



Clatsop County

Board of Commissioners

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May 8, 2025

House Committee On Revenue
Oregon State Legislature
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Support HB 3962-2 – Ensuring Sustainable Tourism and Community Safety

Chair Nathanson, Vice-Chairs Reschke and Walters, and Members of the Committee,

The Clatsop County Board of Commissioners strongly urges your support for House Bill 3962-2 to responsibly address Oregon’s true cost of hosting millions of visitors each year.

Tourism is vital to Oregon’s coastal economy, supporting local jobs and small businesses. Yet, the same visitors who drive economic activity also rely on local public safety services to stay safe while they recreate—services funded primarily by local property taxes, not tourism revenue.

In Clatsop County, where the year-round population is about 40,000, the number of people in the community can swell to more than 120,000 during peak tourism months.¹ State data reinforces this trend: Clatsop County had an average daily overnight visitor share of 24% of the resident population between 2021 and 2023—the second highest in the state, just behind Lincoln County.² Tillamook and Curry counties followed closely.

Overnight-Visitor Day Share of Resident Pop. ³				
County	2021	2022	2023	Average
Lincoln County	28%	27%	25%	27%
Clatsop County	24%	23%	24%	24%
Tillamook County	20%	23%	25%	23%
Curry County	20%	22%	24%	22%
Jefferson County	13%	17%	16%	16%
Wheeler County	14%	16%	16%	15%

This data highlights the communities most affected by a disproportionately large influx of visitors each year.

¹ Dyke, Andrew, et al. “Clatsop County Analysis of the Fiscal Impacts of Tourism.” ECONorthwest. (2023)

² Dean Runyan Associates. “The Economic Impact of Travel in Oregon: Calendar Year 2023 Preliminary.” Travel Oregon. (2024)

³ Overnight-Visitor Day Share of Resident Population is equal to the annual overnight visitor days divided by 365 divided by the resident population.

TOURISM GROWS—SO DO EMERGENCY DEMANDS

The dramatic seasonal surge places enormous pressure on already stretched public safety services and emergency response systems. Between 2019 and 2024, visitors in Clatsop County accounted for about one-third of all jail bookings, arrests, and tickets, and 15% of crime victims. The emergency medical services provider for the County responded to more than 380 calls each month, with even sharper increases during the busiest times of the year.

THE REVENUE IS THERE—BUT WE CAN'T USE IT

State law (ORS 320.350) mandates that 70% of any new or increased local Transient Lodging Tax (TLT) revenue must go toward tourism promotion or tourism-related facilities. That leaves only 30% for other local needs—even when tourism significantly drives up the cost of essential services. As a result, cities and counties are left facing rising public safety demands without the financial tools to keep up.

Clatsop County is at a crossroads—we can no longer afford to subsidize the impacts of tourism with our already stretched General Fund. We recognize the concerns from local lodging businesses about how a TLT rate increase could affect them and want to avoid that approach if possible. Our top priority is a legislative solution that allows more flexible use of existing TLT revenue. Unfortunately, without that flexibility, we may have no choice but to raise the local TLT rate to sustain critical public safety services that support both visitors and residents.

HB 3962-2: A PATH TO SUSTAINABLE TOURISM AND SAFETY

When emergency response systems are overstretched, everyone is affected—visitors and residents alike. Investing in safe, responsive communities strengthens the foundation of Oregon's tourism industry and protects the visitor experience we all want to sustain.

HB 3962-2 allows cities and counties to use a portion of tourism-generated revenue to meet tourism-driven public safety needs—without reducing support for tourism itself. It aligns public safety resources with the realities of increased visitor traffic and seasonal surges.

We are disappointed that despite multiple bills this session seeking to address the growing strain of public safety services in tourism-impacted communities, there has yet to be a meaningful effort to bring stakeholders together to find a workable solution. HB 3962-2 presents a strong and reasonable path forward and we urge the Legislature to act now rather than continue to delay progress on this critical issue.

We respectfully urge your YES vote on HB 3962-2 to ensure that communities can continue to welcome visitors safely and responsibly.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



Mark Kujala, Chair
District 1



Anthony Huacuja, Commissioner
District 2



Pamela Wev, Commissioner
District 3



Courtney Bangs, Vice Chair
District 4



Lianne Thompson, Commissioner
District 5

ATTACHMENTS:

- *Addressing the Impacts of Tourism on Public Safety (summary document with a list of supporting agencies)*
- *Non-County Residents by Month in Clatsop County for 2019-2024 (Bookings, Arrests, Tickets, and Crime Victims)*

Addressing the Impacts of Tourism on Public Safety



Tourism draws millions of visitors to Oregon's scenic counties and cities each year, bringing economic benefits but also significant challenges for public safety. In particular, four coastal counties—Lincoln, Clatsop, Tillamook, and Curry—see the highest average daily population increase per capita.¹ This data is an indicator of the communities most affected by a disproportionately large influx of visitors.

