



Committee: Directly to Council
Committee Review: N/A
Staff: Christine Wellons, Senior Legislative Attorney
Purpose: Final action – vote expected
Keywords: #FoodSecurity #FoodSystemsResilience

AGENDA ITEM #11B
July 12, 2022
Action

SUBJECT

Expedited Bill 20-22, Office of Food Systems Resilience - Established

Lead Sponsors: Council President at the Request of the County Executive

EXPECTED ATTENDEES

Executive Branch representatives
Earl Stoddard, Assistant Chief Administrative Officer

COUNCIL DECISION POINTS & COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

- Action – Council vote expected
- This bill did not go to Committee for a recommendation, so a motion is required prior to a roll call vote.

DESCRIPTION/ISSUE

Expedited Bill 20-22 would:

- (1) establish an Office of Food Systems Resilience as a non-principal office of the Executive Branch; and
- (2) prescribe the authorities and responsibilities of the Office of Food Systems Resilience.

SUMMARY OF KEY DISCUSSION POINTS

- As noted in the staff report, the Council might wish to discuss whether the Director of the Office of Food Systems Resilience should be a non-merit appointee.

This report contains:

Staff Report	Pages 1-4
Expedited Bill 20-22	© 1
County Executive Memo	© 5
Legislative Request Report	© 11
Fiscal Impact Statement	© 12
Testimony	
Heather Bruskin	© 15
Jackie De Carlo	© 18
Susan Eisendrath	© 19

Alternative format requests for people with disabilities. If you need assistance accessing this report you may [submit alternative format requests](#) to the ADA Compliance Manager. The ADA Compliance Manager can also be reached at 240-777-6197 (TTY 240-777-6196) or at adacompliance@montgomerycountymd.gov

M E M O R A N D U M

July 8, 2022

TO: County Council

FROM: Christine Wellons, Senior Legislative Attorney

SUBJECT: Expedited Bill 20-22, Office of Food Systems Resilience - Established

PURPOSE: Final Action – motion and roll call vote expected

Expedited Bill 20-22, Office of Food Systems Resilience - Established, sponsored by Council President Albornoz at the request of the County Executive, was introduced on June 21, 2022. A public hearing was held on June 28, 2022 at 1:30 p.m. Action is scheduled for July 12, 2022.¹

Expedited Bill 20-22 would:

- (1) establish an Office of Food Systems Resilience as a non-principal office of the Executive Branch; and
- (2) prescribe the authorities and responsibilities of the Office of Food Systems Resilience.

BACKGROUND

The County Executive requested the introduction of Bill 20-22 to establish a new non-principal office, the Office of Food Systems Resilience. The County Council appropriated funding for the new office as part of the FY23 operating budget.

BILL SPECIFICS

The duties of the new office of Food Systems Resilience would be to:

- in coordination with the Maryland Food Council, serve as a liaison between government and food systems stakeholders, including residents, businesses, farms, food assistance providers, charities, and educational institutions;
- in coordination with the Department of Environmental Protection, the Office of Agriculture, the Department of Planning, the Department of Health and Human Services, and the Office of Community Partnerships, serve as a central liaison and coordinator for County government food systems initiatives and projects;

¹ #FoodSystemsResilience #FoodSecurity

- develop and maintain a strategy for improving the efficiency, equity, sustainability, and resilience of the food systems in Montgomery County;
- advise the County Executive and County Council on food systems related policy issues, as well as deliver a report on the state of the local food systems with recommended policy, budgetary, and regulatory changes to the County Executive and County Council no less than annually;
- develop and maintain a system to collect and process local food systems data to support accurate and timely monitoring of the state of the local food systems, and analyze such data to support decision making and strategic planning;
- in coordination with the Office of Grants Management and the Office of Procurement, set policies and procedures for grants impacting the local food systems that are consistent with the aforementioned food systems strategy and work to leverage County resources to pursue state, federal, and private sector resources to support local food system initiatives;
- in coordination with the Office of Emergency Management and Homeland Security, the Department of Health and Human Services, and local food assistance providers, support disaster response feeding planning and operations;
- in coordination with the Office of Racial Equity, work to address racial inequities and develop practices to ensure social justice and address disparities in the local food systems; and
- represent the interests of Montgomery County in regional, national, and international food systems coordination efforts.

SUMMARY OF PUBLIC TESTIMONY

The Council received public testimony in support of the bill from the Montgomery County Food Council, Manna Food Center, and a County resident who is a home-based food grower.

All of the testimony requested that the bill be amended to make the Director of the Office of Food Systems Resilience a non-merit, appointed position. The testimony indicated that making the Director position appointed would help ensure transparency, accountability to the County Council and the community, and long-term alignment with countywide priorities.

