

Climate Assessment

Office of Legislative Oversight

Bill 20-24: Public Campaign Financing - Amendments

SUMMARY

The Office of Legislative Oversight (OLO) anticipates Bill 20-24 will have no impact on the County's contribution to addressing climate change as it is proposing amendments to an existing law that does not impact climate change or climate resilience.

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE OF BILL 20-24

The Public Election Fund was established through the enactment of Bill 16-14 in September 2014. It provides public campaign financing for County Executive and County Council candidates with the goals of:

- Encouraging greater voter participation in County elections;
- Increasing opportunities for more residents to run for office; and
- Reducing the influence of large contributions from businesses and organizations.¹

Bill 20-24 would amend the Public Election Fund by:

- Increasing the amount of funds a certified candidate may retain (in certain circumstances) for post-election expenses from \$5,000 to \$10,000 with this amount increasing every four years based upon inflation;
- Clarifying how to calculate the Consumer Price Index adjustment for permissible contribution limits and retention amounts; and
- Making technical corrections throughout the public campaign financing law.²

Bill 20-24, Public Campaign Financing – Amendments, was introduced by the Council on September 17, 2024.

ANTICIPATED IMPACTS

As the bill proposes amendments to an existing law that does not impact the County's contribution to addressing climate change or climate resilience, OLO anticipates that Bill 20-24 will have no impact.

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 20-24 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 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.

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.

CONTRIBUTIONS

OLO staffer Kaitlyn Simmons drafted this assessment.

¹ Montgomery County Council, [Bill 16-14](#), Enacted September 30, 2014.

² Montgomery County Council, [Introduction Report for Bill 20-24](#), Introduced September 17, 2024.

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