

**CITY OF BALTIMORE
COUNCIL BILL 19-0140R
(Resolution)**

Introduced by: Councilmembers Clarke, Henry, Bullock, Burnett, President Young,
Councilmembers Scott, Stokes, Middleton
Introduced and adopted: February 25, 2019

A COUNCIL RESOLUTION CONCERNING

**Request for State Action - *In Rem* Foreclosure and Sale for
Vacant and Abandoned Properties**

FOR the purpose of calling upon the General Assembly to pass and the Governor to sign
legislation that would allow Baltimore City and other local jurisdictions to pursue *in rem*
foreclosures against certain abandoned and vacant properties.

Recitals

We are all familiar with Baltimore's struggle to seek a solution for the thousands of vacant
and abandoned properties that are a blight on our neighborhoods and communities. Through the
efforts of Vacants-to-Value and Project CORE, we are making progress, but the magnitude of the
issue deserves an all-of-the above approach to truly combat it. House Bill 557 and Senate Bill
509, as cross-filed, authorizes local governments to pursue judicial *in rem* tax foreclosures
against certain blighted properties and is another step in the right direction to removing blight
from our communities.

H.B. 557 and S.B. 509 would allow Baltimore City to establish a judicial *in rem* process,
eliminating the tax sale process on properties, structures, and lots that have unpaid liens for at
least 6 months and are considered vacant and abandoned. This *in rem* process is a faster process
and ensures vacant and abandoned properties with unpaid liens are made available for
redevelopment. Often, these properties sit vacant for years going through the tax sale process
and no one bids on them because the value of the liens are more than the value of the property.
The *in rem* process allows for Baltimore City to foreclose on the property and make it available
for redevelopment with clear title. Amendments will strengthen the bill to allow local
jurisdictions to hold the property after the foreclosure sale.

The process outlined by H.B. 557 and S.B. 509 is an efficient and effective way to reduce the
amount of blighted properties in Baltimore City and will build upon the work that other programs
have been doing to help redevelop our communities.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE, That the
Council calls upon the General Assembly to pass and the Governor to sign legislation that would
allow Baltimore City and other local jurisdictions to pursue *in rem* foreclosures against certain
abandoned and vacant properties.

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the Governor, the
Chairs and Members of the Baltimore City House and Senate Delegations to the
Maryland General Assembly, the President of the Maryland Senate, the Maryland House

EXPLANATION: Underlining indicates matter added by amendment.
~~Strike out~~ indicates matter deleted by amendment.

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1 Speaker, the Baltimore City Housing Commissioner, the Mayor, and the Mayor's Legislative
2 Liaison to the City Council.