POTENTIAL AMENDMENT

As mentioned above, public testimony supported amending Expedited Bill 20-22 to make the Director of the Office of Food Systems Resilience a non-merit, appointed position.

In its adoption of the FY2023 operating budget, the Council assumed that the Office would be part of the Community Engagement Cluster, and that the Director of the Office would be a merit

system employee. The Council might wish to ask Executive staff what the fiscal impact would be of making the Director a non-merit appointee.

If the Council wishes to amend the bill to make the Office a principal office, and to make the Director of the Office an appointed position, it could adopt the following amendment:

Amend lines 2-13 as follows.

1A-201. Establishing departments and principal offices.

(a) Executive Branch.

(1) These are the departments and principal offices of the Executive Branch.

County Executive (Charter, § 201 et seq.)

Chief Administrative Officer (Charter, § 210 et seq.)

Consumer Protection (Section 11-2)

Correction and Rehabilitation (Section 2-28)

County Attorney (Charter § 213)

Environmental Protection (Section 2-29)

Finance (Charter § 214; Section 20-38 et seq.)

Fire and Rescue Service (Section 2-39A)

Food Systems Resilience (Section 2-64Q)

General Services (Section 2-30)1A-203.

* * *

1A-203. Establishing other offices.

(a) *Executive Branch.* These are the offices of the Executive Branch that are not part of a department or principal office:

Office of Agriculture (section 2B-1A)

Office of Animal Services (section 2-58C)

Office of the Commission for Women (section 27-28, et seq.)

Office of Community Use of Public Facilities (section 2-64M)

Office of Emergency Management and Homeland Security (section 2-64O)

Office of Grants Management (section 2-64P)

[[Office of Food Systems Resilience (section 2-64Q)]]

Office of Human Rights (section 27-4)

* * *

NEXT STEP: Motion to Enact Expedited Bill 20-22. Roll call vote to enact the bill.

<u>This packet contains:</u>	<u>Circle #</u>
Expedited Bill 20-22	1
County Executive Memo	5
Legislative Request Report	11
Fiscal Impact Statement	12
Testimony	
Heather Bruskin	15
Jackie De Carlo	18
Susan Eisendrath	19

Expedited Bill No. 20-22
Concerning: Office of Food Systems
Resilience - Established
Revised: 6/16/2022 Draft No. 1
Introduced: June 21, 2022
Expires: December 21, 2023
Enacted: _____
Executive: _____
Effective: _____
Sunset Date: _____
Ch. _____, Laws of Mont. Co. _____

COUNTY COUNCIL FOR MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND

By: Council President at the Request of the County Executive

AN EXPEDITED ACT to:

- (1) establish an Office of Food Systems Resilience as a non-principal office of the Executive Branch;
- (2) prescribe the authorities and responsibilities of the Office of Food Systems Resilience; and
- (3) generally amend the law regarding offices of the Executive Branch.

By amending

Montgomery County Code
Chapter 1A, Structure of County Government
Section 1A-203

By adding

Montgomery County Code
Chapter 2, Administration
Section 2-64Q

Boldface	<i>Heading or defined term.</i>
<u>Underlining</u>	<i>Added to existing law by original bill.</i>
[Single boldface brackets]	<i>Deleted from existing law by original bill.</i>
<u>Double underlining</u>	<i>Added by amendment.</i>
[[Double boldface brackets]]	<i>Deleted from existing law or the bill by amendment.</i>
* * *	<i>Existing law unaffected by bill.</i>

The County Council for Montgomery County, Maryland approves the following Act:

Sec. 1. Section 1A-203 is amended, and Section 2-64Q is added, as follows:

1A-203. Establishing other offices.

(a) *Executive Branch.* These are the offices of the Executive Branch that are not part of a department or principal office:

Office of Agriculture (section 2B-1A)

Office of Animal Services (section 2-58C)

Office of the Commission for Women (section 27-28, et seq.)

Office of Community Use of Public Facilities (section 2-64M)

Office of Emergency Management and Homeland Security (section 2-64O)

Office of Grants Management (section 2-64P)

Office of Food Systems Resilience (section 2-64Q)

Office of Human Rights (section 27-4)

* * *

DIVISION 23. OFFICE OF FOOD SYSTEMS RESILIENCE.

2-64Q. Office of Food Systems Resilience - Functions.

