PS Committee Item #1
October 5, 2026
Worksession

MEMORANDUM

September 30, 2026

TO: Public Safety (PS) Committee

FROM: Jim Ogorzalek, Legislative Attorney

SUBJECT: Bill 27-26, Motor Vehicles and Traffic – Unlawful Racing and Street Takeovers Prohibited

PURPOSE: Worksession

Invited Attendees:
Earl Stoddard, Assistant Chief Administrative Officer
Acting Chief Darren Francke, Montgomery County Police Department
Captain Jason Cokinos, Montgomery County Police Department
Captain Tony Galladora, Montgomery County Police Department

Bill 27-26, Motor Vehicles and Traffic – Unlawful Racing and Street Takeovers Prohibited, was introduced on June 16, 2026. Its Lead Sponsor is Councilmember Friedson. The bill's Co-Sponsors are Council Vice President Balcombe, and Councilmembers Katz and Luedtke. A public hearing occurred on July 14, 2026, at 1:30 p.m. A worksession of the Public Safety (PS) Committee is scheduled for Monday, October 5, 2026, at 9:30 a.m.

Bill 27-26 would:

(1) prohibit participation in unlawful racing and street takeovers on public highways or roadways;
(2) define certain terms related to unlawful racing and street takeovers;
(3) establish penalties for such violations; and
(4) generally amend the law regarding motor vehicles and traffic.

Background

In response to recent instances racing, speed contests, and exhibition driving, the General Assembly enacted legislation increasing penalties for participation in racing or speed contests and prohibited exhibition driving, all in certain circumstances as defined under State law. In 2026, the Prince George's County Council enacted a similar law consistent with state law aimed at

prohibiting unlawful speed contests, exhibition driving, stunt driving or race contests. No similar law exists in the Montgomery County Code.

Bill Specifics

Bill 27-26 would prohibit the participation in unlawful racing and street takeovers on public highways or roadways, defining, as necessary, certain terms. The bill establishes that any violation of the new prohibitions is a Class A criminal penalty under the County Code.

SUMMARY OF IMPACT STATEMENTS

Fiscal Impact. "The bill is expected to have an indeterminate fiscal impact on the Montgomery County Police Department (MCPD), primarily through potential personnel and operational workload associated with enforcement. The bill authorizes the seizure, towing, and storage of vehicles used in connection with violations. Based on information from MCPD, towing and storage activity is expected to be cost-neutral or potentially revenue-positive due to existing cost-recovery mechanisms. Because enforcement expectations, operational tempo, incident volume, and the number of potential vehicle impoundments have not yet been established, the fiscal impact cannot be quantified at this time."

Climate Assessment. **"**The Office of Legislative Oversight (OLO) anticipates Bill 27-26 will have no impact on the County's contribution to addressing climate change as it would create additional penalties for unlawful racing, street takeovers, or other related events."

Economic Impact Statement. **"**The Office of Legislative Oversight (OLO) anticipates that Bill 27-26 would have an indeterminate impact on overall economic conditions in the County, as measured by the Council's priority economic indicators. . . .

The Bill would negatively affect households with residents who receive fines or face short-term incarceration as a result of the spectator ordinance. Residents who receive citations would incur nondiscretionary household expenses to pay or challenge these fines, which would likely result in one-time reductions (or recurring reductions for repeat offenders) in household income. Financial consequences would be more severe for lower-income households, as well as those with residents who face short-term incarceration for participating in illegal street racing.

These negative impacts could be offset by economic benefits for some residents and businesses, if the Bill prevents vehicle crashes at future street-racing events in the County. By doing so, the Bill would mitigate crash-related nondiscretionary household expenditures and income losses for crash victims and their households, as well as potentially reduce costs for other road users.

If the spectator ordinance prevents street racing events, the Bill could benefit certain businesses where these events would otherwise occur by preventing revenue and other costs that these events cause in commercial districts. Additionally, if the Bill prevents vehicle crashes that would otherwise occur at future street-racing events in the County, some employers could see lower costs associated with employee injuries and fatalities, while other businesses (e.g., health care providers, vehicle repair shops) may face reduced demand and income.

OLO cannot determine the overall impact of the Bill due to limited evidence on the effectiveness of spectator ordinances and uncertainty in the magnitude and distribution of economic costs and benefits across residents and business entities."

Racial Equity and Social Justice Impact Statement. "The Office of Legislative Oversight (OLO) finds the anticipated racial equity and social justice (RESJ) impact of Bill 27-26 is indeterminate. There are several unanswered questions to understand how increasing penalties for street events would impact RESJ in the County. . . .

Community members who participate in street events could be burdened by additional penalties from participating in these events. This includes possible jail time, and potential fines and fees from misdemeanor convictions and recovering impounded vehicles.

Available data on traffic stops for street racing and exhibition driving shows since 2012, there were 535 traffic stops for these charges. Latinx community members were overrepresented among these traffic stops. Black and White community members were proportionately represented, while Asian community members were underrepresented. . . .

Community members who live, drive, or walk near street events could benefit from increased street safety, and decreased noise and other disruptions if Bill 27-26 helps prevent these events.

Data on the location of traffic stops for street racing and exhibition driving suggests Latinx communities, and to a lesser extent, Black and Asian communities, could disproportionately benefit from increased street safety if Bill 27-26 helps prevent street events."

SUMMARY OF PUBLIC TESTIMONY

The Council held a public hearing on Bill 27-26 on July 14, 2026. The Council received both oral and written testimony, all in support of the bill.

The testimony emphasized that street takeovers and unlawful racing pose serious dangers to participants, bystanders, pedestrians, cyclists, motorists, and neighboring residents, and that the bill would give law enforcement meaningful tools to address these incidents. Several supporters spoke from personal experience, including residents who witnessed takeovers near their homes and family members who have lost loved ones to traffic incidents. Supporters also noted that the bill builds on and strengthens existing state law, and that it has the backing of the Police Chief and the State's Attorney.

