

**HB0236/603726/1**

BY: Ways and Means Committee

AMENDMENTS TO HOUSE BILL 236  
(First Reading File Bill)

AMENDMENT NO. 1

On page 1, in line 2, strike “**State Tax Sale Ombudsman**” and substitute “**Homeowner Protection Program**”; in the same line, strike “**Campaign**”; strike beginning with “requiring” in line 3 down through “campaign;” in line 11 and substitute “expressing the intent of the General Assembly that a certain portion of the balance in the Homeowner Protection Fund be spent each year to conduct outreach in a certain manner to homeowners in tax sale to encourage the homeowners to enroll in the Homeowner Protection Program; authorizing the State Tax Sale Ombudsman to conduct outreach using State employees and resources or contract with a private vendor to conduct outreach; requiring that certain State and local government agencies provide certain information to facilitate outreach at the request of the Ombudsman;”; strike in their entirety lines 13 through 17, inclusive; and in line 20, strike “14–891” and substitute “14–880 and 14–886”.

AMENDMENT NO. 2

On pages 2 through 5, strike in their entirety the lines beginning with line 1 on page 2 through line 12 on page 5, inclusive, and substitute:

“14–880.

(a) Each year, the Department shall issue a report that includes:

(1) an analysis and summary of the information collected through the survey under § 14–879 of this part; and

(2) the following information concerning the activities of the State Tax Sale Ombudsman established under § 2–112 of this article in the preceding taxable year:

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- (i) the number of homeowners who contacted the Ombudsman;
  - (ii) the number of homeowners assisted by the Ombudsman to apply for each of the tax credits under § 9–104 or § 9–105 of this article;
  - (iii) the number of homeowners assisted by the Ombudsman to apply for other discount programs or public benefits and a brief summary of those programs and benefits;
  - (iv) the number of homeowners referred by the Ombudsman to legal services, housing counseling, and other social services, and a brief summary of those services;
  - (v) the number of homeowners enrolled in the Homeowner Protection Program under Part VII of this subtitle;
  - (vi) a summary of the implementation of the Homeowner Protection Program under Part VII of this subtitle, INCLUDING OUTREACH TO HOMEOWNERS UNDER § 14–886(D) OF THIS SUBTITLE;
  - (vii) any statutory or administrative changes the Ombudsman recommends to improve the administration of the Homeowner Protection Program under Part VII of this subtitle; and
  - (viii) any other relevant information.
- (b) On or before November 15 each year, the Department shall:
- (1) publish the report required under subsection (a) of this section on the Department’s website; and

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(2) submit the report required under subsection (a) of this section, in accordance with § 2-1257 of the State Government Article, to the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee and the House Committee on Ways and Means.

14-886.

(a) A homeowner shall submit an application to the Department to be enrolled in the Program.

(b) A homeowner may submit an application for the Program online or by mail.

(c) The Ombudsman shall:

(1) prominently advertise the Program and make applications available on the Ombudsman's website; and

(2) collaborate with local governments, community organizations, and public and private providers of social services and benefits to raise awareness of the Program and disseminate applications.

**(D) (1) IT IS THE INTENT OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY THAT:**

**(I) AT LEAST 2% OF THE BALANCE IN THE HOMEOWNER PROTECTION FUND ESTABLISHED UNDER § 14-891 OF THIS SUBTITLE BE SPENT EACH YEAR TO CONDUCT OUTREACH TO HOMEOWNERS IN TAX SALE TO ENCOURAGE THE HOMEOWNERS TO ENROLL IN THE PROGRAM;**

**(II) THE OUTREACH CONSIST OF:**

**1. LIVE TELEPHONE CALLS TO HOMEOWNERS WHENEVER PRACTICABLE; OR**

(Over)

2. IF LIVE TELEPHONE CALLS ARE NOT PRACTICABLE, METHODS OF CONTACTING HOMEOWNERS OTHER THAN SENDING INFORMATION BY MAIL; AND

(III) PRIORITY BE GIVEN TO CONTACTING HOMEOWNERS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE AFTER THEIR DWELLINGS ARE SOLD AT TAX SALE.

(2) THE OMBUDSMAN MAY:

(I) CONDUCT OUTREACH TO HOMEOWNERS USING STATE EMPLOYEES AND RESOURCES; OR

(II) CONTRACT WITH A PRIVATE VENDOR TO CONDUCT OUTREACH TO HOMEOWNERS.

(3) AT THE REQUEST OF THE OMBUDSMAN:

(I) PROMPTLY AFTER EACH COUNTY TAX SALE, THE COLLECTOR SHALL PROVIDE THE OMBUDSMAN WITH THE LIST OF HOMEOWNERS WHOSE DWELLINGS WERE SOLD AT THE TAX SALE;

(II) NOTWITHSTANDING § 13-202 OF THE TAX - GENERAL ARTICLE, THE COMPTROLLER SHALL PROVIDE THE TELEPHONE NUMBER OF A HOMEOWNER IF THE HOMEOWNER INCLUDED THE HOMEOWNER'S TELEPHONE NUMBER ON A TAX RETURN FILED WITH THE COMPTROLLER; AND

(III) ANY OTHER STATE OR LOCAL GOVERNMENT AGENCY SHALL PROMPTLY PROVIDE ANY INFORMATION REQUIRED TO CONDUCT OUTREACH UNDER THIS SUBSECTION.

(4) THE OMBUDSMAN MAY OBTAIN INFORMATION FROM ANY RELIABLE PRIVATE SOURCE TO CONDUCT OUTREACH UNDER THIS SUBSECTION.

[(d)] (E) The Ombudsman shall cancel the enrollment of a homeowner in the Program if:

(1) the homeowner submits a request to the Ombudsman to withdraw from the Program;

(2) the homeowner submitted false information in the homeowner's application for enrollment in the Program; or

(3) the Ombudsman determines that the homeowner is not acting in good faith to pay the taxes due.

[(e)] (F) If the Ombudsman cancels the enrollment of a homeowner in the Program, the Ombudsman shall send a notice of the cancellation to the homeowner that includes the reasons for cancellation.

[(f)] (G) A homeowner's enrollment in the Program ends on the earliest of:

(1) the date the homeowner pays the full amount of the taxes owed to the Department;

(2) the date that is 3 years after the date the homeowner first enrolled in the Program; or

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(3) the date the homeowner's enrollment in the Program is canceled under subsection [(d)] (E) of this section."