The Office of Food Systems Resilience must:

(a) in coordination with the Maryland Food Council, serve as a liaison between government and food systems stakeholders, including residents, businesses, farms, food assistance providers, charities, and educational institutions;

- (b) in coordination with the Department of Environmental Protection, the Office of Agriculture, the Department of Planning, the Department of Health and Human Services, and the Office of Community Partnerships, serve as a central liaison and coordinator for County government food systems initiatives and projects;
- (c) develop and maintain a strategy for improving the efficiency, equity, sustainability, and resilience of the food systems in Montgomery County;
- (d) advise the County Executive and County Council on food systems related policy issues, as well as deliver a report on the state of the local food systems with recommended policy, budgetary, and regulatory changes to the County Executive and County Council no less than annually;
- (e) develop and maintain a system to collect and process local food systems data to support accurate and timely monitoring of the state of the local food systems, and analyze such data to support decision making and strategic planning;
- (f) in coordination with the Office of Grants Management and the Office of Procurement, set policies and procedures for grants impacting the local food systems that are consistent with the aforementioned food systems strategy and work to leverage County resources to pursue state, federal, and private sector resources to support local food system initiatives;
- (g) in coordination with the Office of Emergency Management and Homeland Security, the Department of Health and Human Services, and local food assistance providers, support disaster response feeding planning and operations;

(h) in coordination with the Office of Racial Equity, work to address racial inequities and develop practices to ensure social justice and address disparities in the local food systems; and

(i) represent the interests of Montgomery County in regional, national, and international food systems coordination efforts.

Sec. 2. Expedited Effective Date. The Council declares that this legislation is necessary for the immediate protection of the public interest. This Act takes effect on the date on which it becomes law.




OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

Marc Elrich
County Executive

MEMORANDUM

June 14, 2022

TO: Gabe Albornoz, President
Montgomery County Council

FROM: Marc Elrich, County Executive 

SUBJECT: Introduction of Bill XX-22E, Establishment of The Office of Food Systems Resilience for the County

In the attached Bill XX-22, I propose creation of an Office of Food Systems Resilience as a non-principal office in the County Government and to establish the duties of the Office. As you know, the funding for this office was approved during your deliberations on the FY23 operating budget.

In my proposed County legislation, the Office of Food Systems Resilience would:

- (1) in coordination with the Maryland Food Council, serve as a liaison between the government and food systems stakeholders, including residents, businesses, farms, food assistance providers, charities, and educational institutions;
- (2) in coordination with the Department of Environmental Protection, the Office of Agriculture, the Department of Planning, the Department of Health and Human Services, and the Office of Community Partnerships, serve as a central liaison and coordinator for County government food systems initiatives and projects;
- (3) develop and maintain a strategy for improving the efficiency, equity, sustainability, and resilience of the food systems in Montgomery County;
- (4) advise the County Executive and County Council on food systems related policy issues, as well as deliver a report on the state of the local food systems with recommended policy, budgetary, and regulatory changes to the County Executive and County Council no less than annually;

- (5) develop and maintain a system to collect and process local food systems data to support accurate and timely monitoring of the state of the local food systems, and analyze such data to support decision making and strategic planning;
- (6) in coordination with the Office of Grants Management and the Office of Procurement, set policies and procedures for grants impacting the local food systems that are consistent with the aforementioned food systems strategy and work to leverage County resources to pursue State, Federal, and private sector resources to support local food system initiatives;
- (7) in coordination with the Office of Emergency Management and Homeland Security, the Department of Health and Human Services, and local food assistance providers, support disaster response feeding planning and operations;
- (8) in coordination with the Office of Racial Equity, work to address racial inequities and develop practices to ensure social justice and address disparities in the local food systems; and
- (9) represent the interests of Montgomery County in regional, national, and international food systems coordination efforts.

I appreciate the work of the Food Security Task Force, in the development of this proposed Bill. Staff from my office and from the FSTF are available to answer your questions.

Thank you.

ME:lb

Enclosures: Legislation
Legislative Request Report
Fiscal Impact Statement

cc: Richard Madaleno, Chief Administrative Officer
Earl Stoddard, PhD, MPH, CEM, Assistant Chief Administrative Officer
Raymond Crowel, Psy.D., Director, Department of Health and Human Services
Mark Hodge, Senior Administrator, School Health Services, Department of Health and Human Services
Netta Squires, Senior Law & Policy Analyst/NCR Emergency Preparedness Specialist, Montgomery County Office of Emergency Management and Homeland Security
Patrick M. Campbell, Senior Planning Manager, Office of Emergency Preparedness, Response and Mass Care, Department of Health and Human Services
Heather Bruskin, Executive Director, Montgomery County Food Council

Expedited Bill No. [Click - type number]
Concerning: [short title]
Revised: [date] Draft No. [#]
Introduced: [date]
Expires: [18 mos. after intro]
Enacted: [date]
Executive: [date signed]
Effective: [date takes effect]
Sunset Date: [date expires]
Ch. [#], Laws of Mont. Co. [year]

COUNTY COUNCIL FOR MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND

By: Council President at the Request of the County Executive

AN EXPEDITED ACT to:

- (1) establish an Office of Food Systems Resilience as a non-principal office of the Executive Branch; and
- (2) prescribe the authorities and responsibilities of Food Systems Resilience.