Although supporting the bill's core purpose, several testifiers urged the Council to consider modifications. Requested amendments included: refining the definition of "street takeover" to explicitly exempt constitutionally protected protests and assemblies, arguing that the current language could be interpreted to criminalize peaceful demonstrations; expanding the bill's coverage to include parking lots, parking structures, and private property, noting that a number of these incidents have occurred on private industrial and commercial lots; and ensuring the bill does not weaken sanctions already established under state law.

ISSUES FOR THE COMMITTEE'S CONSIDERATION[1]

1. Addressing Preemption Concerns

As introduced, the bill contains certain prohibitions that duplicate prohibited behavior under the Maryland Code. Certain of these prohibitions were identified by the Office of the County Attorney as potentially the cause of preemption issues. To address these concerns, Councilmembers Luedtke and Friedson offer the following amendment:

Amend lines 15–20 and 33–45 as follows:

Participant means any person, **[[**in or**]]** outside a vehicle, who purposefully slows, stops, or impedes, or attempts to slow, stop, or impede, the movement of traffic, including pedestrian traffic, for the purpose of a speed contest, stunt driving, exhibition driving, or street takeover. Participant includes any person who aids, abets, promotes, organizes, or attends a speed contest, stunt driving, exhibition driving, or street takeover.

* * *

(b) Prohibited Conduct.

(1) **[[**A person must not engage in an unlawful race, speed contest, street takeover, exhibition driving event, or stunt driving event on any highway or roadway.

(2)**]]** A person must not participate as a timekeeper, flagger, participant, or starter in an unlawful race, speed contest, street takeover, exhibition driving event, or stunt driving event on any highway or roadway.

[[(3)**]]**(2) A person must not aid, abet, promote, or organize an unlawful race, speed contest, street takeover, exhibition driving event, or stunt driving event.

[1] The Committee authorizes Council Legislative Attorneys to make non-substantive technical corrections necessary to fix any typographical, stylistic, formatting, or grammatical errors in Bill 27-26.

[[(4)**]]**(3) A person must not remain in a defined area after a lawful order to disperse has been issued by a law enforcement official.

2. Increasing Fines

As introduced, the bill establishes each violation of the law as a Class A criminal violation, the maximum fine for which under current County law is $1,000. Councilmembers Luedtke and Friedson offer the following amendment to increase the fines for violations of the bill to $5,000, the maximum amount permitted under State law.

Amend lines 46–47, as follows:

(d) Any violation of this section or any regulation issued under it is a Class A violation and may be punished as a misdemeanor. Notwithstanding Section 1-19, the fine for any violation of this section must be in an amount not to exceed $5,000.

This packet contains:	Circle #
Bill 27-26	1
Fiscal Impact Statement	4
Climate Assessment	6
Economic Impact Statement	8
Racial Equity and Social Justice Impact Statement	14
Lead Sponsor's Letter to Colleagues before Committee	20

Bill No. 27-26
Concerning: Motor Vehicles and Traffic – Unlawful Racing and Street Takeovers - Prohibited
Revised: 7/9/2026 Draft No. 2
Introduced: June 16, 2026
Expiration: December 7, 2026
Enacted: _____
Executive: _____
Effective: _____
Sunset Date: _____
Ch. _____, Laws of Mont. Co. _____

COUNTY COUNCIL
FOR MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND

Lead Sponsor: Councilmember Friedson
Co-Sponsors: Council Vice President Balcombe, and Councilmembers Katz and Luedtke

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AN ACT to:

(1) prohibit participation in unlawful racing and street takeovers on public highways or roadways;
(2) define certain terms related to unlawful racing and street takeovers;
(3) establish penalties for such violations; and
(4) generally amend the law regarding motor vehicles and traffic.

By adding
Montgomery County Code
Chapter 31, Motor Vehicles and Traffic
Section 31-9F

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

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

Sec. 1. Section 31-9F is added as follows:

Sec. 31-9F. Unlawful Racing and Street Takeovers Prohibited.

(a) *Definitions.* In this section, the following words and phrases have the meanings indicated:

Exhibition driving has the meaning set forth in Section 21-1116.1 of the Transportation Article of the Maryland Code, as amended.

Lawful order to disperse means an order issued by a law enforcement officer directing people to leave a defined area because the officer has reasonable grounds to believe an unlawful race or a street takeover is occurring or about to occur.

Motor vehicle means a vehicle that is self-propelled, including two or four-wheel vehicles or all-terrain vehicles; motorcycles, mopeds, minibikes, dirt bikes, scooters; and any other means of land transportation deriving motor power from any source other than muscle or wind.

Participant means any person, in or outside a vehicle, who purposefully slows, stops, or impedes, or attempts to slow, stop, or impede, the movement of traffic, including pedestrian traffic, for the purpose of a speed contest, stunt driving, exhibition driving, or street takeover. Participant includes any person who aids, abets, promotes, organizes, or attends a speed contest, stunt driving, exhibition driving, or street takeover.

Street takeover means a coordinated gathering of persons, including persons in motor vehicles, that results in the intentional disruption of the movement of motor vehicles on the highway or roadway or the movement of public safety vehicles within the County, such as vehicles performing burnouts, drifting, spinning, doughnuts, acceleration exhibitions, or other similar maneuvers that create a substantial risk of injury on any county highway.

Stunt driving means any motor vehicle performing or engaging in burnouts, doughnuts, drifting, or wheelies, or allowing a passenger to ride either partially or fully outside the vehicle while operating that vehicle.

Unlawful race or speed contest means any race, speed contest, acceleration contest, or competitive exhibition of speed or acceleration involving one or more motor vehicles not authorized by law.

(b) Prohibited Conduct.

(1) A person must not engage in an unlawful race, speed contest, street takeover, exhibition driving event, or stunt driving event on any highway or roadway.

