

Climate Assessment

Office of Legislative Oversight

Expedited Bill 20-23: OPT/SLT Bargaining Units – Pension and Retirement Adjustments

SUMMARY

The Office of Legislative Oversight (OLO) anticipates Expedited Bill 20-23 will likely have no impact on the County's contribution to addressing climate change as it is proposing changes to retirement plans for certain County employees.

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE OF EXPEDITED BILL 20-23

Expedited Bill 20-23 proposes adjustments to pension and retirement plans for County Employees in Group E and J. The proposed adjustments are a result of the newly negotiated Memorandum of Agreement between the Montgomery County Government and the Municipal and County Government Employees Organization, UFCW, Local 1994. If enacted the Bill would make the following changes to retirement and pension plans:

- Amend Group E eligibility to add eligibility for certain ECC positions to the Group E Optional Retirement Plan and the Integrated Retirement Plan;
- Amend Group J eligibility to add eligibility for certain ECC positions to be designated by the Chief Administrative Officer;
- Amend credited service to provide credited service adjustments for military service;
- Separate Group E and Group J regarding pension multipliers;
- Adjust pension multipliers for Group E and Group J;
- Amend the guaranteed retirement savings plan to default into the guaranteed retirement savings plan for certain part-time employees in the OPT/SLT bargaining unit;
- Amend the disability benefits plan; and
- Generally amend pension and retirement benefits.¹

The proposed changes would increase County expenditures by approximately \$2 million in FY24, increasing annually to \$4 million by FY29. Revenues would not be impacted.

Expedited Bill 20-23, OPT/SLT Bargaining Units – Pension and Retirement Adjustments, was introduced by the Council President on behalf of the County Executive on April 11, 2023.

ANTICIPATED IMPACTS

As Expedited Bill 20-23 proposes changes to retirement plans for certain County employees, OLO anticipates it will have no impact on the County's contribution to addressing climate change, including the reduction and/or sequestration of greenhouse gas emissions, community resilience, and adaptative capacity.

RECOMMENDED AMENDMENTS

The Climate Assessment Act requires OLO to offer recommendations, such as amendments or other measures to mitigate any anticipated negative climate impacts.² OLO does not offer recommendations or amendments as Expedited Bill 20-23 is likely to have no impact on the County's contribution to addressing climate change, including the reduction and/or sequestration of greenhouse gas emissions, community resilience, and adaptative capacity.

CAVEATS

OLO notes two caveats to this climate assessment. First, predicting the impacts of legislation upon climate change is a challenging analytical endeavor due to data limitations, uncertainty, and the broad, global nature of climate change. Second, the analysis performed here is intended to inform the legislative process, not determine whether the Council should enact legislation. Thus, any conclusion made in this statement does not represent OLO's endorsement of, or objection to, the bill under consideration.

PURPOSE OF CLIMATE ASSESSMENTS

The purpose of the Climate Assessments is to evaluate the anticipated impact of legislation on the County's contribution to addressing climate change. These climate assessments will provide the Council with a more thorough understanding of the potential climate impacts and implications of proposed legislation, at the County level. The scope of the Climate Assessments is limited to the County's contribution to addressing climate change, specifically upon the County's contribution to greenhouse gas emissions and how actions suggested by legislation could help improve the County's adaptative capacity to climate change, and therefore, increase community resilience.

While co-benefits such as health and cost savings may be discussed, the focus is on how proposed County bills may impact GHG emissions and community resilience.

CONTRIBUTIONS

OLO staffer Kaitlyn Simmons drafted this assessment.

¹ [Introduction Staff Report for Expedited Bill 20-23, Montgomery County Council, April 11, 2023.](#)

² Bill 3-22, Legislative Branch – Climate Assessments – Required, Montgomery County Council, Effective date October 24, 2022