The Challenge in Clatsop County

Clatsop County, like other tourism-impacted areas, experiences a dramatic population surge during peak seasons—**doubling or even tripling its population**. This influx places immense strain on public safety services funded by and for a smaller resident population, impacting service levels for both residents and visitors.

While tourism generates vital local revenue, the mandated 70/30 split of Transient Lodging Tax (TLT) revenue under ORS 320.350 disproportionately allocates funds to tourism promotion and facilities. It requires that for all new TLT rates and increases established after June 30, 2003, 70% must be used for tourism promotion and tourism-related facilities and only 30% is available for discretionary use.

This leaves local governments without adequate resources to address the impacts of tourism on critical public safety services.

Supporters

The following agencies support this effort:



Other Emergency Services

Tourism increases demand for local resources to respond to accidents and incidents on highways and recreational sites. In rural areas, volunteer-staffed fire agencies are under substantial strain with their workload, financial capacity, and staffing.

In Clatsop County:

- 11 fire agencies utilize volunteer staff to provide year-round services.
- From 2019-2024, the local EMS provider received an average of 382 service calls per month. Call volumes during May through September and November through December regularly exceeded this average, with August reaching the highest monthly average of about 436 calls.

Law Enforcement & DA's Office

Each year, a significant number of visitors interact with local law enforcement and the justice system.

In Clatsop County, from 2019-2024, visitors accounted for an annual average of:

- **One-third of all jail bookings, arrests, and tickets**
- **15% of crime victims**

The Solution

Tourism impacted jurisdictions in Oregon are advocating for greater flexibility in how TLT revenues may be used in order to address the impacts of tourism on critical public safety services provided by law enforcement agencies, District Attorney's Offices, fire agencies, search and rescue, and emergency medical services providers of cities, counties, and special districts.

Non-County Resident Bookings (% of total bookings)													
Year	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Annual Avg %
2019	27%	26%	28%	28%	20%	21%	30%	22%	37%	24%	25%	32%	27%
2020	16%	25%	30%	28%	40%	29%	33%	29%	35%	27%	28%	31%	29%
2021	26%	26%	36%	39%	34%	40%	33%	35%	38%	28%	35%	37%	34%
2022	38%	29%	29%	35%	31%	25%	35%	36%	40%	31%	31%	28%	32%
2023	26%	25%	35%	34%	38%	37%	35%	38%	31%	39%	30%	24%	33%
2024	32%	42%	31%	28%	34%	41%	30%	31%	35%	28%	37%	31%	33%
Monthly Avg	27%	29%	32%	32%	33%	32%	32%	32%	36%	29%	31%	30%	