(2) A person must not participate as a timekeeper, flagger, participant, or starter in an unlawful race, speed contest, street takeover, exhibition driving event, or stunt driving event on any highway or roadway.

(3) A person must not aid, abet, promote, or organize an unlawful race, speed contest, street takeover, exhibition driving event, or stunt driving event.

(4) A person must not remain in a defined area after a lawful order to disperse has been issued by a law enforcement official.

(d) Any violation of this section or any regulation issued under it is a Class A violation and may be punished as a misdemeanor.

(e) A motor vehicle used in violation of this section may be taken into possession by County police or other authorized person designated by the County Executive and may be towed and stored in accordance with applicable law.

Fiscal Impact Statement

Office of Management and Budget

Bill 27-26	Motor Vehicles and Traffic - Unlawful Racing and Street Takeovers Prohibited
Bill Summary	Bill 27-26 would prohibit unlawful racing, speed contests, exhibition driving, stunt driving, and street takeovers on public highways or roadways. The bill defines relevant terms, establishes violations as Class A violations that may be punished as misdemeanors, and authorizes the seizure, towing, and storage of vehicles used in connection with these violations.
Fiscal Impact Summary	The bill is expected to have an indeterminate fiscal impact on the Montgomery County Police Department (MCPD), primarily through potential personnel and operational workload associated with enforcement. The bill authorizes the seizure, towing, and storage of vehicles used in connection with violations. Based on information from MCPD, towing and storage activity is expected to be cost-neutral or potentially revenue-positive due to existing cost-recovery mechanisms. Because enforcement expectations, operational tempo, incident volume, and the number of potential vehicle impoundments have not yet been established, the fiscal impact cannot be quantified at this time.
Fiscal Impact Analysis	**Towing and Storage Costs** The bill authorizes vehicle impoundment for violations. Each impoundment may initially result in towing, storage, letter, and administrative processing costs under existing County procedures or contracts. However, based on information from MCPD, these costs are expected to be recoverable through one or more existing mechanisms: • direct payment by the vehicle owner upon retrieval; • proceeds from the public auction of unclaimed vehicles; or • collection through State-authorized administrative flagging. MCPD indicated that administrative flags do not impose a fee on the County and may generate revenue when outstanding costs are collected. The Department also noted that vehicles involved in street-racing activity are likely to be in recoverable or saleable condition and may be retrieved by the owner or sold at public auction. Accordingly, towing and storage activity is not anticipated to produce a net cost to the County and may generate additional revenue depending on the number of vehicles impounded and recovered. **Revenue Impact** The bill may result in additional revenue associated with vehicle recovery activity, including owner-paid towing and storage charges, public auction proceeds for unclaimed vehicles, and administrative flag collections. However, because the number of future impoundments is unknown, any potential revenue cannot be quantified at this time and is not assumed as an offset to personnel-related enforcement costs. Potential fine revenue is also not quantified because enforcement expectations,

	citation volume, case outcomes, and collection rates are unknown. **Personnel and Enforcement Costs** The primary fiscal impact is expected to arise from police enforcement. Street racing and street takeover incidents may require multiple officers, traffic control, incident management, and follow-up documentation. Depending on enforcement frequency, the bill may result in: • additional patrol or traffic officer deployment time; • overtime for nighttime or weekend enforcement activity; • increased court attendance related to criminal proceedings; • additional administrative workload associated with case processing and impound documentation. The County has not yet established anticipated enforcement expectations or operational tempo. As a result, a quantitative estimate of personnel-related costs is not possible at this time.
Staff Impact	The bill does not mandate new positions. However, enforcement activity may require shifts in deployment and may increase overtime if incidents occur outside regular operating hours. Records personnel, towing-processing staff, and court-related administrative staff may experience additional workload depending on enforcement volume.
Actuarial Analysis	The bill is not expected to impact retiree pension or group insurance costs.
Information Technology Impact	The bill is not expected to impact the County Information Technology (IT) or Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) systems.
Other Information	
Later actions that may impact revenue or expenditures if future spending is projected	The bill does not itself authorize future spending, create a new program, or require new positions. Future expenditures would depend on enforcement volume and operational decisions by the Montgomery County Police Department.
Contributors	Dale Phillips, Montgomery County Police Department Eric Penner, Montgomery County Police Department Julie Knight, Office of Management and Budget

Climate Assessment

Office of Legislative Oversight

BILL 27-26: MOTOR VEHICLES AND TRAFFIC – UNLAWFUL RACING AND STREET TAKEOVERS - PROHIBITED

SUMMARY

The Office of Legislative Oversight (OLO) anticipates Bill 27-26 will have no impact on the County's contribution to addressing climate change as it would create additional penalties for unlawful racing, street takeovers, or other related events.

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE OF BILL 27-26

In 2024, the General Assembly passed House Bill 601, which increased penalties for street racing and exhibition driving in Maryland. Per this law, people who are convicted on these charges can have points added to their driver's license, be fined up to $1,000, and face prison time.[1]

The purpose of Bill 27-26 is to create additional penalties for street racing, exhibition driving, and other similar events in the County. If enacted, Bill 27-26 would prohibit community members from engaging in "an unlawful race, speed contest, street takeover, exhibition driving event, or stunt driving event on any highway or roadway." The Bill would also prohibit other conduct related to these events, such as:[2]

- Serving as timekeeper or flagger for an event;
- Helping to promote or organize an event; and
- Remaining in the crowd of an event after receiving an order to disperse from law enforcement.

Bill 27-26 would allow a violation of these proposed prohibitions to be punished as a Class A misdemeanor. This penalty carries a jail term of up to six months and/or fine of up to $1000.[3] The Bill would also allow vehicles that are involved in these events to be seized by County police or other authorized officials.[4]

The Council introduced Bill 27-26 on June 16, 2026.

