

Climate Assessment

Office of Legislative Oversight

BILL 11-26: FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES – LENGTH OF SERVICE AWARDS PROGRAM FOR VOLUNTEERS - AMENDMENTS

SUMMARY

The Office of Legislative Oversight (OLO) anticipates Bill 11-26 will have no impact on the County's contribution to addressing climate change as it is proposing changes to service benefits for some local fire and rescue department volunteers.

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE OF BILL 11-26

The Length of Service Awards Program (LOSAP) is a County program that:

“provides a monthly pension for members of a Local Fire and Rescue Department [LFRD] who have provided volunteer fire and rescue service for a certain number of years. It is similar to the defined benefit pension for career fire and rescue employees, although the amount of the pension is significantly lower. The County pays for these benefits in budget appropriations instead of establishing a trust fund.”¹

Any changes to LOSAP are negotiated between the County and the authorized representative of LFRDs, which is the Montgomery County Volunteer Fire and Rescue Association (MCFVRA).

The purpose of Bill 11-26 is to implement provisions from a 2023-2026 Memorandum of Agreement between the County and MCFVRA. The provisions would provide **two** 4% LOSAP payment increases for certain volunteer fire and rescue members. The first increase would apply retroactively to monthly LOSAP payments made since July 2024, and the second would apply retroactively to payments made since July 2025.² The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) estimate the proposed increase to LOSAP payments would increase County expenditures by a total of \$110,500 over the next six years.

The Council introduced Bill 11-26 on behalf of the County Executive on February 10, 2026.

ANTICIPATED IMPACTS

As the Bill proposes changes to service benefits for some local fire and rescue department volunteers, OLO anticipates Bill 11-26 will have no impact on the County's contribution to addressing climate change, including the reduction and/or sequestration of greenhouse gas emissions and community climate resilience.

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 Bill 11-26 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 and community climate resilience.

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 increase the County's community climate 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 climate resilience.

CONTRIBUTIONS

OLO staffer Kaitlyn Simmons drafted this assessment.

¹ Christine Wellons to County Council, [Memorandum: Expedited Bill 41-23, Fire and Rescue Services – Length of Service Awards Program for Volunteers – Amendments](#), November 9, 2023.

² Montgomery County Council, [Introduction Staff Report for Bill 11-26, Fire and Rescue Services - Length of Service Awards Program for Volunteers – Amendments](#), February 10, 2026.

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