By amending

Montgomery County Code
Chapter 1A, Structure of County Government
Section 1A-203

By adding

Montgomery County Code
Chapter 2, Administration
Section 2-64Q

Boldface	<i>Heading or defined term.</i>
<u>Underlining</u>	<i>Added to existing law by original bill.</i>
[Single boldface brackets]	<i>Deleted from existing law by original bill.</i>
<u>Double underlining</u>	<i>Added by amendment.</i>
[[Double boldface brackets]]	<i>Deleted from existing law or the bill by amendment.</i>
* * *	<i>Existing law unaffected by bill.</i>

The County Council for Montgomery County, Maryland approves the following Act:

Sec. 1. Section 1A-203 is amended, and Section 2-64Q is added, as follows:

1A-203. Establishing other offices.

(a) *Executive Branch.* These are the offices of the Executive Branch that are not part of a department or principal office:

Office of Agriculture (section 2B-1A)

Office of Animal Services (section 2-58C)

Office of the Commission for Women (section 27-28, et seq.)

Office of Community Use of Public Facilities (section 2-64M)

Office of Emergency Management and Homeland Security (section 2-64O)

Office of Grants Management (section 2-64P)

Office of Food Systems Resilience (section 2-64Q)

Office of Human Rights (section 27-4)

* * *

DIVISION 22. OFFICE OF FOOD SYSTEMS RESILIENCE.

2-64Q. Office of Food Systems Resilience - Functions.

The Office of Food Systems Resilience must:

(a) in coordination with the Maryland Food Council, serve as a liaison between the government and food systems stakeholders, including residents, businesses, farms, food assistance providers, charities, and educational institutions;

- (b) in coordination with the Department of Environmental Protection, the Office of Agriculture, the Department of Planning, the Department of Health and Human Services, and the Office of Community Partnerships, serve as a central liaison and coordinator for County government food systems initiatives and projects;
- (c) develop and maintain a strategy for improving the efficiency, equity, sustainability, and resilience of the food systems in Montgomery County;
- (d) advise the County Executive and County Council on food systems related policy issues, as well as deliver a report on the state of the local food systems with recommended policy, budgetary, and regulatory changes to the County Executive and County Council no less than annually;
- (e) develop and maintain a system to collect and process local food systems data to support accurate and timely monitoring of the state of the local food systems, and analyze such data to support decision making and strategic planning;
- (f) in coordination with the Office of Grants Management and the Office of Procurement, set policies and procedures for grants impacting the local food systems that are consistent with the aforementioned food systems strategy and work to leverage County resources to pursue state, federal, and private sector resources to support local food system initiatives;
- (g) in coordination with the Office of Emergency Management and Homeland Security, the Department of Health and Human Services, and local food assistance providers, support disaster response feeding planning and operations;

(h) in coordination with the Office of Racial Equity, work to address racial inequities and develop practices to ensure social justice and address disparities in the local food systems; and

(i) represent the interests of Montgomery County in regional, national, and international food systems coordination efforts.

* * *

Sec. 2. Expedited Effective Date. The Council declares that this legislation is necessary for the immediate protection of the public interest. This Act takes effect on the date on which it becomes law.

Approved:

Gabriel Albornoz, President, County Council Date

Approved:

Marc Elrich, County Executive Date

This is a correct copy of Council action.

Judy Rupp, Clerk of the Council Date

APPROVED AS TO FORM AND LEGALITY
OFFICE OF THE COUNTY ATTORNEY

BY: Gd. [Signature]
DATE: June 14, 2022

LEGISLATIVE REQUEST REPORT

Bill XX-22E -
Food Systems Resilience

DESCRIPTION: This Bill establishes the Office of Food Systems Resilience as a non-principal office in the County government.

PROBLEM:

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES: To establish an Office of Food Systems Resilience as a non-principal office in the County government.

COORDINATION: Office of the County Executive.

FISCAL IMPACT: Office of Management and Budget.

ECONOMIC IMPACT: Office of Legislative Oversight.

RACIAL EQUITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE IMPACT: Office of Legislative Oversight

EVALUATION: To be done.

