

# VIRGINIA ACTS OF ASSEMBLY -- 2020 SESSION

## CHAPTER 244

*An Act to amend and reenact § 58.1-3970.1 of the Code of Virginia, relating to real estate with delinquent taxes or liens; sales by nonprofit organizations.*

[H 535]

Approved March 10, 2020

**Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:**

**1. That § 58.1-3970.1 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted as follows:**

**§ 58.1-3970.1. Appointment of special commissioner to execute title to certain real estate with delinquent taxes or liens to localities.**

A. Except as provided in subsection B, in any proceedings under this article for the sale of a parcel or parcels of real estate which meet all of the following: (i) each parcel has delinquent real estate taxes or the locality has a lien against the parcel for removal, repair or securing of a building or structure; removal of trash, garbage, refuse, litter; or the cutting of grass, weeds or other foreign growth, (ii) each parcel has an assessed value of \$75,000 or less, and (iii) such taxes and liens, together, including penalty and accumulated interest, exceed 50 percent of the assessed value of the parcel or such taxes alone exceed 25 percent of the assessed value of the parcel, the locality may petition the circuit court to appoint a special commissioner to execute the necessary deed or deeds to convey the real estate to the locality in lieu of the sale at public auction. After notice as required by this article, service of process, and upon answer filed by the owner or other parties in interest to the bill in equity, the court shall allow the parties to present evidence and arguments, ore tenus, prior to the appointment of the special commissioner. Any surplusage accruing to a locality as a result of the sale of the parcel or parcels after the receipt of the deed shall be payable to the beneficiaries of any liens against the property and to the former owner, his heirs or assigns in accordance with § 58.1-3967. No deficiency shall be charged against the owner after conveyance to the locality.

B. For a parcel or parcels of real estate in the Cities of Norfolk, Richmond, Hopewell, Newport News, Petersburg, Fredericksburg, Hampton, and Martinsville, all of the provisions of subsection A shall apply except (i) that the percentage of taxes and liens, together, including penalty and accumulated interest, and the percentage of taxes alone set forth in clause (iii) of subsection A shall exceed 35 percent and 15 percent, respectively, of the assessed value of the parcel or parcels or (ii) that the percentage of taxes and liens, together, including penalty and accumulated interest, and the percentage of taxes alone set forth in clause (iii) of subsection A shall exceed 20 percent and 10 percent, respectively, of the assessed value of the parcel or parcels, and each parcel has an assessed value of \$150,000 or less, provided that under this clause the property is not an occupied dwelling, and the locality enters into an agreement for sale of the parcel to a nonprofit organization to renovate or construct a single-family dwelling on the parcel for sale to a person or persons to reside in the dwelling whose income is below the area median income.

C. *For sales by a nonprofit organization pursuant to subsection B, such sales may include either (i) both the land and the structural improvements on a property or (ii) only the structural improvements of a property and not the land the structural improvements are located on. A sale of only the structural improvements is permissible only if (i) the structural improvements are subject to a ground lease with a community land trust, as that term is defined in § 55.1-1200; (ii) the structural improvements are subject to a ground lease that has a term of at least 90 years; and (iii) the community land trust retains a preemptive option to purchase such structural improvements at a price determined by a formula that is designed to ensure that the improvements remain affordable in perpetuity to low-income and moderate-income families earning less than 120 percent of the area median income, adjusted for family size.*