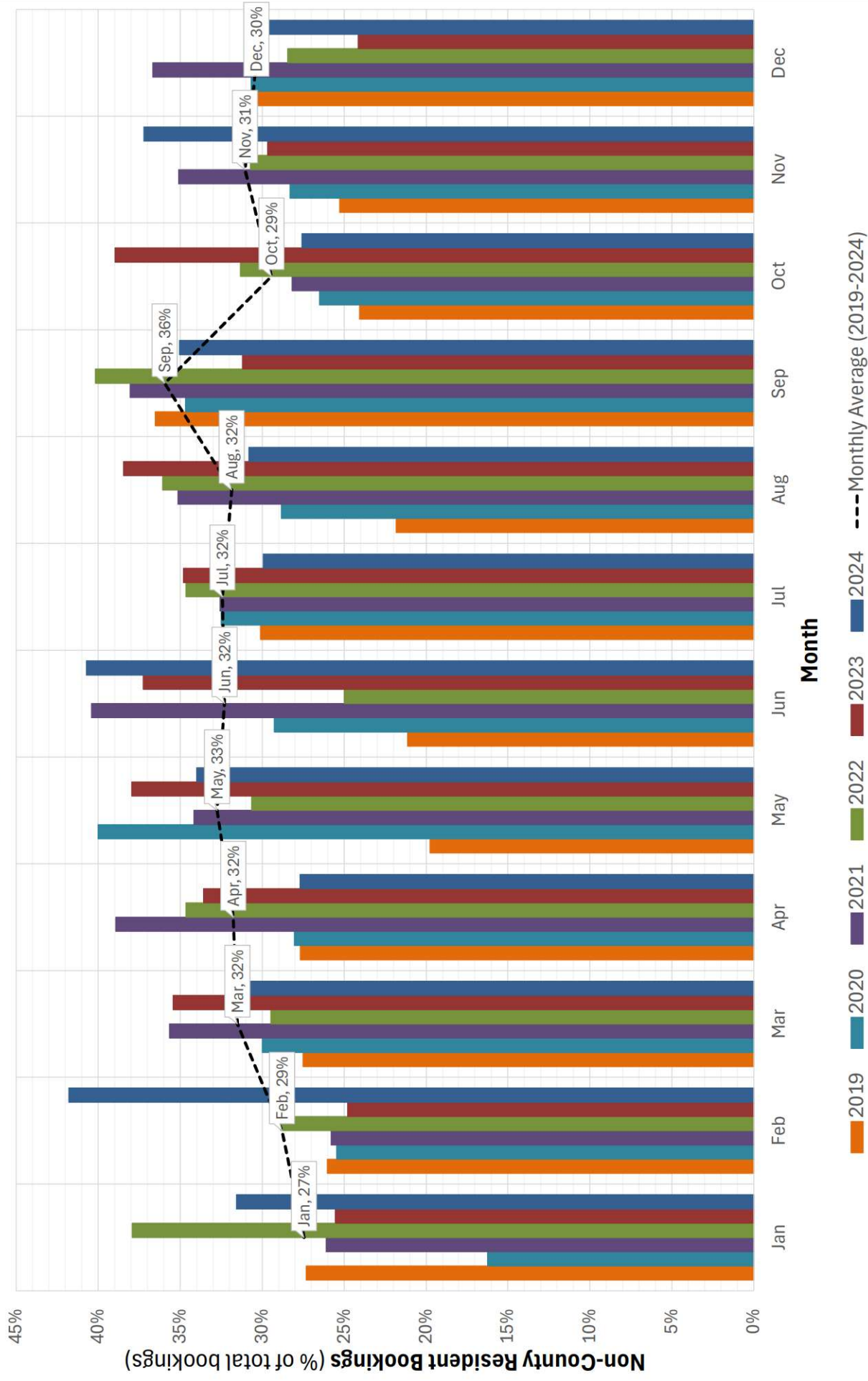
Non-County Resident Arrests (% of total arrests)													
Year	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Annual Avg %
2019	27%	21%	36%	25%	29%	27%	25%	28%	30%	25%	23%	40%	28%
2020	27%	30%	35%	33%	37%	23%	34%	35%	33%	29%	22%	25%	30%
2021	26%	30%	32%	38%	33%	23%	26%	32%	40%	32%	24%	32%	31%
2022	38%	34%	32%	32%	24%	36%	35%	35%	32%	33%	34%	27%	33%
2023	27%	29%	30%	28%	32%	36%	30%	35%	29%	27%	26%	29%	30%
2024	28%	37%	28%	31%	30%	36%	31%	45%	30%	39%	36%	31%	33%
Monthly Avg	29%	30%	32%	31%	31%	30%	30%	35%	32%	31%	28%	31%	

Non-County Resident Tickets (% of total tickets)													
Year	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Annual Avg %
2019	29%	29%	42%	31%	33%	37%	41%	40%	38%	24%	30%	30%	34%
2020	29%	36%	44%	29%	47%	45%	43%	37%	30%	35%	37%	28%	37%
2021	31%	29%	35%	40%	42%	48%	36%	46%	39%	35%	31%	26%	36%
2022	25%	40%	43%	33%	28%	34%	40%	36%	24%	28%	32%	24%	32%
2023	27%	30%	28%	35%	44%	28%	35%	47%	30%	38%	26%	26%	33%
2024	32%	33%	29%	30%	41%	37%	45%	45%	28%	26%	27%	28%	33%
Monthly Avg	29%	33%	37%	33%	39%	38%	40%	42%	31%	31%	31%	27%	

