Point: Petitions

Petitions Count
770

Petitions Percentage*
1.04%

Year	Percentage
2010	2.16%
2011	2.07%
2012	1.5%
2013	1.68%
2014	1.65%
2015	1.4%
2016	1.44%
2017	1.4%
2018	1.4%
2019	1.4%
2020	1.4%
2021	1.4%
2022	1.4%
2023	1.4%
2024	0.71%

Decision Point Trend*

Select Year Decision Point: Petitions

Petitions Count
1,298

Petitions Percentage*
2.87%

Year	Percentage
2010	4.73%
2011	4.1%
2012	4.2%
2013	5.53%
2014	4.2%
2015	4.2%
2016	4.2%
2017	4.2%
2018	4.2%
2019	4.2%
2020	4.2%
2021	4.2%
2022	4.2%
2023	4.2%
2024	1.65%

Comparison of Delinquent Filings with Comparable Circuits

Muscogee

Bibb

Select Calendar Year: 2021 | Select County: Muscogee | Select Judicial Circuit: All | Select Judicial District: All

Select Gender: All | Select Race: All

At-Risk Population* 45,160

Referrals 1,359

Secure Detentions 388

Diversions 275

Delinquent Adjudications 1,314

Commitments 194

Secure Confinements 13

Superior Court Transfers 0

Select Calendar Year: 2024 | Select County: Bibb | Select Judicial Circuit: M | Select Judicial District: All

Select Gender: All | Select Race: All

At-Risk Population* 33,923

Referrals 619

Secure Detentions 176

Diversions 145

Delinquent Adjudications 363

Commitments 59

Secure Confinements 15

Superior Court Transfers 0