ANTICIPATED IMPACTS

As the Bill would create additional penalties for unlawful racing, street takeovers, or other related events , OLO anticipates Bill 27-26 will have no impact on the County's contribution to addressing climate change, including the reduction and/or sequestration of greenhouse gas emissions and community climate resilience.

RECOMMENDED AMENDMENTS

The Climate Assessment Act requires OLO to offer recommendations, such as amendments or other measures to mitigate any anticipated negative climate impacts.[5] OLO does not offer recommendations or amendments as Bill 27-26 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 and community climate resilience.

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 increase the County's community climate 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] HB 601: Street Racing and Exhibition Driving – Prohibited Acts, Enforcement, and Penalties, Maryland General Assembly, 2024 Regular Session.
[2] Bill 27-26, Introduction Staff Report for Bill 27-26, Montgomery County Council, Introduced June 16, 2026, pg. (3).
[3] Montgomery County Code Sec. 1-19.
[4] Ibid.
[5] Bill 3-22, Legislative Branch – Climate Assessments – Required, Montgomery County Council, Effective date October 24, 2022

Economic Impact Statement

Montgomery County, Maryland

Bill 27-26, Motor Vehicles and Traffic – Unlawful Racing and Street Takeovers Prohibited

Summary

The Office of Legislative Oversight (OLO) anticipates that Bill 27-26 would have an indeterminate impact on overall economic conditions in the County, as measured by the Council's priority economic indicators. This analysis focuses on the following feature of the Bill that is non-duplicative with State law—the proposal to authorize the Montgomery County Police Department (MCPD) to cite non-driving participants at illegal street racing and exhibition events. To assess its economic impacts, this analysis draws on the only study OLO found that examines the effectiveness of penalizing non-driving participants ("spectator ordinances") on reducing illegal street racing, as well as studies on economic impacts of vehicular crashes, legal monetary sanctions, and incarceration in the U.S.

The Bill would negatively affect households with residents who receive fines or face short-term incarceration as a result of the spectator ordinance. Residents who receive citations would incur nondiscretionary household expenses to pay or challenge these fines, which would likely result in one-time reductions (or recurring reductions for repeat offenders) in household income. Financial consequences would be more severe for lower-income households, as well as those with residents who face short-term incarceration for participating in illegal street racing.

These negative impacts could be offset by economic benefits for some residents and businesses, if the Bill prevents vehicle crashes at future street-racing events in the County. By doing so, the Bill would mitigate crash-related nondiscretionary household expenditures and income losses for crash victims and their households, as well as potentially reduce costs for other road users.

If the spectator ordinance prevents street racing events, the Bill could benefit certain businesses where these events would otherwise occur by preventing revenue and other costs that these events cause in commercial districts. Additionally, if the Bill prevents vehicle crashes that would otherwise occur at future street-racing events in the County, some employers could see lower costs associated with employee injuries and fatalities, while other businesses (e.g., health care providers, vehicle repair shops) may face reduced demand and income.

OLO cannot determine the overall impact of the Bill due to limited evidence on the effectiveness of spectator ordinances and uncertainty in the magnitude and distribution of economic costs and benefits across residents and business entities.

Background and Purpose of Bill 27-26

In 2024, the General Assembly passed House Bill 601, which increased penalties for street racing and exhibition driving in Maryland. Per this law, people who are convicted on these charges can have points added to their driver's license, be fined up to $1,000, and face prison time.[1]

The purpose of Bill 27-26 is to create additional penalties for street racing, exhibition driving, and other similar events in the County. If enacted, Bill 27-26 would prohibit community members from engaging in "an unlawful race, speed contest, street takeover, exhibition driving event, or stunt driving event on any highway or roadway." The Bill would also prohibit other conduct related to these events, such as:[2]

- Serving as timekeeper or flagger for an event;
- Helping to promote or organize an event; and
- Remaining in the crowd of an event after receiving an order to disperse from law enforcement.

Bill 27-26 would allow a violation of these proposed prohibitions to be punished as a Class A misdemeanor. This penalty carries a jail term of up to six months and/or fine of up to $1000.[3] The Bill would also allow vehicles that are involved in these events to be seized by County police or other authorized officials.[4]
The Council introduced Bill 27-26 on June 16, 2026.

Information Sources, Methodologies, and Assumptions

As required by Section 2-81B of the Montgomery County Code, this Economic Impact Statement evaluates the impacts of Bill 27-26 on residents and private organizations, using the Council's priority economic indicators as the measure. In doing so, it examines whether the Bill would have a net positive or negative impact on overall economic conditions in the County.[5]

Scope of Analysis: Most of the regulatory provisions proposed in Bill 27-26 aimed at curbing street racing and exhibition driving duplicate State law. These provisions would likely have little local impact, as State law already provides State's Attorneys with the legal authority to enforce these provisions.[6] This analysis, therefore, focuses on the following feature of the Bill that is non-duplicative—the proposal to authorize the Montgomery County Police Department (MCP) to cite non-driving participants in these events.

Information Sources: The Bill would likely have *direct* economic impacts through citations for non-driving participants and potentially *indirect* impacts if it reduces crashes from illegal street racing. To assess these impacts, this analysis draws primarily on the following sources of information:

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[1] HB 601: Street Racing and Exhibition Driving – Prohibited Acts, Enforcement, and Penalties, Maryland General Assembly, 2024 Regular Session.
[2] Bill 27-26, Introduction Staff Report for Bill 27-26, Montgomery County Council, Introduced June 16, 2026, pg. (3).
[3] Montgomery County Code Sec. 1-19.
[4] Ibid.
[5] Montgomery County Code, Sec. 2-81B, Economic Impact Statements.
[6] OLO communication with Council attorney, August 26, 2026.