Non-County Resident Crime Victims (% of total victims)													
Year	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Annual Avg %
2019	13%	10%	11%	11%	13%	16%	22%	32%	18%	13%	19%	22%	17%
2020	12%	19%	11%	8%	6%	14%	24%	19%	11%	13%	8%	8%	13%
2021	12%	11%	9%	14%	18%	12%	11%	14%	12%	9%	18%	16%	13%
2022	8%	33%	9%	16%	16%	15%	17%	17%	18%	21%	9%	12%	16%
2023	14%	10%	12%	9%	19%	17%	20%	30%	14%	15%	16%	16%	16%
2024	5%	13%	12%	20%	16%	21%	22%	16%	13%	13%	17%	8%	15%
Monthly Avg	11%	16%	10%	13%	15%	16%	19%	21%	14%	14%	14%	14%	

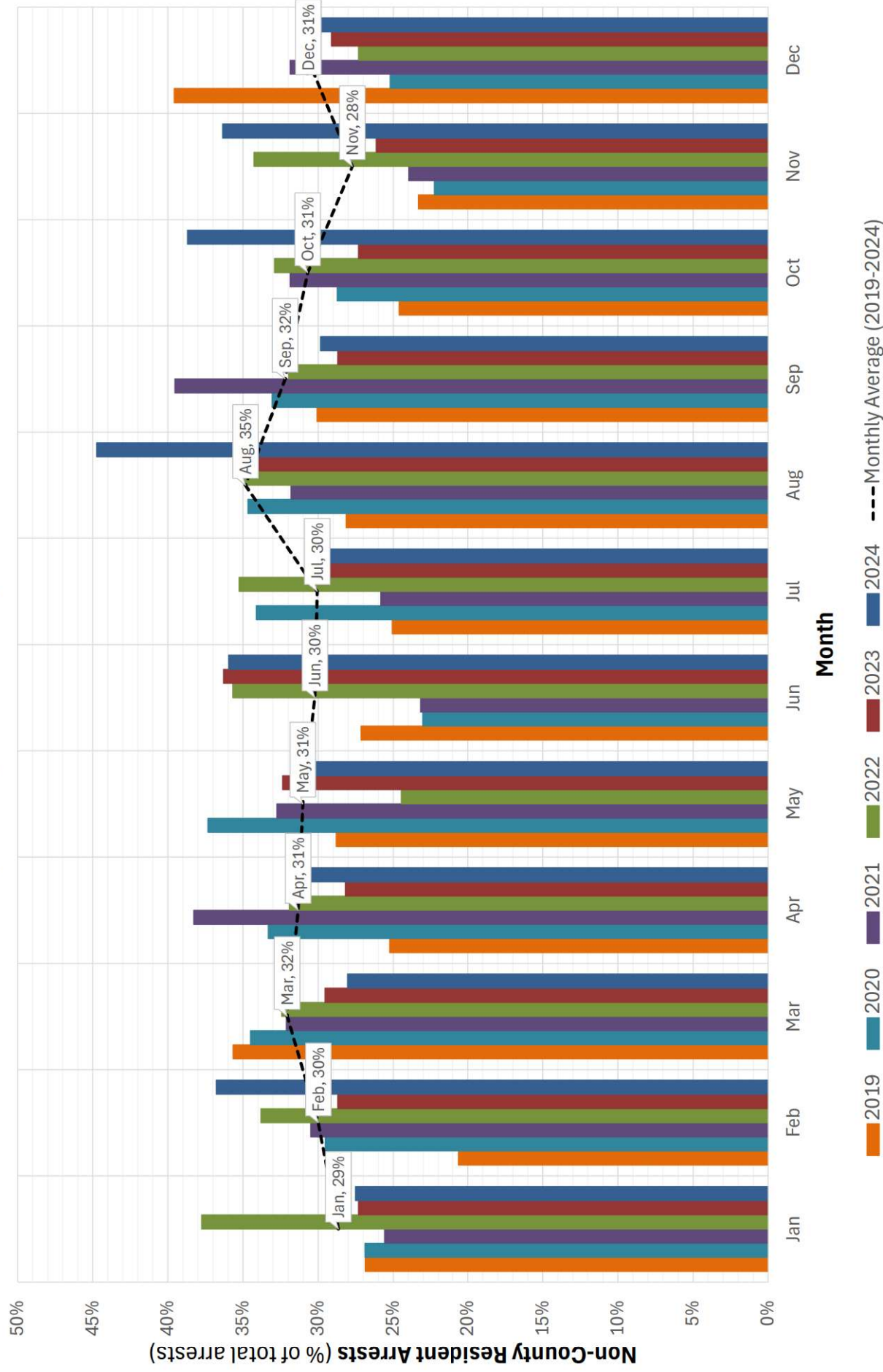
**Greater than Annual Avg

Persons Booked in Clatsop County | Non-County Residents by Month (2019-2024)



