CITY OF BALTIMORE COUNCIL BILL 22-0100R (Resolution)

Introduced by: Councilmembers Ramos, Bullock, Torrence

Introduced and read first time: April 4, 2022 Assigned to: Ways and Means Committee

Committee Report: Favorable

Adopted:

A COUNCIL RESOLUTION CONCERNING

| 1 | Informational Hearing – Judicial In Rem Foreclosure |
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| 2 | FOR the purpose of inviting the Commissioner of the Department of Housing and Community |
| 3 | Development, the Deputy City Solicitor, and other relevant parties to come before the City |
| 4 | Council to describe the in rem foreclosure process, inform the Council on the capacity of the |
| 5 | Department of Housing and Community Development to increase in rem foreclosure cases, |
| 6 | inform the Council on the role of the Circuit Court in the in rem foreclosure process, and |
| 7 | recommend measures the City Council can take to support these efforts. |
| 8 | Recitals |
| 9 | In 2016, the Center for Community Progress authored a report about the Baltimore City tax |
| 10 | sale system and suggested a number of reforms, including the implementation of the judicial in |
| 11 | rem tax foreclosure process. |
| 12 | In 2019, Maryland Senate Bill 509/House Bill 557, sponsored by Senator Eckardt of |
| 13 | Dorchester County and Delegate Holmes of Prince George's County, passed the General |
| 14 | Assembly, enabling jurisdictions to use in rem foreclosure to acquire vacant and abandoned |
| 15 | properties. This was one of the actions recommended by the Tax Sale Task Force study that was |
| 16 | completed in 2017. |
| 17 | In 2020, the Baltimore City Council passed Council Bill 20-0529, which established the in |
| 18 | rem tax foreclosure process in Baltimore City. |
| 19 | In rem tax foreclosure allows the City to remove an abandoned property with |
| 20 | liens that exceed the value of the property from tax sale and then foreclose on the liens. The City |
| 21 | then takes title of the property and can utilize it for community development purposes in |
| 22 | collaboration with the community. It is the best tool the City has to eliminate blight through |
| 23 | rehabilitation or demolition of properties, while also controlling the outcome of the process. |

Council Bill 22-0100R

| 1 | NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE, That the |
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| 2 | Baltimore City Council invites the Commissioner of the Department of Housing and Community |
| 3 | Development, the Deputy City Solicitor, and other relevant parties to come before the City |
| 4 | Council to describe the in rem foreclosure process, inform the Council on the capacity of the |
| 5 | Department of Housing and Community Development to increase in rem foreclosure cases, |
| 6 | inform the Council on the role of the Circuit Court in the in rem foreclosure process, and |
| 7 | recommend measures the City Council can take to support these efforts. |

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the Commissioner of the Department of Housing and Community Development, the Deputy City Solicitor, and the Mayor's Legislative Liaison to the City Council.

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