EXPERIENCE ELSEWHERE: Unknown

SOURCES OF INFORMATION: Earl Stoddard, Assistant Chief Administrative Officer

APPLICATION WITHIN MUNICIPALITIES:

PENALTIES: As provided in Chapters 30C and 31A, Montgomery County Code.

ebl

02-0000
I:\KQ\LATTNE\Forms\Legislation\legislative request report.doc

Fiscal Impact Statement
Bill XX-22, Office of Food Systems Resilience - Established

Legislative Summary

1. Bill XX-22 establishes Office of Food Systems Resilience as a non-principal office in the County government.; and establishes the duties of the Office:

- in coordination with the Maryland Food Council, serve as a liaison between the government and food systems stakeholders, including residents, businesses, farms, food assistance providers, charities, and educational institutions;
- in coordination with the Department of Environmental Protection, the Office of Agriculture, the Department of Planning, the Department of Health and Human Services, and the Office of Community Partnerships, serve as a central liaison and coordinator for County government food systems initiatives and projects;
- develop and maintain a strategy for improving the efficiency, equity, sustainability, and resilience of the food systems in Montgomery County;
- advise the County Executive and County Council on food systems related policy issues, as well as deliver a report on the state of the local food systems with recommended policy, budgetary, and regulatory changes to the County Executive and County Council no less than annually;
- develop and maintain a system to collect and process local food systems data to support accurate and timely monitoring of the state of the local food systems, and analyze such data to support decision making and strategic planning;
- in coordination with the Office of Grants Management and the Office of Procurement, set policies and procedures for grants impacting the local food systems that are consistent with the aforementioned food systems strategy and work to leverage County resources to pursue State, Federal, and private sector resources to support local food system initiatives;
- in coordination with the Office of Emergency Management and Homeland Security, the Department of Health and Human Services, and local food assistance providers, support disaster response feeding planning and operations;
- in coordination with the Office of Racial Equity, work to address racial inequities and develop practices to ensure social justice and address disparities in the local food systems; and
- represent the interests of Montgomery County in regional, national, and international food systems coordination efforts.

2. An estimate of changes in County revenues and expenditures regardless of whether the revenues or expenditures are assumed in the recommended or approved budget. Includes source of information, assumptions, and methodologies used.

The funding for the Office of Food Systems Resilience was appropriated as part of the FY23 Approved Operating Budget. Bill XX-22 establishes the office as a non-principal office creating no additional fiscal impacts beyond the programs in the approved operating budget. First year costs (FY23) are expected to total \$1,087,854 as shown in the table below. Of this amount, \$348,725 would be in personnel costs, \$733,000 would be in ongoing operating expenses, and \$6,129 would be required for one-time expenses. The Operating Budget for the first year is anticipated to total up to \$1,087,854 as outlined below:

Operating Budget	FY23
Personnel Cost:	
Food System Resilience Director	\$131,935
Food System Resilience Policy Analyst	\$112,812
Food System Partner Specialist	\$103,978
Sub-Total Personnel Cost	\$348,725
Operating Expenses:	
Farm to Food Bank Program	\$350,000
Montgomery County Food Council	\$200,000
Market Money Grants Program	\$125,000
Community Gardening and Local Resilience Grants Program	\$50,000
Data Collection and Reporting System	\$4,000
Travel and Events	\$4,000
One-Time Expenses: Miscellaneous Operating, Laptops, etc.	\$6,129
Sub-Total Operating Expense	\$739,129
Total Operating Budget	\$1,087,854

3. Revenue and expenditure estimates covering at least the next 6 fiscal years.

Operating Budget	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY26	FY27	FY28	Total
Personnel Cost:							
Food System Resilience Director	\$ 131,935	\$ 131,935	\$ 131,935	\$ 131,935	\$ 131,935	\$ 131,935	\$ 791,610
Food System Resilience Policy Analyst	\$ 112,812	\$ 112,812	\$ 112,812	\$ 112,812	\$ 112,812	\$ 112,812	\$ 676,872
Food System Partner Specialist	\$ 103,978	\$ 103,978	\$ 103,978	\$ 103,978	\$ 103,978	\$ 103,978	\$ 623,868
Sub-Total Personnel Cost	\$ 348,725	\$ 348,725	\$ 348,725	\$ 348,725	\$ 348,725	\$ 348,725	\$ 2,092,350
Operating Expenses:							
Farm to Food Bank Program	\$ 350,000	\$ 350,000	\$ 350,000	\$ 350,000	\$ 350,000	\$ 350,000	\$ 2,100,000
Montgomery County Food Council	\$ 200,000	\$ 200,000	\$ 200,000	\$ 200,000	\$ 200,000	\$ 200,000	\$ 1,200,000
Market Money Grants Program	\$ 125,000	\$ 125,000	\$ 125,000	\$ 125,000	\$ 125,000	\$ 125,000	\$ 750,000
Community Gardening and Local Resilience Grants Program	\$ 50,000	\$ 50,000	\$ 50,000	\$ 50,000	\$ 50,000	\$ 50,000	\$ 300,000
Data Collection and Reporting System	\$ 4,000	\$ 4,000	\$ 4,000	\$ 4,000	\$ 4,000	\$ 4,000	\$ 24,000
Travel and Events	\$ 4,000	\$ 4,000	\$ 4,000	\$ 4,000	\$ 4,000	\$ 4,000	\$ 24,000
One-Time Expenses	\$ 6,129	-	-	-	-	-	
Sub-Total Operating Expense	\$ 739,129	\$ 733,000	\$ 733,000	\$ 733,000	\$ 733,000	\$ 733,000	\$ 4,404,129
Total Operating Budget	\$ 1,087,854	\$ 1,081,725	\$ 1,081,725	\$ 1,081,725	\$ 1,081,725	\$ 1,081,725	\$ 6,496,479