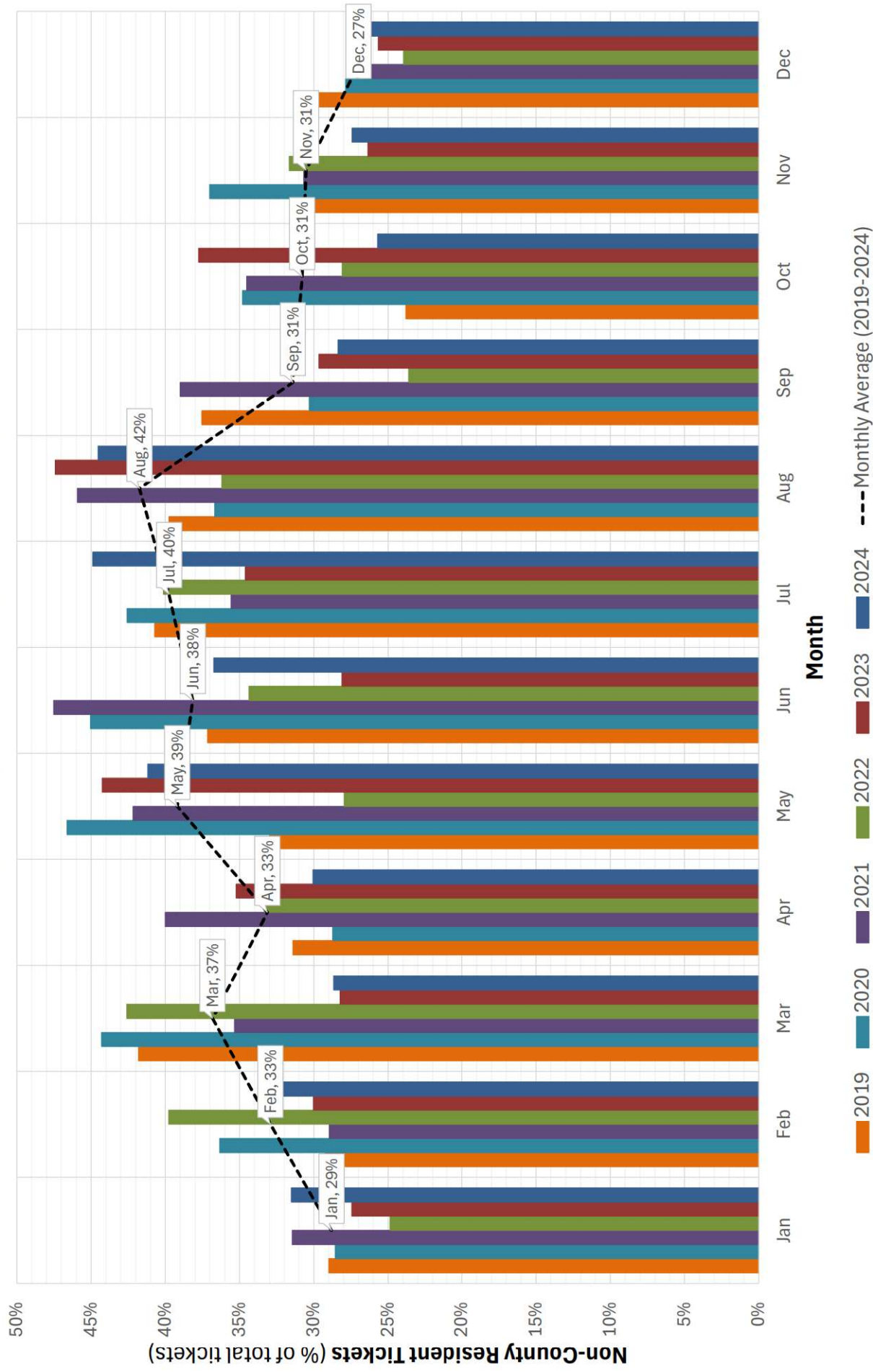
****Bookings:** This includes instances in which someone in Clatsop County was taken into custody, transported to the County jail, and their personal and case information was recorded. After booking, the individual may have been immediately released (e.g., on bail or recognizance) or remained detained at the County jail pending further legal proceedings.

