

Chapter 615

**(House Bill 659)**

AN ACT concerning

**Task Force to Study Tax Sales in Maryland**

FOR the purpose of establishing the Task Force to Study Tax Sales in Maryland; providing for the composition, chair, and staffing of the Task Force; prohibiting a member of the Task Force from receiving certain compensation but authorizing the reimbursement of certain expenses; requiring the Task Force to study and make recommendations regarding certain matters; requiring the Task Force to report its findings and recommendations to the Governor and the General Assembly on or before a certain date; providing for the termination of this Act; and generally relating to the Task Force to Study Tax Sales in Maryland.

Preamble

WHEREAS, The Maryland tax sale system has not been overhauled in many years; and

WHEREAS, Local jurisdictions in the State are struggling with vacant and abandoned properties due to tax sales; and

WHEREAS, People are losing their homes for unpaid taxes and water bills; and

WHEREAS, It is the will of the General Assembly to examine the tax sale system to maximize resources, facilitate properties getting to productive use, and protecting residents; now, therefore,

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, That:

- (a) There is a Task Force to Study Tax Sales in Maryland.
- (b) The Task Force consists of the following members:
  - (1) two members of the Senate of Maryland, appointed by the President of the Senate;
  - (2) two members of the House of Delegates, appointed by the Speaker of the House;
  - (3) the Secretary of Housing and Community Development, or the Secretary's designee;

- (4) one member from Baltimore City, appointed by the Mayor of Baltimore City;
- (5) one member from Dorchester County, appointed by the Dorchester County Manager;
- (6) one member from Prince George's County, appointed by the Prince George's County Executive;
- (7) one member appointed by the Maryland Association of Counties;
- (8) one member appointed by the Maryland Municipal League;
- (9) one member appointed by the Center for Community Progress; ~~and~~
- (10) two members appointed by the Community Development Network of Maryland;
- (11) one member appointed by the Maryland Multi-Housing Association;
- (12) one member appointed by the Maryland State Bar Association;
- (13) one member appointed by the National Tax Lien Association; ~~and~~
- (14) one member appointed by the Maryland Association of Municipal Water Agencies; and
- (15) one member appointed by the Maryland Tax Sale Participants Association.

(c) The President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House shall designate the chair of the Task Force.

(d) The Task Force may establish subcommittees it determines are necessary to carry out its duties.

(e) The Department of Housing and Community Development shall provide staff for the Task Force.

(f) A member of the Task Force:

(1) may not receive compensation as a member of the Task Force; but

(2) is entitled to reimbursement for expenses under the Standard State Travel Regulations, as provided in the State budget.

(g) The Task Force shall:

(1) evaluate and assess the impact of tax sales in Maryland;

(2) evaluate how tax sales are conducted in each county; ~~and~~

(3) evaluate tax sales to collect delinquent water charges and alternative methods of collecting delinquent water charges; and

~~(3)~~ (4) examine and make recommendations for reform of the tax sale process in Maryland.

(h) On or before December 1, 2017, the Task Force shall report its findings and recommendations to the Governor and, in accordance with § 2-1246 of the State Government Article, the General Assembly.

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect June 1, 2017. It shall remain effective for a period of 1 year and 1 month and, at the end of June 30, 2018, with no further action required by the General Assembly, this Act shall be abrogated and of no further force and effect.

**Approved by the Governor, May 25, 2017.**