

Subject: Testimony and Fiscal Analysis Statement

To: Lonnie Robbins  
Chief Administrative Officer

From: Holly Sun *HS*  
Administrator, Office of Budget

Date: December 15, 2020

### Background

This emergency bill proposes to amend the Fiscal 2021 operating budget by increasing the current year appropriation in the non-departmental expense category.

The additional appropriation will help continue the support the County has been providing to residents and businesses still struggling under the financial hardships brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic. Given the uncertainties over another federal relief package, it is critical to provide continued support to local businesses and vulnerable residents during the current surge in the pandemic.

The plan is to provide funding to the Howard County Economic Development Authority to issue grants and low interest business loans; Howard County General Hospital to continue creating infrastructure for additional ICU and bed capacity; housing assistance to prevent evictions and foreclosures; food and utility bill payment assistance; and extension of educational support and childcare programs like HoCo STRIVES and RecZone.

### Fiscal Analysis

This bill proposes to use \$6.5 million in one-time funding from prior year surplus above the amount required for the Charter-mandated Budget Stabilization Account. Per County Charter, prior surplus can only be used on one-time non-recurrent expenditures. This bill proposes using it to provide critical one-time assistance to residents and businesses impacted by the pandemic.

CC: Jennifer Sager