

Economic Impact Statement

Montgomery County, Maryland

Bill 27-24 Animal Control – Impoundment and Disposition

SUMMARY

The Office of Legislative Oversight (OLO) anticipates that Bill 27-24 would have an insignificant impact on economic conditions in the County in terms of the Council’s priority indicators.

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE OF BILL 27-24

According to Montgomery County Code, an animal may be impounded¹ by an animal control officer, the Executive Director of Animal Services, or the Animal Matters Hearing Board, in order to protect the health or safety of a person, an animal, or the public.²

Once an animal is impounded, the director must promptly make a “reasonable effort” to find and notify the owner of the impounded animal. Currently an owner has five days to reclaim their animal and pay the estimated cost of caring for the animal after receiving the notice of impoundment.³ If the owner does not pay, the impounded animal is considered abandoned and becomes County property.⁴

Bill 27-24 seeks to reduce the time an owner has to reclaim their animal from five days to three days, which is consistent with Maryland State law.⁵ The bill would further require the notice of impoundment to be posted on the animal owner’s door and on the Montgomery County Animal Services and Adoption Center website. The intention of the bill is to reduce overcrowding at the animal shelter and allow for abandoned animals to be adopted more quickly.⁶

Bill 27-24, Animal Control – Impoundment and Disposition, was introduced by the County Council on December 3, 2024.

¹ Defined as seizing and holding in legal custody

² [Montgomery County Code, § 5-303.](#)

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ [Maryland Code, Crim. Law § 10-617 - Disposal of domestic animal.](#)

⁶ [Montgomery County Council, Staff Introduction Report for Bill 27-24, Introduced December 3, 2024.](#)

INFORMATION SOURCES, METHODOLOGIES, AND ASSUMPTIONS

As required by 2-81B of the Montgomery County Code, this Economic Impact Statement evaluates the impacts of Bill 27-24 on residents and private organizations in relation to Council's priority economic indicators. In doing so, it examines whether the Bill would have a net positive or negative impact on overall economic conditions in the County.⁷ Decreasing the time an owner has to reclaim their animal from five days to three days would have no direct impact on the Council's priority economic indicators. For this reason, OLO anticipates that the Bill would have insignificant economic impacts on private organizations, residents, and overall economic conditions in the County.

VARIABLES

Not applicable

IMPACTS

WORKFORCE ▪ TAXATION POLICY ▪ PROPERTY VALUES ▪ INCOMES ▪ OPERATING COSTS ▪ PRIVATE SECTOR CAPITAL INVESTMENT ▪ ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ▪ COMPETITIVENESS

Not applicable

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Not applicable

CAVEATS

Two caveats to the economic analysis performed here should be noted. First, predicting the economic impacts of legislation is a challenging analytical endeavor due to data limitations, the multitude of causes of economic outcomes, economic shocks, uncertainty, and other factors. 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.

CONTRIBUTIONS

Stephen Roblin (OLO) prepared this report.

⁷ "[Sec. 2-81B, Economic Impact Statements](#)," Montgomery County Code.