§§1-8 -C.55:14K-94 to 55:14K-101

(CORRECTED COPY) P.L. 2021, CHAPTER 34, approved March 9, 2021 Assembly, No. 5130 (First Reprint)

AN ACT concerning the mitigation of loss on distressed and 1 2 foreclosed properties, supplementing and amending Title 55 of 3 the Revised Statutes, and amending Title 2A of the New Jersey 4 Statutes. 5 6 **BE IT ENACTED** by the Senate and General Assembly of the State 7 of New Jersey: 8 9 1. (New section) This act shall be known and may be cited as 10 the "New Jersey Foreclosure Prevention Act." 11 2. (New section) The Legislature finds and declares that: 12 13 a. New Jersey experienced heightened foreclosure rates during 14 the Great Recession beginning in 2008 and continuing for the 15 ensuing decade, only returning to pre-recession rates of foreclosure in 2019. 16 17 b. New Jersey is currently suffering through the COVID-19 pandemic, with more than 1.6 million New Jersey residents seeking 18 19 unemployment benefits due to job loss, furlough, or hour 20 reductions. 21 c. Homeowners in New Jersey have suffered enormous negative 22 economic impacts due to the COVID-19 pandemic, resulting in 23 increased housing insecurity. During each month from April 2020 through August 2020, the number of New Jersey households that 24 deferred or did not pay their mortgages exceeded 160,000; 25 d. Given New Jersey's susceptibility to prolonged periods of 26 27 elevated rates of foreclosure, as evidenced by the long-term impact of the Great Recession, the Legislature hereby determines and 28 declares that there is a need to provide alternative foreclosure 29 mitigation measures. 30 31 32 3. (New section) As used in P.L. (C.) (pending , c. 33 before the Legislature as this bill): "Agency" means the New Jersey Housing and Mortgage Finance 34 35 Agency established pursuant to section 4 of P.L.1983, c.530 36 (C.55:14K-4).

Matter underlined thus is new matter

Matter enclosed in superscript numerals has been adopted as follows:

¹Assembly AAP committee amendments adopted January 7, 2021.

EXPLANATION – Matter enclosed in **bold-faced** brackets [thus] in the above bill is not enacted and is intended to be omitted in the law.

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1 "Community development corporation" means a nonprofit 2 community development corporation established pursuant to Title 3 15 or 15A of the Revised Statutes of New Jersey, or other law of 4 this State, with a focus on producing and operating affordable 5 housing or housing with on-site social services for individuals with 6 special needs.

7 "Community development financial institution" means an entity
8 designated and certified by the United States Department of the
9 Treasury as a Community Development Financial Institution
10 pursuant to 12 CFR Part 1805.

"Contractor" means a qualified community development
financial institution that enters into a contract or loan with the
agency pursuant to section 5 of P.L.1983, c.530 (C.55:14K-5).

14 "Eligible property" means any residential property or mortgage 15 note that is owned by an institutional lender as the result of a 16 mortgage foreclosure judgment or a deed in lieu of foreclosure, is 17 by a municipality as the result of a tax foreclosure judgment or is 18 subject to a nonperforming loan from an institutional lender.

"Fund" means the Foreclosure Intervention Fund, established
pursuant to section 4 of P.L., c. (C.) (pending before the
Legislature as this bill).

"Institutional lender" or "lender" means any lawfully constituted 22 23 mortgage lender, mortgage investor, or mortgage loan servicer that 24 owns an eligible property, including, but not limited to, any agency 25 or instrumentality of the United States or the State, including, but 26 not limited to, the Government National Mortgage Association, the 27 Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corporation, the Federal National Mortgage Association, the Federal Housing Administration, the 28 29 Business Administration, the Small Resolution Funding 30 Corporation, and the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation.

31 "Intercreditor agreement" means an agreement among creditors
32 that sets forth the various lien positions and the rights and liabilities
33 of each creditor and its impacts on the other creditors.

34 "Program" means the "New Jersey Residential Foreclosure
35 Prevention Program" established pursuant to section 4 of P.L. ,
36 c. (C.) (pending before the Legislature as this bill).

37 "Qualified community development financial institution" means
38 a community development financial institution that has a minimum
39 of \$50,000,000 in assets and a minimum of two years' experience in
40 the financing and acquisition of real estate for affordable housing.

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42 4. (New section) a. There is established in the agency the "New Jersey Residential Foreclosure Prevention Program," which shall be 43 44 subject to the powers of the agency, as designated pursuant to 45 section 5 of P.L.1983, c.530 (C.55:14K-5). The goal of the 46 program is to ensure that loss mitigation and foreclosure prevention 47 measures are taken on eligible properties. Either directly, or 48 through its contractors, the agency may purchase eligible properties

and mortgage assets in furtherance of this goal, pursuant to section
 5 of P.L., c. (C.) (pending before the Legislature as this
 bill).

