



Legislation Text

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The official copy considered by the City Council is the first reader copy.

Introductory*

**City of Baltimore
Council Bill R
(Resolution)**

Introduced by: Councilmember Ramos

A Resolution Entitled

A Council Resolution concerning
Informational Hearing - Baltimore City Tax Sale

For the purpose of inviting the Baltimore City Department of Finance, the Baltimore City Department of Housing and Community Development, the Comptroller, Baltimore City Information Technology, the Law Department, the Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service and other relevant parties to provide information and complete details and timeline, and amounts of liens owed, disaggregated where appropriate by demographics, ages, owner-occupied versus non-owner-occupied, and number of residents who have owned their property for more than 25 years in tax sale this year; in addition, discussing the City's powers related to the state, programs already in place to assist homeowners in tax sale, possible reforms, an update on implementation of the *In Rem* process for vacant and abandoned properties, and any other relevant information of interest to the Baltimore City Council.

Recitals

Whereas, Tax sale is the process by which Baltimore and the State of Maryland collect delinquent property taxes, environmental citations, liens and water bills;

Whereas, in Baltimore, owner-occupied homes with delinquent water bills are not considered tax sale liens for owner occupied homes;

Whereas, the 2017 General Assembly Tax Sale Task Force recommended several reforms, most of which Baltimore City and the General Assembly have implemented;

Whereas, Md. Code Ann., Tax-Property § 14-811(f)(1)-(2) allows for Baltimore to remove seniors, disabled and low income homeowners from tax sale;

Whereas, many properties have been passed down through families without legal transfer of title;

Whereas, the disproportionate number of tax certificates offered and sold are in predominantly Black neighborhoods;

Whereas, tenants are adversely impacted when a property in which they reside is impacted by tax sale;

Whereas, vacant properties cycling through tax sale provide an opportunity for reinvestment;

Whereas, there is a recognition from the Baltimore City Council, General Assembly and from local advocates that the process needs to be reformed to protect homeowners, particularly our seniors; and

Whereas, reforms of this system are possible and need to be discussed.

Now, therefore, be it resolved by the City Council of Baltimore, That the Council invites the Baltimore City Department of Finance, the Baltimore City Department of Housing and Community Development, the Comptroller, Baltimore City Information Technology, the Law Department, the Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service and other relevant parties to provide information and complete details and timeline, and amounts of liens owed, disaggregated where appropriate by demographics, ages, owner-occupied versus non-owner-occupied, and number of residents who have owned their property for more than 25 years in tax sale this year; in addition, discussing the City's powers related to the state, programs already in place to assist homeowners in tax sale, possible reforms, an update on implementation of the *In Rem* process for vacant and abandoned properties, and any other relevant information of interest to the Baltimore City Council.

And be it further resolved, That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the Mayor, the Comptroller, the Director of Baltimore City Information Technology, the Director of Finance, the Acting Commissioner of Housing and Community Development, the Acting City Solicitor, the Executive Director of the Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service, and the Mayor's Legislative Liaison to the City Council.