

Climate Assessment

Office of Legislative Oversight

Expedited Fire and Rescue Services – Credited Service for Bill 21-23: Group G Members

SUMMARY

The Office of Legislative Oversight (OLO) anticipates Expedited Bill 21-23 will 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 21-23

The goal of Expedited Bill 21-23 is to implement provisions in the Collective Bargaining Agreement that were negotiated between the County Executive and the Montgomery County Career Fire Fighter Association, International Association of Fire Fighters, Local 1664, AFL-CIO (IAFF). The Bill seeks to do so by making changes to the County Code regarding retirement plans for Group G members who participate in the Montgomery County Employees' Retirement System. Eligible Group G members include personnel within the Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Services (MCFRS), namely full-time and career part-time paid firefighters, fire officers, and rescue service personnel.¹ If enacted, the Bill would make the following changes to the retirement plans:

- Adjust the cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) provided to certain Group G members.
- Increase the pension amount for Group G members.
- Modify the sick leave benefit credit to correct an oversight in previous legislation submitted to the Council.²

The proposed changes would increase County expenditures by approximately \$2.6 million in FY24, increasing annually to \$3.6 million by FY29. Revenues would not be impacted.

Expedited Bill 21-23, Fire and Rescue Services – Credited Service for Group G Members was introduced by the Council President on behalf of the County Executive on April 11, 2023.

ANTICIPATED IMPACTS

As Expedited Bill 21-23 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.³ OLO does not offer recommendations or amendments as Expedited Bill 21-23 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 [Summary Description for Sworn Fire Personnel in Retirement Group G.](#)

² [Introduction Staff Report](#) for Expedited Bill 21-23.

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