

Legislation Text

File #: 180851-A, **Version:** 1

Calling on Sheriff Jewell Williams and the First Judicial District of Pennsylvania to impose a moratorium on residential property foreclosure sales until City Council has the opportunity to hold public hearings regarding recently obtained data, which suggests troubling trends in already struggling areas of the City.

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 Sheriff's Office; and

WHEREAS, As a result of City Council's call for action, a temporary moratorium on residential foreclosure sales was enacted by the Philadelphia Sheriff's Office. Additionally, the Court of Common Pleas of Philadelphia announced the Residential Mortgage Foreclosure Diversion Pilot Program in May of 2008; and

WHEREAS, On September 13, 2018, Philadelphia City Council passed Resolution No. 180765, which 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; and

WHEREAS, After that resolution was passed, the Philadelphia Sheriff's Office produced data regarding property mortgage foreclosures dating back to 2014. This data suggests that several areas of the City are being hit the hardest. Between 2014 and 2018, the 40th Ward has seen 494 residential mortgage foreclosure sales. Wards 34 and 35 are also experiencing more than double the rate of sales as compared to the rest of the City; and

WHEREAS, It is the duty of this Body to protect the citizens and the neighborhoods of Philadelphia and this Body has already gone on record with an intent to thoroughly analyze sheriff sale trends by unanimously passing Resolution No. 180765. In light of this recently received data, a moratorium on residential foreclosure sales should be enacted, until Council schedules a hearing pursuant to Resolution No. 180765; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That it hereby calls upon Sheriff Jewell Williams to impose a moratorium on residential foreclosure sales until City Council has the opportunity to hold public hearings regarding recently obtained data, which suggests troubling trends in already struggling areas of the City.