- Cost-of-crash studies that estimate the economic costs generated by motor vehicle crashes for different groups of actors, in particular, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's report, The Economic and Societal Impact of Motor Vehicle Crashes, 2019 (Revised).
- A peer-reviewed study published in 2006 on the effectiveness of San Diego's spectator ordinance and other policies aimed at reducing illegal street racing, which is the only study that OLO identified on illegal street racing that examines penalties against non-driving participants.[7]
- Peer-reviewed literature reviews on the individual and family impacts of legal monetary sanctions and mass incarceration in the U.S.[8]

Inferences on the Bill's potential economic impacts made in this analysis are based on findings from these studies, as well as a previous Economic Impact Statement that draws on cost-of-crash studies.[9]

Variables

The economic effects of Bill 27-26 would primarily depend on the following variables:

- Number of citations for non-driving participants;
- Number of illegal street racing events; and
- Vehicular crashes at these events.

Impacts

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

Residents

OLO anticipates that Bill 27-26 would have an indeterminate impact on certain residents in the County.

Direct Impacts on Non-Driving Participants

By authorizing MCPD to cite non-driving participants at illegal street racing events, the Bill would negatively affect residents who receive fines as a result of this provision. The Bill would classify non-driving participation in these events as a Class A violation that may be punished as a misdemeanor, with a fine up to $1,000, jail term up to six months, and civil penalties of $500 for first-time offenses and $750 for repeat offenses.[10]

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[7] John L. Worrall and Stephen G. Tibbetts, "Explaining San Diego's Decline in Illegal Street-Racing Casualties," *Justice Quarterly* 23, no. 4 (2006): 530–44.
[8] LaScala-Gruenewald, Angela, and Leslie Paik. "Legal Financial Obligations in the United States: A Review of Recent Research." *Sociology Compass* 17, no. 5 (2023): e13070; Lee, Hedwig, and Christopher Wildeman. "Assessing Mass Incarceration's Effects on Families." *Science* 374, no. 6565 (2021): 277–81; and Kirk, David S., and Sara Wakefield. "Collateral Consequences of Punishment: A Critical Review and Path Forward." *Annual Review of Criminology* 1, no. 1 (2018): 171–94.
[9] See statement on Bill 17-26.
[10] Montgomery County Code, *Sec. 1-19. Fines and Penalties*.

Residents who receive citations would incur nondiscretionary household expenses to pay or challenge these fines. All else being equal, these costs would result in one-time reductions (or recurring reductions for repeat offenders) in household income. These fines may have more adverse impacts for certain households. Studies have shown that fines and fees cause financial instability for households and can lead to wage garnishment, liens, and interceptions of tax refunds that push people further into poverty and debt, which, in turn, can result in education and employment losses. These impacts are especially harmful for lower income households.[11]

Households with residents who face short-term incarceration for participating in illegal street racing may experience more severe financial consequences. Research on the impacts of incarceration have found it is associated with declining employment prospects and future earnings, greater material insecurity and reliance on public assistance, rising legal debts, and housing instability. Furthermore, incarceration increases economic hardships that families of incarcerated individuals face.[12]

Potential Indirect Impacts on Other Residents

The Bill could impact other residents if it successfully reduces illegal street racing events and vehicular crashes that occur at them.

Although numerous jurisdictions have instituted "spectator ordinances,"[13] OLO only found one study that has investigated their effectiveness. In 2002, San Diego instituted a law making it an arrestable offense to attend a street racing event. A 2006 study tested whether this spectator ordinance and other factors[14] were associated with a decrease in street racing injuries/fatalities. It found no evidence of the effectiveness of the spectator ordinance. The only factor that achieved statistical significance was the ordinance permitting the forfeiture of vehicles used in illegal street races and other exhibitions of speed ("forfeiture ordinance").[15]

However, OLO is cautious to generalize about the effectiveness of spectator ordinances from this study because the study is based on a single jurisdiction and used a methodology to assess statistical associations and therefore by itself cannot establish a causal relationship.

If the spectator ordinance prevents street-racing events in the County, the Bill could avert out-of-pocket costs from uncovered medical expenses, lost income, and uncompensated time for crash victims and their households. In doing so, the Bill could mitigate crash-related nondiscretionary household expenditures and

[11] LaScala-Gruenewald and Park. "Legal Financial Obligations in the United States."

[12] Lee and Wildeman. "Assessing Mass Incarceration's Effects on Families"; and Kirk and Wakefield. "Collateral Consequences of Punishment."

[13] Examples include Ohio and Florida.

[14] The other factors included a forfeiture ordinance, an increase in the number of sanctioned races, press coverage of illegal racing, and enhanced law-enforcement activity aimed at curbing the street racing.

[15] Worrall and Tibbetts, "Explaining San Diego's Decline in Illegal Street-Racing Casualties."

income losses. Additionally, the Bill could reduce costs for other road users associated with travel delays, excess fuel use caused by vehicle crashes, lower insurance premiums, and other costs linked to crashes.[16]

Beyond these potential impacts, the Bill is unlikely to affect other residents in terms of the Council's other priority economic indicators.

Businesses, Non-Profits, Other Private Organizations

OLO anticipates that Bill 27-26 would have an indeterminate impact on certain private organizations in the County.

If the spectator ordinance prevents street racing events, the Bill could benefit certain businesses where these events would otherwise occur. Numerous sources have documented how street racing events often occur in commercial areas, including downtown Silver Spring MD, and how these events can disrupt commercial activity and lead to theft, vandalism and other crime.[17] Preventing these events would likely avert revenue losses and other costs that otherwise would occur.

Additionally, if the Bill prevents vehicle crashes, some employers could see lower costs from workplace disruption, overtime, retraining, and fringe benefits associated with employee injuries and fatalities. Some health care providers may face reduced demand for emergency, inpatient, and other care related to crashes, along with lower uncompensated or undercompensated care costs, and some vehicle repair shops and related businesses could lose income from collision work.

