

# Racial Equity and Social Justice (RESJ) Impact Statement

Office of Legislative Oversight

## EXPEDITED BILL 30-25: NOISE CONTROL – LEAF REMOVAL EQUIPMENT – ENFORCEMENT PROCEDURES

### SUMMARY

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The Office of Legislative Oversight (OLO) anticipates Expedited Bill 30-25 will have a positive impact on racial equity and social justice (RESJ) in the County. Removing the photographic evidence requirement for complaints on the gas-powered leaf blower ban would increase privacy among landscapers who are disproportionately Latinx and prevent an activity that could exacerbate existing fears among Latinx community members.

### PURPOSE OF RESJ IMPACT STATEMENTS

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RESJ impact statements (RESJIS) evaluate the anticipated impact of legislation on racial equity and social justice in the County. RESJ is a **process** that focuses on centering the needs, leadership, and power of Black, Indigenous, and other People of Color (BIPOC) and communities with low incomes. RESJ is also a **goal** of eliminating racial and social inequities. Applying a RESJ lens is essential to achieve RESJ.<sup>1</sup> This involves seeing, thinking, and working differently to address the racial and social inequities that cause racial and social disparities.<sup>2</sup>

### PURPOSE OF EXPEDITED BILL 30-25

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In September 2023, the County Council passed Bill 18-22.<sup>3</sup> This Bill banned the use of gas-powered leaf blowers in the County as of July 1, 2025. Bill 18-22 intended to decrease noise pollution and greenhouse gas emissions associated with the use of gas-powered leaf blowers.<sup>4</sup>

Currently, to enforce Bill 18-22, community members must submit a complaint that includes photographic evidence of the person violating the ban.<sup>5</sup> The purpose of Expedited Bill 30-25 is to repeal this photographic evidence requirement. Instead, Bill 30-25 would allow a complaint on a violation of the ban by at least one witness.<sup>6</sup>

Given their overrepresentation among business owners and employees in the landscaping industry, Latinx community members are disproportionately impacted by enforcement of the gas-powered leaf blower ban.<sup>7</sup> In July of this year, the Transportation and Environment Committee raised concerns that amid the current political climate – where Latinx community members are being targeted by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) –<sup>8</sup> the photo enforcement requirement could create a chilling effect on landscapers.<sup>9,10</sup> As noted in the introduction staff report, “Bill 30-25 seeks to address the concerns and unintended consequences raised by the Committee.”<sup>11</sup>

The Council introduced Expedited Bill 30-25 on September 30, 2025.

This RESJIS builds on the ones for Bills 18-22 and 19-25, which OLO published in August 2022 and July 2025, respectively.<sup>12,13</sup> Please refer to Bill 18-22 RESJIS for background on entrepreneurship, landscape contracting, leaf blowers, and racial equity.

# RESJ Impact Statement

## Expedited Bill 30-25

### ANTICIPATED RESJ IMPACTS

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To consider the anticipated impact of Bill 30-25 on RESJ in the County, OLO recommends the consideration of two related questions:

- Who would primarily benefit or be burdened by this bill?
- What racial and social inequities could passage of this bill weaken or strengthen?

Landscaping business owners and employees would benefit from increased privacy if the photographic evidence requirement for complaints on the gas-powered leaf blower ban is removed. Local data suggests that Latinx- and White-owned employer businesses in the County are overrepresented in the Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services industry that includes landscaping businesses (Table A, Appendix). Local data also suggests that Latinx community members are overrepresented among landscaping employees given their high rate of employment in natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations (Table B, Appendix).

Aggressive immigration enforcement fosters a heightened state of fear that harms the health and well-being of immigrant families.<sup>14,15</sup> These fears have been particularly felt among Latinx people across citizenship status, as ICE has targeted Latinx individuals and communities with indiscriminate and increasingly violent enforcement tactics.<sup>16</sup> Removing the photographic evidence requirement for complaints on the gas-powered leaf blower ban would increase privacy among landscapers who are disproportionately Latinx and prevent an activity that could exacerbate existing fears among Latinx community members.

