



Councilmember Anita Bonds

A PROPOSED RESOLUTION

IN THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

To declare the existence of an emergency with respect to the need to amend the District of Columbia Housing Finance Agency Act to extend the Reverse Mortgage Insurance and Tax Payment Program, to include condominium fees and homeowners association fees as approved uses of the financial assistance provided by the program, and to give the District of Columbia Housing Finance Agency the discretion to issue greater assistance if necessary.

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, That this resolution may be cited as the “Reverse Mortgage Insurance and Tax Payment Program Extension Emergency Declaration Resolution of 2022”.

Sec. 2. (a) The District of Columbia Housing Finance Agency’s (“DCHFA”) Reverse Mortgage Insurance and Tax Payment Program was initiated as an 18-month pilot program in the Reverse Mortgage Foreclosure Prevention Amendment Act of 2018, effective October 30, 2018 (D.C. Law 22-168; D.C. Official Code § 42-2703.07a), and funded with \$500,000 in Fiscal Year 2019. The pilot program was extended by emergency Council action on March 31, 2020, and further extended on December 1, 2020. The pilot program expired on October 27, 2021.

(b) ReMIT provided assistance to senior homeowners with reverse mortgages who faced foreclosure due to outstanding payments averaging less than \$10,000. These seniors often do not qualify for other assistance programs, yet have few or no other options for finding more affordable housing accommodations. ReMIT offered a fresh start to senior households who missed payments for reasons other than a loss of income, such as the loss of capacity to handle their affairs, or the loss of a spouse who kept track of expenses.

(c) The ReMIT pilot program successfully saved 31 District senior households from displacement, allowing the seniors to stay in their longtime residences. The program ended with more than \$200,000 in funding remaining from the initial \$500,000 appropriation.

(d) Although the DCHFA has indicated their support for a permanent ReMIT program, which would incorporate certain changes to expand access and improve administration, eligible homeowners will not be able to receive assistance until after the changes are negotiated and the bill goes through the full legislative process.

(e) In the meantime, with the District of Columbia’s foreclosure moratorium (D.C. Act 24-0334), enacted by emergency/temporary Council action on February 1, 2022, ending on June 30, 2022, seniors with reverse mortgages will once again be at risk of facing foreclosure.

Additionally, over the course of the foreclosure moratorium, some senior households may have accumulated debt, necessitating an unusually large amount of assistance.

(f) While the Committee on Housing and Executive Administration's staff works to develop and enact a permanent ReMIT program, reinstating the ReMIT pilot program through the end of the calendar year will ensure that eligible seniors can receive the assistance they need to remain in their homes. Raising the maximum amount of assistance, which will also be a part of the permanent legislation, will allow the HFA to support seniors with a particularly significant need for assistance while the Committee develops a permanent program.

(g) It is critically important that the Council act to prevent senior households from losing their homes while they wait for assistance.

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 Reverse Mortgage Insurance and Tax Payment Extension Emergency Amendment Act of 2022 be adopted after a single reading.

Sec. 4. This resolution shall take effect immediately.