The personnel cost for all positions in the table above have been flatlined in the out-years. These costs would begin in FY23 when the Bill takes effect.

4. An actuarial analysis through the entire amortization period for each bill that would affect retiree pension or group insurance costs.

Bill XX-22 is not expected to impact retiree pension or group insurance costs.

5. An estimate of expenditures related to County's information technology (IT) systems, including Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) systems.

Bill XX-22 is not expected to materially impact the County's IT or ERP systems.

6. Later actions that may affect future revenue and expenditures if the bill authorizes future spending.

If the Office expands its scope of work, additional resources may be required.

7. An estimate of the staff time needed to implement the bill.

Staff from the Office of the County Executive and Department of Health and Human Services will be involved in the establishment of the Office. The amount of individual staff time the Office will take to establish cannot be reliably estimated at this time.

8. An explanation of how the addition of new staff responsibilities would affect other duties.

Not Applicable.

9. An estimate of costs when an additional appropriation is needed.

See the response to Question 2.

10. A description of any variable that could affect revenue and cost estimates.

The potential revenue that might be raised by the Office is unknown and difficult to project. Even if the Office can obtain grant funds, the future mitigation of County cost is not likely. If the scope of the Office grows, the fiscal impact on the County could be increased.

11. Ranges of revenue or expenditures that are uncertain or difficult to project.

Not Applicable

12. If a bill is likely to have no fiscal impact, why that is the case.

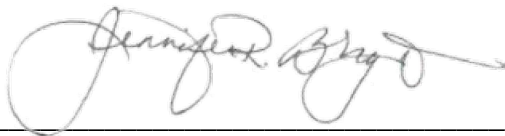
Not Applicable

13. Other fiscal impacts or comments.

Not Applicable

14. The following contributed to and concurred with this analysis:

- Earl Stoddard, Office of the County Executive
- Thomas Tippet, Office of Management and Budget



Jennifer R. Bryant, Director
Office of Management and Budget

6-9-22

Date



June 27, 2022

**2022 SESSION SUPPORT TESTIMONY
Bill 20-22: Office of Food Systems Resilience - Established**

BILL: Bill 20-22: Office of Food Systems Resilience - Established
POSITION: Testimony of Support of Bill 20-22
BILL ANALYSIS: This bill would establish an Office of Food Systems Resilience in Montgomery County as a non-principal office of the Executive Branch and prescribes the authorities and responsibilities of that office.

Dear Members of the Montgomery County Council:

The Montgomery County Food Council (Food Council) would like to thank the County Council for the continued investment in our work, as well as for understanding the essential need for community-based coordination and sector-specific support in food systems change. Although community leadership is critical, increased government capacity is vital as well, especially related to strategic use of resources and breaking down silos. Therefore, **the Food Council urges you to SUPPORT Bill 20-22, which will establish an Office of Food Systems Resilience (OFSR) in Montgomery County.**

As our County faced surging food insecurity and empty pantry shelves during the COVID-19 pandemic, the critical need for government response in coordination with community partners became more clear than ever. The establishment of the Food Security Task Force (FSTF) created a public-private partnership in response to this crisis that enabled an unprecedented expansion in food system efforts, leveraging the unique tools of government, nonprofit, philanthropy, and the broader private sector to ameliorate food insecurity in Montgomery County while building resiliency for future crises. Now that the County has moved to the recovery phase, the Office of Food Systems Resilience will continue the valuable work of recently disbanded FSTF, to provide the dedicated government component of a community-based, systems-oriented, and data driven approach toward lasting positive change in our local food system. The OFSR must lead on policy strategies and strategic investments, centered around a systems focus for the County to move beyond emergency food and build on unique assets and opportunities in Montgomery County to build on our lessons learned from the pandemic to be better prepared for future crises and stronger as a community.



