

Legislation Text

File #: 180765, **Version:** 0

Authorizing the City Council Committee on Housing, Neighborhood Development, and the Homeless to hold public hearings to examine sheriff sale trends throughout the City since the existence of Philadelphia's Residential Mortgage Foreclosure Diversion Program, and further examine the impact of sheriff sales on the City's affordable housing market.

WHEREAS, In March of 2008, Philadelphia City Council passed Resolution No. 080331, which called on then Sheriff John Green and then President Judge C. Darnell Jones to impose a moratorium on residential foreclosure sales in Philadelphia. At that time, Philadelphia was facing a mortgage foreclosure crisis, with nearly 200 homes a month being auctioned by the Philadelphia Sherriff's Office; and

WHEREAS, As a result of City Council's call for action, the Court of Common Pleas of Philadelphia announced the Residential Mortgage Foreclosure Diversion Pilot Program in May of 2008; and

WHEREAS, The Philadelphia Mortgage Foreclosure Diversion Program serves as a national model for the prevention of residential foreclosures, bringing together homeowners and lenders, along with housing counselors and experts, in a concerted effort to help Philadelphians remain in their homes; and

WHEREAS, The Philadelphia Mortgage Foreclosure Diversion Program operates every Thursday in Courtroom 676 of City Hall. It has been reported that, to date, the program has helped to save over 11,000 homes; and

WHEREAS, Even with the success of the Philadelphia Mortgage Foreclosure Diversion Program, thousands of homes throughout the City continue to be sold at actions. This is because the only applies to owner-occupied residential properties experiencing a mortgage foreclosure. Other types of foreclosures, such as tax foreclosures, are not eligible for the program, and non-payment may result in sheriff sales of these properties; and

WHEREAS, In 2016, 5,935 properties were sold at sheriff sale auctions. These numbers declined slightly in 2017, when 3,962 properties were sold; and

WHEREAS, Sherriff sales do not just affect individual families who lose their homes, the costs to communities are staggering. Sheriff sales destabilize lower-income communities and have the potential to negatively affect home values throughout Philadelphia; and

WHEREAS, As the City of Philadelphia continues to develop an affordable housing plan, the trends of sheriff sales, and their potential impact on affordable housing should be examined, to control the risk of a city-wide housing affordability crisis; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That it hereby authorizes the City Council Committee on Housing, Neighborhood Development, and the Homeless to hold public hearings to examine sheriff sale trends throughout the City since the existence of Philadelphia's Residential Mortgage

Foreclosure Diversion Program, and further examine the impact of sheriff sales on the City's affordable housing market.