Beyond these potential impacts, OLO does not anticipate that the Bill would affect other private organizations in terms of the Council's other priority indicators

Overall Impact

OLO anticipates that Bill 27-26 would have an indeterminate impact on overall economic conditions in the County due to limited evidence on the effectiveness of spectator ordinances as well as uncertainty in the magnitude and distribution of economic costs and benefits across residents and business entities.

Discussion Items

Not applicable

[16] See "Economics of Road Safety" section in the Economic Impact Statement for Bill 17-26, which summarizes the National High Traffic Safety Administration's report on the economic impacts of motor vehicle crashes.
[17] AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety, Street Racing: Prevalence, Participation, and Public Concern, Research Brief, April 2026; Kenneth Peak and Ronald Glesner, Street Racing, U.S. Department of Justice, December 2004; and "Police cruisers smashed as street takeover mob swarms Silver Spring," WIJLA, February 24, 2026.

Caveats

Two caveats to the economic impact analysis conducted 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, PhD (OLO) prepared this report.

Racial Equity and Social Justice (RESJ) Impact Statement

Office of Legislative Oversight

Bill 27-26: Motor Vehicles and Traffic - Unlawful Racing and Street Takeovers - Prohibited

Summary

The Office of Legislative Oversight (OLO) finds the anticipated racial equity and social justice (RESJ) impact of Bill 27-26 is indeterminate. There are several unanswered questions to understand how increasing penalties for street events would impact RESJ in the County.

Purpose of RESJ Impact Statements

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.[1] This involves seeing, thinking, and working differently to address the racial and social inequities that cause racial and social disparities.[2]

Purpose of Bill 27-26

In 2024, the General Assembly passed House Bill 601, which increased penalties for street racing and exhibition driving in Maryland. Per this law, people who are convicted on these charges can have points added to their driver's license, be fined up to $1,000, and face prison time.[3]

The purpose of Bill 27-26 is to create additional penalties for street racing, exhibition driving, and other similar events in the County. If enacted, Bill 27-26 would prohibit community members from engaging in "an unlawful race, speed contest, street takeover, exhibition driving event, or stunt driving event on any highway or roadway." The Bill would also prohibit other conduct related to these events, such as:[4]

- Serving as timekeeper or flagger for an event;
- Helping to promote or organize an event; and
- Remaining in the crowd of an event after receiving an order to disperse from law enforcement.

Bill 27-26 would allow a violation of these proposed prohibitions to be punished as a Class A misdemeanor. This penalty carries a jail term of up to six months and/or fine up to $1,000.[5] The Bill would also allow County police or other authorized officials to seize vehicles involved in these events.[6]

The Council introduced Bill 27-26 on June 16, 2026.

This RESJIS builds on the ones for:

- Expedited Bill 49-21, Police - Police Accountability Board - Administrative Charging Committee - Established, published in January 2022, which provides racial equity context on policing;[7]

- Bill 14-24, Vehicle Noise Abatement Monitoring - Pilot Program, published in August 2024, which provides racial equity context on fines and civic debt;[8]
- Bill 28-25, Motor Vehicles and Traffic - Parking in Bikeways - Prohibited, published in September 2025, which provides racial equity context on traffic safety.[9]

ANTICIPATED RESJ IMPACTS

Bill 27-26 defines four kinds of street events it aims to prohibit in the County: unlawful races and speed contests (or "speed racing"), street takeovers, exhibition driving, and stunt driving. Figure A in the appendix includes definitions for each of these events from the Bill. Note, for this RESJIS, the term "street events" generally refers to the street events defined in Bill 27-26.

State law currently prohibits street racing and exhibition driving. Bill 27-26 would broaden the scope of prohibited street events in the County to also include street takeovers and stunt driving. It would also broaden prohibited conduct related to street events beyond just participating as a driver, such as serving as a timekeeper or helping to promote an event. The Bill would create the following additional penalties for participating in street events:

- Drivers participating in street racing and exhibition driving could face increased penalties from County-imposed fines and jail time on top of fines and jail time that can be imposed from state charges. They could also face increased fees from recovering an impounded vehicle.
- Drivers participating in other street events that would be newly prohibited with Bill 27-26 (i.e., street takeovers, stunt driving) could face increased penalties from County-imposed fines and jail time. They could also face increased fees from recovering an impounded vehicle.
- Community members participating in other conduct related to street events that would be newly prohibited with Bill 27-26 could face increased penalties from County-imposed fines and jail time.

Since 2012, on average, there have been fewer than 40 traffic stops per year for street racing and exhibition driving in Montgomery County.[10]

To consider the anticipated impact of Bill 27-26 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?

OLO identified the following groups who would be impacted by Bill 27-26:

Community members who participate in street events could be burdened by additional penalties from participating in these events. This includes possible jail time, and potential fines and fees from misdemeanor convictions and recovering impounded vehicles.

Available data on traffic stops for street racing and exhibition driving shows since 2012, there were 535 traffic stops for these charges. Latinx community members were overrepresented among these traffic stops. Black and White community members were proportionately represented, while Asian community members were underrepresented. (Table A, Appendix)

Community members who live, drive, or walk near street events could benefit from increased street safety, and decreased noise and other disruptions if Bill 27-26 helps prevent these events.

Data on the location of traffic stops for street racing and exhibition driving suggests Latinx communities, and to a lesser extent, Black and Asian communities, could disproportionately benefit from increased street safety if Bill 27-26 helps prevent street events. (Figure B & Table B, Appendix)[11]

There remain several unanswered questions to determine how Bill 27-26 would impact RESJ in the County. These include:

- Given that street events appear to be infrequent, would this Bill lead to more interactions with the Montgomery County Police Department (MCPD) that would worsen existing racial disparities in police interactions among Latinx community members?[12]
- Given that street events appear to be infrequent, would this Bill meaningfully increase street safety and decrease noise in impacted communities?
- If this Bill works as intended, do the potential costs of increasing penalties for street events to Latinx community members outweigh the potential benefits of increased street safety and decreased noise to BIPOC communities?
- What are expected expenses and revenues from enforcing this Bill? How will the fiscal impact benefit or burden community members by race and ethnicity?[13]

Taken together, OLO finds the anticipated RESJ impact of Bill 27-26 is indeterminate.

