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Councilmember Anita Bonds

A BILL

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IN THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

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To declare the existence of an emergency with respect to the need to amend the Rental Housing Act of 1985 to extend the deadline by which the Office of the Tenant Advocate must develop the Rent Control Housing Database and transfer administration and maintenance of the database to the Rental Accommodations Division.

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, That this resolution may be cited as the “Rent Control Housing Database Deadline Extension Emergency Declaration Resolution of 2021”.

Sec. 2. (a) On July 20, 2017, the Publicly Accessible Rent Control Housing Clearinghouse Emergency Amendment Act of 2017 went into effect, tasking the Office of the Tenant Advocate (“OTA”) with the development of a user-friendly, Internet-accessible, and searchable database for the submission, management, and review of all documents and relevant data that housing providers are required to submit to the Rental Accommodations Division (“RAD”) within the Department of Housing and Community Development pursuant to the Rent Stabilization Program.

(b) The statutory deadline by which OTA was to complete the database and transfer administration and maintenance to RAD was originally established as September 30, 2020 (*see*, D.C. Code §42-3502.03c(e) - “The database created pursuant to subsection (a) of this section shall be completed, tested, and operational by September 30, 2020.”).

(c) On October 6, 2020, due to unforeseen delays in the award of the contract for the development of the database, the Council adopted the “Rent Control Housing Database Deadline Extension Temporary Amendment Act of 2020,” extending the deadline for OTA to complete the database and transfer administration and maintenance to RAD to December 31, 2021. The bill became effective Dec. 23, 2020.

(d) The “Rent Control Housing Database Deadline Extension Temporary Amendment Act of 2020” expired on Aug. 4, 2021, causing the original deadline of September 30, 2020, to go back into effect.

(e) For purposes of keeping the work on the database on track, and to comply with all necessary legal requirements for the completion of the project, the deadline must now be extended again.

(g) Additionally, the OTA and the RAD have requested additional time to work out technical issues that have arisen, due to uncertainties associated with creating a seamless interface between the new database and the basic business licensing process for housing

providers at the Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs involving coordinating with the newly created Department of Buildings.

(f) A new deadline of March 31, 2022, is in the best interest of the parties and the public, in order to ensure a smooth transition from OTA to the RAD.

(g) The Rent Control Housing Database Deadline Extension Emergency Amendment Act of 2021 will extend the deadline by which OTA must develop the database from September 30, 2020 to March 31, 2022.

(h) It is important that the deadline be extended to accommodate the delays described herein and to provide OTA with a reasonable amount of time by which to complete the database project.

Sec. 3. The Council of the District of Columbia determines that the circumstances enumerated in section 2 constitute emergency circumstances making it necessary that the Rent Control Housing Database Deadline Extension Emergency Amendment Act of 2021 be adopted after a single reading.

Sec. 4. This resolution shall take effect immediately