

# Climate Assessment

Office of Legislative Oversight

## BILL 28-25: MOTOR VEHICLES AND TRAFFIC – PARKING IN BIKEWAYS - PROHIBITED

### SUMMARY

The Office of Legislative Oversight (OLO) anticipates Bill 28-25 will likely have a small, positive impact on the County's contribution to addressing climate change as the Bill's proposed changes could make bike lanes safer to use and therefore encourage more residents to choose biking as a form of transportation over more carbon intensive transportation. This could decrease the County's greenhouse gas emissions associated with travel.

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### BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE OF BILL 28-25

Under County law, community members are prohibited from stopping, standing, or parking a vehicle in any way that impedes traffic and in certain places. This includes sidewalks, crosswalks, and within intersections, among others.<sup>1</sup> Currently, community members can be fined \$60 for violations of this law.<sup>2</sup>

If enacted, Bill 28-25 would prohibit community members from stopping, standing, or parking a vehicle in a bikeway. The Bill defines a bikeway as "any area expressly intended for bike travel, including:<sup>3</sup>

- Associated curbs and gutters; and
- Any bike lane, off-street trail, separate bike lane, shared use roadway, or side path."

According to the Bill's sponsor, Bill 28-25 is intended to "enhance safety for cyclists and keep designated bikeways clear and accessible for users."<sup>4</sup>

The Council introduced Bill 28-25 on July 29, 2025.

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### METHODOLOGIES, ASSUMPTIONS, AND UNCERTAINTIES

**Methodology.** OLO reviewed research on bike lanes and user's perceptions of safety on characteristics of bike lanes.

**Assumptions.** Prohibiting vehicles from standing, stopping, or parking in bike lanes would encourage more residents to choose biking as a form of transportation.

**Uncertainties.** OLO is unable to predict how many residents will choose to bike to their destination, due to perceived safety of bike lanes from prohibiting vehicles standing, stopping, or parking in bike lanes.

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## PERCEPTIONS OF SAFETY & IMPACTS ON BIKE LANE USAGE

Bike lanes are important infrastructure in encouraging multi-modal transportation and reducing dependency on personal motor vehicles, which contribute greatly to greenhouse gas emissions associated with travel.<sup>5</sup> However, the type and quality of bike lanes influence people's decisions in using a bike as their primary source of transportation. For example, various studies and surveys have highlighted preferences in how bike lanes are constructed and other policies that encourage safer bike use such as:

- Protected bike lanes that are well separated from motorized traffic;<sup>6</sup>
- Continuous bike lanes or trails along a chosen route;<sup>7</sup> and
- Buffers between parked cars and the bike line.<sup>8</sup>

Many of these preferences are rooted in safety. Research shows the potential bike rider's perception of the safety of a bike lane and/or route is one of the main deciding factors in choosing to bike over other forms of transportation.<sup>9</sup> Other factors that contribute to the safety of bike lanes include discouraging cars from parking in bike lanes. One study found that streets with lower traffic levels and no parked cars are associated with low levels of injury risk. Bicycle accidents frequently occur due to opening doors of parked cars and obstacles in bike lanes, such as parked cars.<sup>10</sup>

Bill 28-25's proposed prohibition of motor vehicles standing, stopping, or parking in bikeways would likely increase the perception of safety in bike lanes, if enforced. If residents perceive bike lanes to be safer, they are more likely to choose biking as a form of transportation. Encouraging transportation other than by personal vehicle can decrease the County's greenhouse gas emissions associated with travel.

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## ANTICIPATED IMPACTS

As the Bill's proposed changes are likely to increase the perception of safety in bike lanes and therefore encourage more residents to choose to bike as a form of transportation over more carbon intensive methods of transportation, OLO anticipates Bill 28-25 could have a small, positive impact on the County's contribution to greenhouse gas emissions.

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## RECOMMENDED AMENDMENTS

The Climate Assessment Act requires OLO to offer recommendations, such as amendments or other measures to mitigate any anticipated negative climate impacts.<sup>11</sup> OLO does not offer recommendations or amendments as Bill 28-25 is likely to have a positive impact on the County's contribution to addressing climate change, including the reduction and/or sequestration of greenhouse gas emissions, community resilience, and adaptive 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.

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## 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 adaptive 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.

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## CONTRIBUTIONS

OLO staffer Kaitlyn Simmons drafted this assessment.

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<sup>1</sup> [Introduction Staff Report for Bill 28-25, Montgomery County Council, Introduced July 29, 2025, pgs. 1-2.](#)

<sup>2</sup> [Introduction Staff Report for FY 26 Resolution on Transportation Fees, Charges, and Fares, Montgomery County Council, Introduced March 25, 2025, pgs. \(7\)-\(8\).](#)

<sup>3</sup> Introduction Staff Report for Bill 28-25, pg. 2.

<sup>4</sup> ["Councilmember Evan Glass Introduces Bicycle Safety Legislation," Press Releases, Montgomery County Council, July 29, 2025.](#)

<sup>5</sup> [US Department of Transportation, "Active Transportation", Accessed 8/27/2025.](#)

<sup>6</sup> [Hwang, U. and Guhathakurta, S., "Exploring the Impact of Bike Lanes on Transportation Mode Choice: A simulation-based, route-level impact analysis", Sustainable Cities and Society, February 2023.](#)

<sup>7</sup> [O'Halleran, C. and Hull, A., "Bicycle infrastructure: can good design encourage cycling?", Urban, Planning, and Transport Research, August 12, 2014.](#)

<sup>8</sup> [McNeil, N., Monsere, C. M., and Dill, J., "The Influence of Bike Lane Buffer Types on Perceived Comfort and Safety of Bicyclists and Potential Bicyclists", Civil and Environmental Engineering, 2015.](#)

<sup>9</sup> [Clark, C., et. al., "User Preferences for Bicycle Infrastructure in Communities with Emerging Cycling Cultures", Journal of the Transportation Research Board, June 27, 2019.](#)

<sup>10</sup> [O'Halleran, C. and Hull, A., "Bicycle infrastructure: can good design encourage cycling?", Urban, Planning, and Transport Research, August 12, 2014.](#)

<sup>11</sup> Bill 3-22, Legislative Branch – Climate Assessments – Required, Montgomery County Council, Effective date October 24, 2022