

Racial Equity and Social Justice (RESJ) Impact Statement

Office of Legislative Oversight

EXPEDITED FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES – LENGTH OF SERVICE AWARDS BILL 8-22: PROGRAM FOR VOLUNTEERS – AMENDMENTS

SUMMARY

The Office of Legislative Oversight (OLO) anticipates that Expedited Bill 8-22 will have little to no impact on racial equity and social justice (RESJ) in Montgomery County since the estimated resources committed through this legislation are relatively small.

PURPOSE OF RESJ IMPACT STATEMENT

The purpose of racial equity and social justice (RESJ) impact statements is to evaluate the anticipated impact of legislation on racial equity and social justice in the County. Racial equity and social justice refer to a **process** that focuses on centering the needs of communities of color and low-income communities with a **goal** of eliminating racial and social inequities.¹ Achieving racial equity and social justice usually requires seeing, thinking, and working differently to address the racial and social harms that have caused racial and social inequities.²

PURPOSE OF EXPEDITED BILL 8-22

The purpose of Expedited Bill 8-22 is to increase the amount of the length of service benefits to certain local fire and rescue department volunteers.³ Expedited Bill 8-22 was introduced on April 19, 2022.

The Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service Length of Service Award Program (LOSAP) was enacted by Council legislation on July 1, 1975 to recognize and reward volunteer firefighters, rescuers, medical attendants, and administrative members who provide specified level of fire and rescue service to their Community.⁴ Local fire and rescue department volunteers accumulate LOSAP points for activities ranging from completing training courses to responding to department/station calls.⁵ Volunteers who accumulate a minimum of 50 points per calendar year could qualify for a monthly benefit payment at 10 and 15 years of service as an active volunteer, depending on age, and at 25 years of service as an active volunteer, regardless of age.

If enacted, Expedited Bill 8-22 would increase the monthly LOSAP benefit payment for qualifying local fire and rescue department volunteers by 2.5%.

ANTICIPATED RESJ IMPACTS

The Montgomery County Office of Management and Budget estimates that County expenditures will increase by \$1,612 to \$5,752 annually if Bill 8-22 is enacted.⁶ OLO anticipates the Bill will have little to no impact on racial equity and social justice in the County since the estimated resources committed through this legislation are relatively small.

RESJ Impact Statement

Expedited Bill 8-22

RECOMMENDED AMENDMENTS

The County's Racial Equity and Social Justice Act requires OLO to consider whether recommended amendments to bills aimed at narrowing racial and social inequities are warranted in developing RESJ impact statements.⁷ OLO does not offer recommended amendments for Expedited Bill 8-22, as its limited scope and committed resources would not address racial and social inequities in the County.

CAVEATS

Two caveats to this racial equity and social justice impact statement should be noted. First, predicting the impact of legislation on racial equity and social justice is a challenging, analytical endeavor due to data limitations, uncertainty, and other factors. Second, this RESJ impact statement is intended to inform the legislative process rather than 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.

¹ Definition of racial equity and social justice adopted from “Applying a Racial Equity Lens into Federal Nutrition Programs” by Marlysa Gamblin, et.al. Bread for the World, and from Racial Equity Tools <https://www.racialequitytools.org/glossary>

² Ibid

³ Montgomery County Council, Expedited Bill 8-22, Fire and Rescue Services – Length of Service Awards Programs for Volunteers – Amendments, Introduced April 19, 2022, Montgomery County, Maryland. https://apps.montgomerycountymd.gov/ccllms/DownloadFilePage?FileName=2749_1_20160_Bill_8-2022_Introduction_20220419.pdf

⁴ Length of Service Award Program for Volunteers in the Fire Service, MC 311 Customer Service Center, Montgomery County, Maryland, Accessed April 27, 2022. <https://www3.montgomerycountymd.gov/311/Solutions.aspx?SolutionId=1-6SPC8V>

⁵ Montgomery County Code Chapter 21 Section 21-21, Length of Service Award Program for Volunteers, Montgomery County, Maryland, Accessed April 27, 2022. https://codelibrary.amlegal.com/codes/montgomerycounty/latest/montgomeryco_md/0-0-0-9624

⁶ Fiscal Impact Statement, Expedited Bill 8-22, Fire and Rescue Services – Length of Service Awards Programs for Volunteers – Amendments, Office of Management and Budget, Montgomery County, Maryland, March, 28, 2022.

⁷ Montgomery County Council, Bill 27-19, Administration – Human Rights - Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice – Racial Equity and Social Justice Advisory Committee - Established