Therefore, OLO anticipates Bill 30-25 will have a positive impact on RESJ in the County.

### RECOMMENDED AMENDMENTS

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The 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.<sup>17</sup> OLO anticipates Expedited Bill 30-25 will have a positive impact on RESJ in the County. As such, OLO does not offer recommended amendments.

### CAVEATS

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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.

# RESJ Impact Statement

## Expedited Bill 30-25

### APPENDIX

**Table A. Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services (NAICS 56) Employer Firms by Race and Ethnicity, Montgomery County**

Race or ethnicity <sup>18</sup>	% Business Owners (NAICS 56)	% All Business Owners (NAICS 00)	% Adult Population
Asian	5.7	21.8	16.0
Black	8.3	7.6	18.3
Native American	-	1.4	0.5
Pacific Islander	-	0.1	0.0
White	80.9	69.1	46.6
Latinx	26.6	10.0	18.7

Source: OLO Analysis of [AB2200CSA01, 2022 American Business Survey](#) and [Table S2101, 2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates](#), Census Bureau.

**Table B. Rate of Employment in Natural Resources, Construction, and Maintenance Occupations, Montgomery County**

Race or ethnicity	Rate of Employment
Asian	2.5
Black	3.0
White	3.4
Latinx	20.4
County	6.3

Source: [Table S0201, 2023 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates](#), Census Bureau.

<sup>1</sup> Definition of racial equity and social justice adopted from [Marlysa Gamblin et al., “Applying Racial Equity to U.S. Federal Nutrition Programs,” Bread for the World](#) and [Racial Equity Tools](#).

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> [Action Staff Report for Bill 18-22, Montgomery County Council, Vote on September 26, 2023.](#)

<sup>4</sup> [“Leaf Blowers,” Montgomery County Department of Environmental Protection.](#)

<sup>5</sup> [Introduction Staff Report for Expedited Bill 30-25, Montgomery County Council, Introduced September 30, 2025, pg. 1.](#)

<sup>6</sup> Ibid, pg. 2.

<sup>7</sup> [RESJIS for Expedited Bill 19-25, Office of Legislative Oversight, July 14, 2025, pg. 2.](#)

<sup>8</sup> [Antonio Planas, “‘It’s about surviving’: Hispanic businesses struggle with ICE and the economy,” The Banner, October 13, 2025.](#)

<sup>9</sup> Introduction Staff Report for Expedited Bill 30-25, pg. 2.

<sup>10</sup> [Maryam Shahzad, “Elrich Supports Enforcing Leaf Blower Ban Without Photos,” Montgomery County Media, October 9, 2025.](#)

<sup>11</sup> Introduction Staff Report for Expedited Bill 30-25, pg. 2.

<sup>12</sup> [RESJIS for Bill 18-22, Office of Legislative Oversight, August 11, 2022.](#)

<sup>13</sup> RESJIS for Bill 19-25.

<sup>14</sup> [Akash Pillai, et al., “Potential Impacts of Mass Detention and Deportation Efforts on the Health and Well-Being of Immigrant Families,” KFF, February 6, 2025.](#)

<sup>15</sup> [Myriam Vidal Valero, “U.S. immigration policy: Mental health impacts of increased detentions and deportations,” American Psychological Association, September 1, 2025.](#)

<sup>16</sup> [Nicole Foy, “We Found That More Than 170 U.S. Citizens Have Been Held by Immigration Agents. They’ve Been Kicked, Dragged and Detained for Days,” ProPublica, October 16, 2025.](#)

<sup>17</sup> [Bill 27-19, Administration – Human Rights – Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice – Racial Equity and Social Justice Advisory Committee – Established, Montgomery County Council.](#)

<sup>18</sup> For Tables A and B, race is inclusive of Latinx origin. Estimates for Native American and Pacific Islander community members are not available for all data points. Margins of error for some data points in Table A may be large.