



SENATE MAJORITY OFFICE

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Bill prevents vacant houses from becoming neighborhood nuisances

HB 2662A requires owners of vacant foreclosed properties to provide basic maintenance on the house and yard

SALEM—This morning the Oregon Senate approved a bill that gives communities more control over preventing vacant foreclosed properties from becoming neighborhood nuisances. House Bill 2662A, which passed on an 18-12 vote, prohibits property owners from neglecting foreclosed properties and empowers local governments with enforcement tools to deal with problem houses.

“For many communities, it’s bad enough that families have been forced out of their homes during this foreclosure crisis. And the impact of an unkempt, vacant property on the neighborhood just makes it worse,” said Senate Majority Leader Diane Rosenbaum (D-Portland). “Today we’re giving neighbors the ability to address this problem so it doesn’t negatively impact their community.”

More than half of all foreclosed homes in Oregon are vacant, but current law does not assign responsibility for the upkeep of these abandoned properties. This situation has created problems for neighborhoods throughout the state as eyesore properties introduce criminal activity and harm property values.

“Vacant houses can have a large effect on the neighborhood around them, especially if the owner of the property doesn’t properly maintain it,” said Senator Floyd Prozanski (D-Eugene). “We need the process outlined in HB 2662A to help communities ensure they can manage issues of neglected and abandoned properties.”

House Bill 2662A requires the owner of a vacant property to post contact information on the house. The bill allows local government to require the owners of vacant properties to remedy issues of neglect or nuisance that affect the property’s surrounding neighborhood. If the owner does not provide a timely remedy, the local government is authorized to address the nuisance and attach a lien against the property for costs.

House Bill 2662A now goes to Governor John A. Kitzhaber for his approval.

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