Persons Arrested in Clatsop County | Non-County Residents by Month (2019-2024)



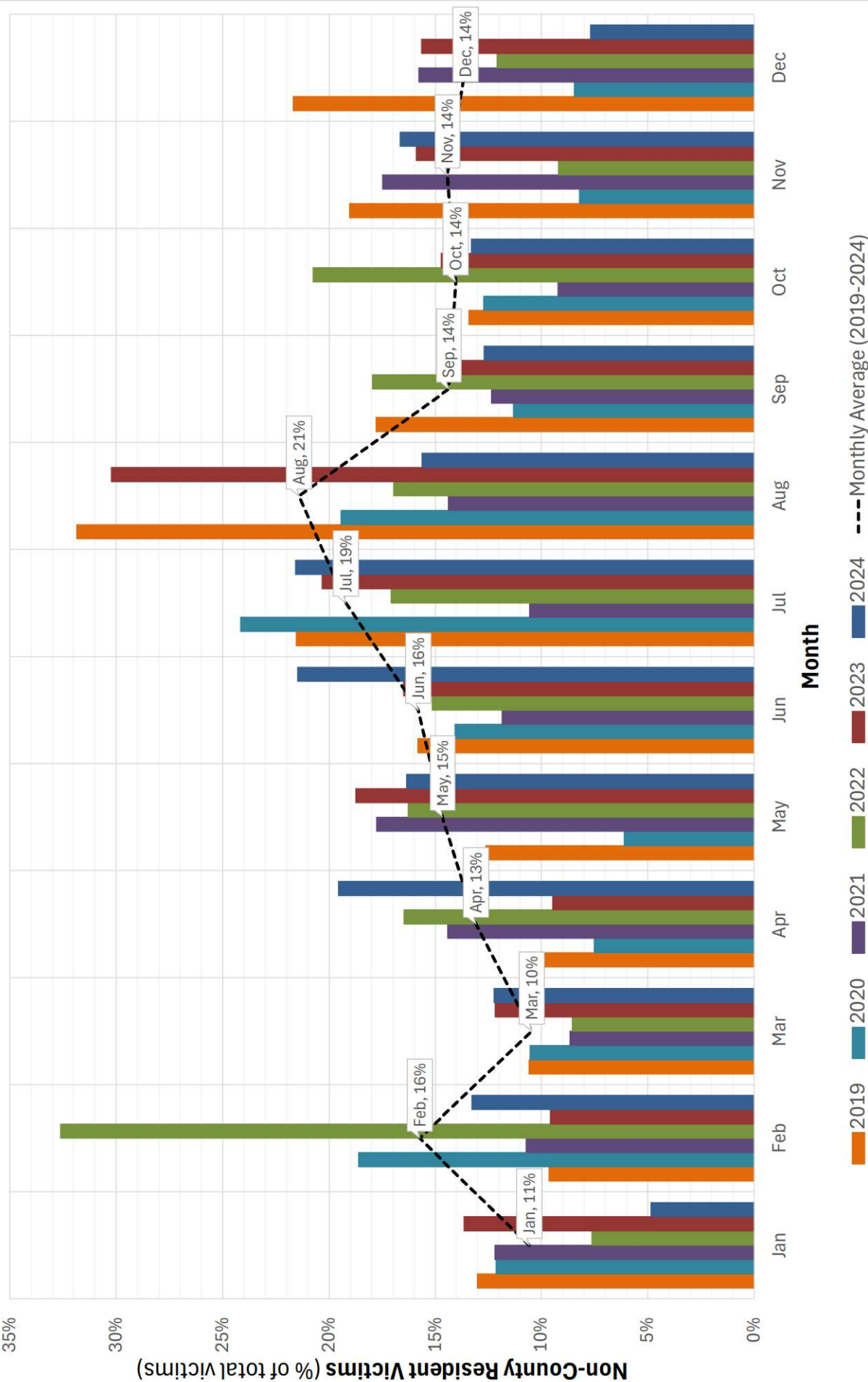
**** Arrests:** This includes instances in which someone in Clatsop County was taken into custody based on probable cause or suspicion of a crime. While arrests often lead to bookings, some are resolved through "cite and release," where the person is issued a citation and released with a court date.

Persons Ticketed in Clatsop County | Non-County Residents by Month (2019-2024)



****Tickets:** This includes instances in which local law enforcement issued citations to individuals in Clatsop County for violations (e.g. traffic offenses and other non-jailable offenses such as Minor in Possession), typically requiring a fine or court appearance without taking the individual into custody.

Crime Victims in Clatsop County | Non-County Residents by Month (2019-2024)



****Victims:** Individuals who suffered harm—physical, emotional, psychological, or financial—due to a reported criminal act in Clatsop County.