
CITY OF BALTIMORE

BRANDON SCOTT – MAYOR



ZEKE COHEN - COUNCIL PRESIDENT



OFFICE OF COUNCIL SERVICES

NANCY MEAD – DIRECTOR

100 N. HOLIDAY STREET

BALTIMORE MD, 21202

HEARING NOTES

Bill: 25-0080

Title: In Rem Foreclosure – Vacant Structures and Nuisance Properties

Committee: Housing & Economic Development

Chaired by: James Torrence

Hearing Date: 10/21/2025

Time (Beginning): 5:15 PM

Time (Ending): 6:35: PM

Location: Du Burns Council Chamber / Webex

Total Attendance: Approximately 72

Committee Members in Attendance:

James Torrence, Odette Ramos, Antonio Glover, Jermaine Jones, Zac Blanchard

Bill Synopsis in the file?	☒ YES	☐ NO	☐ N/A
Attendance sheet in the file?	☒ YES	☐ NO	☐ N/A
Agency reports read?	☒ YES	☐ NO	☐ N/A
Hearing televised or audio-digitally recorded?	☒ YES	☐ NO	☐ N/A
Certification of advertising/posting notices in the file?	☐ YES	☐ NO	☒ N/A
Evidence of notification to property owners?	☐ YES	☐ NO	☒ N/A
Final vote taken at this hearing?	☐ YES	☒ NO	☐ N/A
Motioned by:			
Final Vote:			

Major Speakers

(This is not an attendance record.)

Nina Themlis – Mayor’s Office of Government Relations

Alice Kenedy – Housing Commissioner

Hilary Ruley – Law Department

Gabriel Stuart-Sikowitz – Department of Finance

Major Issues Discussed

- Chair Torrence opened the hearing, introducing the bill and noting members in attendance

- The floor was open to opening comments from the bill sponsor, Councilmember Ramos.
- The floor was open to agency reports with questions from members. Topics included:
 - Law
 - Why is this a constitutional issue when approved by the state legislature
 - States are the place to push the constitutional envelope – this may not be illegal on its face, but amendments would allow for more security in a court.
 - Finance
 - Why is this analysis focused on the nuisance – what analysis is done
 - How did finance calculate the cost on this?
 - Looking at the cost for in rem, but not able to know the value of all vacant opposed to their liens at this time
 - DHCD
 - * Please provide the process cost and an outline of the process for In Rem 1.0, receivership, condemnation ect... *
 - Why the negative bill report – why not favorable w/ amendments?
 - DHCD did not know where Law was on the bill – and the department is unfavorable without their amendments – willing to look at the bill with additional amendments.
 - BVRI is funding compensation for IN REM – is that a possible funding source for IN REM 2?
 - IN REM 2 won't increase the properties that can be acquired
 - The sponsor disagrees with that assessment – the properties may be eligible for other strategies, but this might be faster – another tool in the box
 - DHCD - that is not clear.
 - * Standard IN REM filings v what would it look like for IN REM 2*
 - BCIT
 - Real Estate
- The floor was open to public testimony (see attendance record)
- There were additional questions from members, topics included:
 - What is the definition of nuisance property
 - The sponsor is looking to add to that definition w/DLR to incorporate additional data and refine.
 - Should the Council consider adding a public health component to a nuisance definition? The sponsor was open to it
- This hearing was recessed

Further Study

Was further study requested?

☐ Yes ☒ No

If yes, describe.

- An outline of the process for condemnation & In Rem and the budget items for those.
Average cost of acquiring a property
- Standard In Rem Filings and what it would be like if we had In Rem 2.0

Committee Vote:

Chair:..... Yea
Vice Chair:..... Yea
Member: Yea
Member: Yea
Member: Yea

Tony Leva, Date: 11/4/2025

Cc: Bill File
 OCS Chrono File