Affecting real change in our food system requires a holistic approach that recognizes the need for complementary strategic investments in programs and projects. Investments that not only address food insecurity and hunger, but also consider broader issues like supply chain resilience, local food production, equitable economic opportunity, and sustainability. The OFSR will leverage its expertise to inform and ensure that all countywide planning and budget processes consider food system impacts and build resilience. A preview of the types of food system disruptions that will come with climate change and global political crisis was provided via the COVID-19 pandemic. It is imperative that the County establish this office so it is better prepared to meet these coming challenges. By employing teams of experts that can coordinate cross-agency partnerships and effectively use public resources to support our extensive network of local food systems partners, this office will be able to create and execute strategies to guide public policy and resource allocation.

The Office of Food Systems Resilience would be responsible for partnering with the Food Council and broader community to create and implement a long-term, cross-agency strategic plan that will more effectively and efficiently use public funds to combat food insecurity and build a resilient local food system. While Montgomery County has made considerable investments toward food system issues, our funding and energy will be more effectively spent on sufficient staffing focused specifically on the food system and this long-term strategic plan that will be centered on equity, social justice, the entire food system, and data-informed approaches. While our robust and highly skilled nonprofit sector is adaptable, resourceful, and collaborative, there are some tools only available to local government, particularly during a crisis. Dedicated internal government staffing with policy and best practice expertise, as well as decision-making authority, over resources including Federal funding allocation, institutional procurement, legislative action, and cross-jurisdictional coordination, is necessary to steward these resources both in emergencies and blue-sky times. **In addition to sufficient staffing and budget resources, in order to ensure transparency, accountability to County Council and the community, and long-term alignment with countywide priorities, the Director of the Office of Food Systems Resilience should be an appointed position.**

The Office of Food Systems Resilience will transform how we approach and measure the creation of a stronger food system. No longer will we only track the number of pounds of food and families served. This office will conduct research to identify gaps in food assistance service and expand SNAP access points. It will prioritize strategies that look to reduce the number of people reliant on food assistance by addressing the root causes of food insecurity and inequity. It will consider all levels of the food system in its strategies, seeking to enhance and expand local food production capacities, mitigate supply chain vulnerabilities, prevent, recover, and recycle wasted food, and create a more environmentally sustainable food system. This office will also seek to meet the



practical, cultural, and nutritional needs of our diverse communities to ensure our residents' dignity is maintained and health emphasized.

Montgomery County has already taken major steps toward creating a stronger and more resilient local food system with the Food Security Plan and deployment of the FSTF. The recent establishment of the Maryland Food System Resiliency Council provides Montgomery County with a strong foundation and blueprint toward developing a coordinated and cohesive long-term food system strategy. It is vital that we pass Bill 20-22 to build upon the momentum of these successes and ensure that Montgomery County will remain committed toward affecting transformative change in our food system. **For these reasons the Montgomery County Food Council is FOR Bill 20-22 and urges your support FOR this bill.**

The Montgomery County Food Council is a nonprofit organization that serves as the primary connection point for businesses, nonprofits, government agencies, and residents around food system issues in our County. We bring together over 2,000 local and regional partners in community-wide education, advocacy, and capacity building initiatives. Our work cultivates a more resilient, sustainable, and equitable local food system by enhancing food access for the over 100,000 at risk for hunger, expanding food education opportunities for all residents, supporting our County's farms and food and beverage businesses, and addressing the impact of local food production, distribution, consumption and recycling on our natural resources.

For more information, please contact: Heather Bruskin, MCFC Executive Director at the email and phone number below.





**Testimony to the Montgomery County Council
Submitted by Manna Food Center in support of
Bill 20-22: Office of Food Systems Resilience
June 2022**

Dear Members of the Montgomery County Council:

Manna Food Center urges you to **SUPPORT** Bill 20-22, which will establish an Office of Food Systems Resilience (OFSR) in Montgomery County. As part of our decades of service as the designated food bank of the county, our long-standing commitment to the work of the Montgomery County Food Council, as well as our current administration of the Community Food Rescue network, Manna is a strong advocate for and contributor to a sustainable, fair food system. As the County moves from an emergency pandemic to the challenges of rising inflation and persistent social injustice, the Office of Food Systems Resilience will take up the important role of being a partner to the not-for-profit community, as well as businesses and other public entities, to continue community-based, systems-oriented, and data driven strategies to achieve Food for All.

Effective food system work requires a balanced approach that recognizes the unique roles and intersections between policy and practice. The issues at stake include food security, public health, the food economy, and environmental sustainability. The COVID-19 pandemic offered a preview of the types of food system disruptions threatened by climate change or global political crisis. With the OFSR, Montgomery County will be better prepared to meet these coming challenges.

