

# Climate Assessment

Office of Legislative Oversight

## EXPEDITED BILL 6-26: FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES – EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES INSURANCE REIMBURSEMENT PROGRAM – USE OF REVENUES

### SUMMARY

The Office of Legislative Oversight (OLO) anticipates Expedited Bill 6-26 will have no impact on the County's contribution to addressing climate change as it is proposing a change to the County Code to reflect an existing practice of distributing emergency medical services transports revenue.

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### BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE OF EXPEDITED BILL 6-26

The Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service (MCFRS) provide emergency medical, fire and rescue services across the County. MCFRS provides these services through a combined career and volunteer system that operates out of 37 fire stations.<sup>1</sup> Nineteen of these stations are local fire and rescue departments (LFRD) staffed by volunteer firefighters.<sup>2</sup>

To provide ambulance transports – or emergency medical services transports (EMST) – MCFRS bills health insurance providers. EMST revenues are used to provide equipment, enhancement, and training for MCFRS and LFRDs. County law requires that 15 percent of net EMST revenues be allocated annually to support LFRDs.<sup>3</sup> Historically, the County has distributed these funds to the representative for the LFRDs, the Montgomery County Volunteer Fire and Rescue Association (MCVFRA).<sup>4,5</sup>

In 2025, the County's Office of the Inspector General (OIG) found distributing EMST funds to the MCVFRA was inconsistent with County Code.<sup>6</sup> The purpose of Bill 6-26 is to update County Code to respond to the OIG's finding. If enacted, Bill 6-26 would explicitly allow the distribution of EMST funds to the LFRD representative. The funds could continue to be used for the following purposes already established in County law:<sup>7</sup>

- Apparatus for LFRDs;
- Facilities for LFRDs;
- Training for volunteers;
- Gear and equipment for volunteers;
- Administrative staff;
- Volunteer recruitment and retention; and
- Volunteer stand-by support.

The Council introduced Expedited Bill 6-26 on February 3, 2026.

## ANTICIPATED IMPACTS

As the Bill is proposing a change to the County Code to reflect an existing practice of distributing emergency medical services transports revenue, OLO anticipates Expedited Bill 6-26 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.

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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>8</sup> OLO does not offer recommendations or amendments as Expedited Bill 6-26 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, community resilience, and adaptative capacity.

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## 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 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.

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## CONTRIBUTIONS

OLO staffer Kaitlyn Simmons drafted this assessment.

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<sup>1</sup> ["Fire and Rescue Service,"](#) Operating Budget, Montgomery County Government.

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<sup>2</sup> [Home](#), Montgomery County Volunteer Fire Rescue Association.

<sup>3</sup> [Introduction Staff Report for Expedited Bill 6-26](#), Montgomery County Council, Introduced February 3, 2026, pgs. 1-2.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> ["Councilmembers Luedtke, Katz, and Mink Introduce Bill to Support Volunteer Firefighters,"](#) Press Release, Montgomery County Council, February 3, 2026.

<sup>6</sup> [Introduction Staff Report for Expedited Bill 6-26](#), pg. 2.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Bill 3-22, Legislative Branch – Climate Assessments – Required, Montgomery County Council, Effective date October 24, 2022