

Climate Assessment

Office of Legislative Oversight

EXPEDITED BILL 10-26: ARTS AND HUMANITIES COUNCIL - AMENDMENTS

SUMMARY

The Office of Legislative Oversight (OLO) anticipates that Expedited Bill 10-26 will have no impact as it is proposing changes to an existing Council whose operations do not impact the County's contribution to climate change. OLO notes one of the proposed changes requires OLO to conduct an evaluation of the performance and effectiveness of AHCMC. The office cannot provide an independent assessment of that proposed change and it is therefore left out of the analysis.

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE OF EXPEDITED BILL 10-26

In 1999, the Council passed a law designating the Arts & Humanities Council of Montgomery County (AHCMC) as the County's local arts agency. Through this designation, the AHCMC is responsible for:¹

- Promoting creativity, scholarship, and professionalism in arts and humanities;
- Providing and coordinating funding for arts and humanities in the County; and
- Advising local, state, and federal agencies about financial and other needs of arts and humanities programs in the County.

Between FY18 and FY25, the AHCMC distributed \$49 million in County funding to grants supporting non-profit arts and humanities organizations and individual artists and scholars in the County.²

The purpose of Expedited Bill 10-26 is to update the governance structure and responsibilities of the AHCMC. If enacted, Expedited Bill 10-26 would:³

- Set the size, terms, and composition of AHCMC's board of directors and the duties of the board;
- Require annual reports on AHCMC's activities and on the status of [Public Arts Trust](#) on August 31 of every year;
- Set specific requirements for AHCMC's articles of incorporation and bylaws; and
- Require AHCMC to adopt and implement a RESJ policy that applies a RESJ lens into all aspects of its operations.

Expedited Bill 10-26 would also require AHCMC's designation to be renewed by the Council every five years. OLO would be required to evaluate AHCMC at least one year before the redesignation is made.⁴ According to the County Executive, Expedited Bill 10-26 was introduced to guarantee that public investment in AHCMC "is

supported by modernized governance provisions that reinforce accountability and maintain public confidence.”⁵

The Council introduced Expedited Bill 10-26 at the request of the County Executive on February 10, 2026.

ANTICIPATED IMPACTS

As the Bill proposes changes to the governance structure and responsibilities of an existing council whose operations do not impact the County’s contribution to climate change, OLO anticipates Expedited Bill 10-26 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.⁶ OLO does not offer recommendations or amendments as Expedited Bill 10-26 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.

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 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.

CONTRIBUTIONS

OLO staffer Kaitlyn Simmons drafted this assessment.

¹ [Education and Culture Committee Staff Report, Discussion: Arts & Humanities](#), Montgomery County Council, July 22, 2019, pg. 2.

² C. Kalyandurg, [OLO Report 2025-13: Investing in the Arts: How County Government Funds Cultural Organizations and Public Arts Venues](#), Office of Legislative Oversight, November 4, 2025, pgs. 24-25.

³ Bill 10-26, [Introduction Staff Report for Expedited Bill 10-26](#), Montgomery County Council, Introduced February 10, 2026, pgs. (1)-(13).

⁴ Ibid., pg. (3).

⁵ Memo from County Executive to Council President, [Introduction Staff Report for Expedited Bill 10-26](#), pg. (15).

⁶ Bill 3-22, Legislative Branch – Climate Assessments – Required, Montgomery County Council, Effective date October 24, 2022