The Office of Food Systems Resilience would be responsible for partnering with Manna and other community actors to create and implement the next Food Security Plan, as well as guide and steward both short and long-term community investments and policy directions. Local government staff with policy and best practice expertise, as well as decision-making authority, over resources including Federal funding allocation, institutional procurement, legislative action, and cross-jurisdictional coordination, is critical.

We believe that in the spirit of transparency, accountability to County Council and the community, as well as alignment with countywide, community-based priorities, the Director of the Office of Food Systems Resiliency should be an appointed position. As an organization committed to being participant-centered and data driven, we are eager to work with the Office of Food Systems Resilience to continue to advance a stronger food system. At all levels of the food system from mitigating supply chain vulnerabilities, to decreasing food waste, to creating a more environmentally sustainable food system partnership with the OFSR and the community will yield a range of nutrition, economic, and health benefits for our diverse and vibrant community. **Manna Food Center is FOR Bill 20-22 and urges your support FOR this bill.**

For more information about our work or our testimony, please contact: Jackie DeCarlo, CEO, at jackie@mannafood.org

RE: Written Testimony of Support of Bill 20-22: Office of Food Systems Resilience

Dear Montgomery County Councilmembers:

My name is Susan Eisendrath and I am writing to register my support of Bill 20-22: Office of Food Systems Resilience. While I am active in the county efforts to improve our food system as a former member of the Montgomery County Food Council, former Co-Chair and current member of the Environmental Impact Working Group, current member of the Racial Equity Committee and as a Master Gardener/Composter and through my volunteer work with the Climate Action Plan Coalition, I am not representing these organizations. I am a home-based food grower, with a front-yard farmette in Rockville and I fully support the establishment of the Office of Food Systems Resilience since it would bolster the County Council's commitment to ensuring the food system work is more coordinated and integrated into both community-based organizations and government programs.

The COVID-19 pandemic has amplified the need for our County to focus resources and support to address the increase in food insecurity and this Office should serve as a hub for coordinating efforts. I applaud the work that the The Food Council has done to expand services during the past few years and I appreciate the work of the Food Security Task Force (FSTF) which strengthened the collaborative work of government, non-profit, and community partnerships to meet family needing additional assistance during the pandemic.

The Office of Food Systems Resilience will build upon the foundation of the unique cross sectorial work related to food insecurity and other social services and it will also provide a base for strengthening the development of food system analysis and research, program and policy planning and targeted investments.

Addressing food insecurity in relation to building a more resilient food system will require the County to also analyze issues related to climate change and how our County will be impacted by food and supply chain disruptions, climatic challenges (such as temperature increases, weather related damages-hail, heavy rains, drought, etc.) that alter food production capacity within the county and globally. Just to provide one scientific reality based example of the challenges we are and will increasingly be faced with, in relation to food production and climate change: Most plants have a maximum temperature production range and when temperatures are above 75 to 95 degrees F, the heat stress causes flowers to deteriorate, tomatoes drop flowers at sustained temperatures of 85 degrees F during the day and 70 degrees F during night. We are already seeing such "heat stress" negatively impact crops, even in our County.

In addition, political global conditions and situations propose challenges to the food system and these realities must be taken into consideration in order to plan a more sustainable and resilient food system locally. Rising food prices are a result of a variety of global factors, most notably we've experienced disruptions caused by the war in Ukraine, which has created volatile energy supplies, decreases in access to fertilizers, restrictions on certain food imports and challenges to other critical aspects of the food system.

Since the County Climate Action Plan does not focus squarely on the impacts of climate change and the food system, I strongly urge the Council to add explicitly to the charge of the Office of Food System Resilience, that it will also be responsible for:

Analyzing the potential and pending impacts of climate change on the food system and establishing resiliency focused plans to address the negative impacts, which may include but are not limited to:

- Establishing the barriers and opportunities for increasing local food production
- Identifying land for food production and expanding access to support food production within the county Identifying barriers and opportunities for coordinating regional food production systems to establish resilient localized food production
- Identifying the necessary support for farmers and residents to expand food production (e.g., these might include effort such as promoting and supporting Climate Victory Gardens and efforts to address temperature increases and food production challenges, etc.)
- Applying an equity and social justice lens needs to all these efforts
- Establishing a system to include community input in planning and execution of food production programs
- Identifying and applying policies and programs that are based on environmentally sustainable and resiliency rooted best practice planning to address climate change challenges

Finally, in order to establish a solid commitment to continued work on food system resiliency, I urge the Council to make the Director of the Office of Food Systems Resilience an appointed position, with adequate staffing to and resources to launch and sustain this critical service to improve our county and meet the needs of our residents.

Thank you for your time and commitment. Susan Eisendrath, MPH, Rockville, MD Resident