Recommended Amendments

The County's RESJ Act requires OLO to consider whether to recommend amendments to bills that could reduce racial and social inequities and advance RESJ.[14] OLO finds the anticipated RESJ impact of Bill 27-26 is indeterminate. As such, OLO does not offer recommended amendments. However, should the Council seek to improve the RESJ impact of this Bill, OLO offers one policy option for Council consideration:

- **Engage BIPOC community stakeholders to update Bill 27-26, draft Method 2 regulations, and develop annual reporting requirements to the Council.** The Council can consider engaging BIPOC community stakeholders, especially Latinx and BIPOC youth stakeholders, to amend Bill 27-26 as needed to reflect the needs and priorities of BIPOC communities who are most impacted by the Bill. This could include considering alternative strategies to address street events that minimize policing. The Council can also consider requiring the responsible agency to partner with BIPOC community stakeholders to develop Method 2 regulations[15] and annual reporting requirements for enforcement related to street events to evaluate the Bill's impact on RESJ.

Caveats

Two caveats to this RESJIS should be noted. First, predicting the impact of bills on RESJ is challenging due to data limitations, uncertainty, and other factors. Second, this RESJIS is intended to inform the Council's decision-making process rather than determine it. Thus, any conclusion made in this statement does not represent OLO's endorsement of, or objection to, the bill under consideration.

APPENDIX

Figure A. Street Events Defined in Bill 27-26

Exhibition driving (per Sec. 21-1116.1 of Transportation Article of Maryland Code): The operation of a motor vehicle in close proximity to a crowd or gathering in a manner that intentionally results in two or more of the following:

(1) The excessive, abrupt acceleration or deceleration of the motor vehicle;

(2) The skidding, squealing, burning, or smoking of the tires of the motor vehicle;

(3) The swerving or swaying of the motor vehicle from side to side while accelerating;

(4) (i) The engine of the motor vehicle producing an unreasonably loud, raucous, or disturbing noise; or

(ii) The grinding of the gears of the motor vehicle or the backfiring of the engine of the motor vehicle;

(5) Any of the wheels of the motor vehicle losing contact with the ground; or

(6) The transportation of a passenger on or in an area of a motor vehicle that is not designed or intended for passenger transport such as the hood or roof.

Street takeover: A coordinated gathering of persons, including persons in motor vehicles, that results in the intentional disruption of the movement of motor vehicles on the highway or roadway or the movement of public safety vehicles within the County, such as vehicles performing burnouts, drifting, spinning, doughnuts, acceleration exhibitions, or other similar maneuvers that create a substantial risk of injury on any County highway.

Stunt driving: Any motor vehicle performing or engaging in burnouts, doughnuts, drifting, or wheelies, or allowing a passenger to ride either partially or fully outside the vehicle while operating that vehicle.

Unlawful race or speed contest (i.e., speed racing): Any race, speed contest, acceleration contest, or competitive exhibition of speed or acceleration involving one or more motor vehicles not authorized by law.

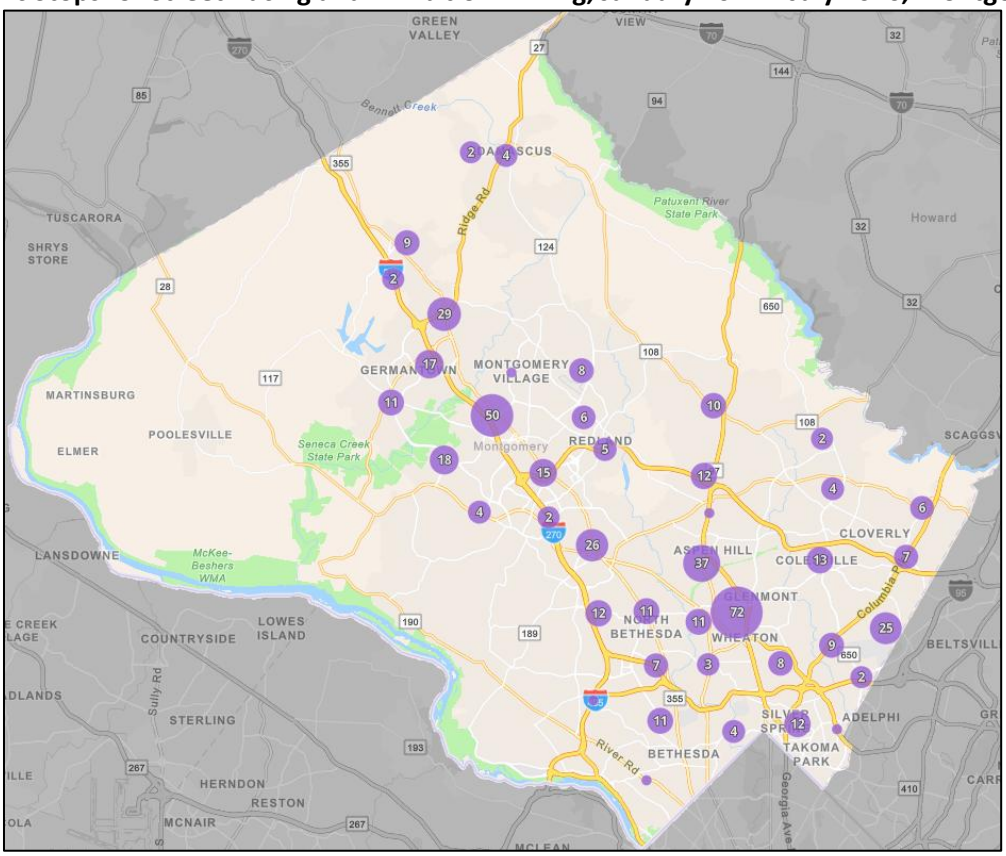
Source: Bill 27-26, Introduction Staff Report for Bill 27-26, pgs. (2)-(3); Sec. 21-1116.1, Code of Maryland Transportation.

