



February 18, 2026

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

TO: David H. Murray
Council Administrator

Colette R. Gresham, Esq.
Deputy Council Administrator

THRU: Lavinia Baxter *LB*
Senior Legislative Budget and Policy Analyst

FROM: David Williams *D.W.*
Legislative Budget and Policy Analyst

RE: Policy Analysis and Fiscal Impact Statement
CB-002-2026 DaCara Rose's Law

CB-002-2026 (Proposed and introduced by Council Member Wanika Fisher)

Assigned to the Health, Human Services, and Public Safety Committee

AN ACT CONCERNING MISSING PERSONS WITHIN THE COUNTY – DACARA ROSE'S LAW for the purpose of prohibiting any mandatory waiting period before taking a missing person report; requiring prompt acceptance of missing person reports; requiring public-facing notice that no waiting period is imposed; providing for implementation by written policy; and generally relating to missing person reports and law enforcement practices in Prince George's County.

Fiscal Summary

Direct Impact:

Expenditures: Potential modest anticipated expenditures

Revenues: No anticipated revenues

Indirect Impact:

None.

Legislative Summary:

CB-002-2026¹, proposed and sponsored by Council Member Wanika Fisher, was introduced on February 10, 2026, and referred to the Health, Human Services, and Public Safety (HHSPS) Committee. This bill would prohibit any mandatory waiting period before taking a missing person report and mandate the police department to take missing person reports promptly. It also states that the police department reaffirms this policy in writing. The Department of Health is tasked with collaborating with law enforcement agencies to make to inform the general public and the family of a potential missing person that there is no waiting period to file a report and create a public media campaign specifically tailored to assist missing black women and girls.

Current Law/Background:

DaCara Rose Thompson disappeared from Lanham, Maryland, on August 22, 2025. Her remains were discovered off Route 50 in Anne Arundel County, Maryland.² A 35-year-old, Hugo Rene Hernandez-Mendez was apprehended as the prime suspect in her disappearance and suspected of murder. According to federal immigration officials, Hernandez-Mendez was in the country illegally and is currently being held without bond. Currently, there is no waiting period to file a missing person report with law enforcement. The notion of a waiting period is a common myth perpetuated in film and television. Seasoned investigators often point to the first 48 hours as the most crucial time to locate any missing person because the likelihood that they will be found in stable condition drastically decreases after that mark. According to the United States Code Title 34, Subtitle 4, Chapter 413 §41308³ each state reporting under this provision shall “ensure that no law enforcement agency within the State establishes or maintains any policy that requires the observance of any waiting period before accepting a missing child or unidentified person report”. Additionally, Maryland State Code under Title 3, Subtitle 6 §3-601 subsection a part 1 dictates “A law enforcement agency may not establish a mandatory waiting period before taking a missing person report.” And part 2 states, “A law enforcement agency shall make every effort to inform the general public and the family of a missing person that the agency does not impose a mandatory waiting period before taking a missing person report.”⁴ The provisions of this legislation are codified at the federal and state levels.

Resource Personnel:

¹ Prince George’s County – [CB-002-2026](#)

² NBC Washington- [Dacara Thompson murder](#)

³ Cornell Law School – [34 USC §41308](#)

⁴ FindLaw- Maryland Code [§3-601](#)

- Shanika Griffith, Chief of Staff, Council District 2
-

Discussion/Policy Analysis:

CB-002-2026 repeals and reenacts with amendments County Code Subtitle 18. Division 4. Section 18-123 mandates the following provisions:

- ❖ Institutes a countywide prohibition on waiting periods to file missing persons reports.
- ❖ Mandates that each law enforcement agency make efforts to provide public notice that there is no waiting period to file a missing person's report.
- ❖ Mandates each law enforcement agency to maintain a written policy consistent with this section and Maryland State Code Public Safety Article §3-601.
- ❖ Mandates the Department of Health, in collaboration with law enforcement agencies, to conduct public information campaigns to raise awareness about the absence of a wait time to file a missing person report.
- ❖ Mandates the Department of Health to create a public campaign specifically tailored to assist missing black women and girls.

This bill serves as a countywide equivalent of the aforementioned §3-601 of the Maryland State Code. There is currently no mandatory waiting period to file a missing persons report in the United States or in the state of Maryland. Most regionally adjacent jurisdictions do not currently have similar bills in place due to the existence of 34 U.S.C §41308 and Maryland Public Safety Article §3-601, which codify the legislative mandates of this bill.

Fiscal Impact:

- *Direct Impact*

Adoption of CB-002-2026 may have an adverse fiscal impact on the County. According to feedback from the Department of Health, a targeted public relations campaign could cost upward of \$250,000. The Health Department has been subject to federal reductions in grant funding; therefore, targeted requests of this nature may require additional budget appropriations. At the time of this writing, a breakdown of the cost had not been provided.

- *Indirect Impact*

Adoption of CB-002-2026 is not anticipated to have an indirect fiscal impact.

- *Appropriated in the Current Fiscal Year*

No

Effective Date:

The proposed Bill shall be effective forty-five (45) calendar days after it becomes law.

If you require additional information or have questions about this fiscal impact statement, please call me.