

Email sent out on 4.27.2020:

Attached is today's press release from the Governor's office. I have pulled out a couple of remarks below, highlighting some key words:

"Additionally, Governor Mills has instructed all departments of State government to freeze all non-emergency spending and hiring and she is renewing her calls for the federal government to provide flexibility for states to use federal funding for expected revenue shortfalls."

"Additionally, Governor Mills instructed all departments to apply an emergency basis scrutiny to spending and hiring. This includes freezing unencumbered balances for Fiscal Year 2019 and certain reserves in Fiscal Year 2020, as well as reviewing contractual obligations through the remainder of the Fiscal Year, which ends June 30th. The Governor has also prohibited state employees from traveling out of state on state business."

No one knows what our state and local communities will look like at the end of this mess; anyone that thinks our fiscal woes will immediately be cured have not been paying attention. Businesses and jobs may not come back as hoped.

According to the Bangor Daily, the City of Brewer is conservatively budgeting for state revenue sharing to be 35 percent lower than the city had projected before the pandemic. –AND - Maine could lose \$200 million by the end of June and up to \$1 billion by mid-2021, according to dire projections, made by Moody Analytics, showing that nearly a quarter of state revenue could be in danger due to the coronavirus.

The DOT anticipates a \$125 million loss in Highway Fund revenues over the next 18 months adding to the annual \$232 million shortfall that cancelled 142 projects at the start of the year.

The \$13.45 million replacement of the Wilson Street/I-395 Bridge – the first phase of the I-395 connector project - will be advertised on May 27th.

Is the connector going to now be considered an emergency? I would offer that the connector isn't even essential, let alone an emergency.

The connector needs to be on the same chopping block as every other program during this fiscal crisis.