Table A. Traffic Stops for Street Racing and Exhibition Driving by Race and Ethnicity, January 2012 – July 2026, Montgomery County[16]

Race or ethnicity	# of Stops	% of Stops	County Population
Asian	20	3.7	15.3
Black	95	17.8	18.3
White	178	33.3	39.5
Latinx	201	37.6	21.0
Total	535		

Source: OLO Analysis of Traffic Violations dataset as of July 30, 2026, dataMontgomery; Table DP05, 2024 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Census Bureau.

Figure B. Traffic Stops for Street Racing and Exhibition Driving, January 2012 – July 2026, Montgomery County



Source: OLO Analysis of Traffic Violations dataset as of July 30, 2026, dataMontgomery.

Table B. Percent of Population by Race and Ethnicity, Select Areas

Race or ethnicity	Glenmont	Wheaton	Gaithersburg	Montgomery Village	Aspen Hill	County
Asian	12.4	10.0	20.4	14.4	9.7	15.4
Black	26.7	19.4	15.0	23.6	15.2	18.6
Native American	0.1	1.0	1.1	1.8	0.3	0.6
Pacific Islander	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0
White	19.8	25.6	32.6	30.0	35.5	42.1
Latinx	38.2	44.7	30.5	32.5	36.6	21.0

Source: Table DP05, 2024 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Census Bureau.

[1] Definition of racial equity and social justice adopted from M. Gamblin et al., "Applying Racial Equity to U.S. Federal Nutrition Programs," Bread for the World and Racial Equity Tools.
[2] Ibid.
[3] HB 601: Street Racing and Exhibition Driving – Prohibited Acts, Enforcement, and Penalties, Maryland General Assembly, 2024 Regular Session.
[4] Bill 27-26, Introduction Staff Report for Bill 27-26, Montgomery County Council, Introduced June 16, 2026, pg. (3).
[5] Montgomery County Code Sec. 1-19.
[6] Ibid.

[7] RESJIS for Expedited Bill 49-21, Office of Legislative Oversight, January 10, 2022.
[8] RESJIS for Bill 14-24, Office of Legislative Oversight, August 27, 2024.
[9] RESJIS for Bill 28-25, Office of Legislative Oversight, September 10, 2025.
[10] OLO analysis of Traffic Violations dataset as of July 30, 2026, dataMontgomery.
[11] Figure B (Appendix) includes a map with the general locations of the 535 traffic stops for street racing and exhibition driving charges since 2012 (from dataMontgomery dataset). The map shows these traffic stops were primarily concentrated in the Glenmont/Wheaton, Gaithersburg/Montgomery Village, and Aspen Hills areas. Census data in Table B (Appendix) shows Latinx community members are overrepresented in each of these communities. Black community members are overrepresented in Glenmont and Montgomery Village, and Asian community members are overrepresented in Gaithersburg.
[12] Latinx community members are overrepresented among MCPD arrests. Refer to Table A in RESJIS for Bill 18-26, Office of Legislative Oversight, May 12, 2026, pg. 3.
[13] The Office of Management and Budget found Bill 27-26 would have an indeterminate impact on the County's costs and revenues. Refer to Fiscal Impact Statement for Bill 27-26, Public Hearing Staff Report for Bill 27-26, Office of Management and Budget, pgs. (4)-(5).
[14] Bill 27-19, Administration – Human Rights – Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice – Racial Equity and Social Justice Advisory Committee – Established, Montgomery County Council.
[15] Regulations are policies developed by the Executive Branch that outline how a law will be implemented or enforced. Method 2 regulations must be sent to the County Council for approval or disapproval before they can take effect. Montgomery County Code Sec. 2A-15.
[16] For Table A and Figure B, OLO filtered Traffic Violations dataset to include charges for racing vehicles [21-1116(a), 21-1116(a1), 21-1116(b)] and exhibition driving [21-1116.1(b)] from the Maryland Transportation Code. For Tables A and B, race is not inclusive of Latinx origin.

MONTGOMERY COUNTY COUNCIL
ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND

ANDREW FRIEDSON
COUNCILMEMBER, DISTRICT 1

CHAIR, PLANNING, HOUSING AND PARKS COMMITTEE
HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE

MEMORANDUM

September 29, 2026

TO: Public Safety Committee

FROM: Councilmember Andrew Friedson, Chair, Planning, Housing & Parks (PHP) Committee

SUBJECT: Bill 27-26, Motor Vehicles and Traffic - Unlawful Racing and Street Takeovers Prohibited

I introduced Bill 27-26 this past June in response to the rise of "street takeovers," which are large, unauthorized gatherings where participants block public roadways to drag race and conduct reckless driving stunts. They have increased in frequency across the region, creating significant public safety risks for residents, bystanders, and officers. Residents deserve to feel safe on our roads and in their neighborhoods. This bill gives law enforcement the clarity and authority needed to intervene earlier, disrupt these coordinated events, and keep people out of harm's way. Street takeovers endanger everyone involved - drivers, spectators, and our officers. We must ensure MCPD has strong, modern tools to address this growing threat.

After the County Attorney's Office initially supported the draft legislation, they revised their position concluding that certain elements of the current bill expose us to legal challenges under prevailing state law. In response, I am proposing amendments to Bill 27-26 for the Public Safety Committee's scheduled review on October 5, 2026, which include:

- elimination of section B. 1 to avoid potential preemption concerns; and
- increasing the fine to $5,000, which is the largest penalty the Council is authorized to set, to ensure that street takeovers are treated seriously and carry meaningful consequences.

These two targeted amendments will ensure our language aligns with state preemption requirements and preserves our legislative intent. Thank you for your consideration.

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