4 The agency in furtherance of the program may enter into b. 5 contracts with any person, corporation, or entity which the agency 6 determines to be necessary or appropriate to carry out its 7 (C. responsibilities under P.L. , c.) (pending before the 8 Legislature as this bill). Such contracts shall be subject to the 9 procedures adopted pursuant to section 5 of P.L. , c. (C.) 10 (pending before the Legislature as this bill). All contracts entered 11 into in furtherance of the program shall be governed by the laws of 12 the State and shall provide for indemnification of the agency.

13 In carrying out the agency's duties under P.L. c. 14 (C.) (pending before the Legislature as this bill), the c. 15 agency may employ the consulting services of real estate and loan 16 portfolio asset management firms, property management firms, 17 auction marketing firms, brokerage services firms, appraisers, and 18 such other consultants and employees required in the judgment of 19 the agency, notwithstanding the provisions of Title 11A of the New 20 Jersey Statutes.

d. Within 180 days following the enactment of P.L.

(C. 22) (pending before the Legislature as this bill), the c. 23 agency shall adopt a funding plan for the program utilizing the 24 "Foreclosure Intervention Fund" established pursuant to section 6 25) (pending before the Legislature as this bill). of P.L., c. (C. 26 The agency may directly fund the program through revenue 27 generated by the fund. The agency shall have the authority to alter 28 its funding plan as the Executive Director of the agency deems 29 necessary. The funding plan shall include, but not be limited to, 30 program revenue, expected expenditures and projections for the 31 acquisition of foreclosed residential properties or mortgage assets.

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33 5. (New section) a. (1) The agency may enter into contracts 34 or loans, or both, with no more than two qualified community 35 development financial institutions to negotiate, bid for, and 36 purchase eligible properties and mortgage assets for the purpose 37 facilitating the program. In selecting contractors from among 38 qualified community development financial institutions, the agency 39 shall accord a strong preference to qualified community 40 development financial institutions that have substantial experience 41 in lending in the State and substantial knowledge of the State's real 42 estate markets. The agency may enter into contracts or loans, or 43 both, with a partnership or consortia of organizations, as long as a 44 qualified community development financial institution is the lead 45 entity, or a partnership or consortia of multiple qualified community 46 development financial institutions.

47 (2) Should the agency contract with a community development
48 financial institution for the purposes of P.L. , c. (C.)

1 (pending before the Legislature as this bill), the contract shall 2 specify the amounts, schedules, and types of funding to be provided 3 by the agency to the qualified community development financial 4 institution, the repayment schedule for the portion of that funding to 5 be repaid, and targeted goals for homeowner interventions. The 6 agency may condition funding and goals upon the availability of 7 funds to the program. The contract shall specify reasonable 8 administrative costs sufficient to enable the qualified community 9 development financial institution to exercise its obligations 10 pursuant to P.L., c. (C.) (pending before the Legislature as 11 this bill). The contract shall set forth criteria for instances when the 12 purchase, sale, lease, and conveyance of properties furthers the purposes of P.L., c. (C. 13) (pending before the Legislature as 14 this bill).

b. All purchases, sales, leases, and conveyances of property by
qualified community development financial institutions exercised
pursuant to this section shall be deemed to lessen the burdens of
government in furthering the purposes of P.L. , c. (C.)
(pending before the Legislature as this bill).

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21 6. (New section) a. There is established within the agency a Foreclosure Intervention Fund, which shall be a non-lapsing, 22 23 revolving fund and which shall be the repository for funds 24 appropriated or otherwise made available for the purposes of 25 P.L. , c. (C.) (pending before the Legislature as this bill), 26 and any interest earned thereon. The fund shall be administered by 27 the agency, in accordance with its authority under section 5 of 28 P.L.1983, c.530 (C.55:14K-5) to manage funds for housing 29 programs.

b. The agency may transfer into the fund any amounts held or
received by the agency that are needed by the agency or its
contractors for the purchase of eligible property.

c. The agency may use annually up to five percent of the monies
available in the fund for the payment of any necessary
administrative costs related to the administration of the program.

d. Revenue generated through the mechanisms established
pursuant to N.J.S.2A:17-38 exceeding the funding plan developed
pursuant to subsection d. of section 4 of P.L. , c. (C.)
(pending before the Legislature as this bill) may be appropriated by
the agency for additional foreclosure prevention programs.

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7. (New Section) a. The agency may make grants to eligible
applicants, including, but not limited to, non-profit housing
sponsors, municipalities or other governmental entities utilizing
funds provided by P.L. , c. (C.) (pending before the
Legislature as this bill) or otherwise made available to the agency.
Grants issued pursuant to this section shall be used to advance the

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goals of the program, as established pursuant to section 4 of P.L.
 c. (C.) (pending before the Legislature as this bill).

b. The agency shall establish regulations, procedures or
guidelines governing the qualifications of applicants, the
application procedures and the criteria for awarding grants to such
eligible applicants and the standards for establishing the amount,
terms and conditions of each grant.

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9 8. (New section) a. The agency is authorized to defend and 10 indemnify the federal government, any department, board, body, 11 agency or other entity thereof, the Government National Mortgage 12 Association and its successors and assigns, the Federal National 13 Mortgage Association and its successors and assigns, and the 14 Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corporation and its successors and 15 assigns, against claims, causes of action, demands, costs or 16 judgments against that entity arising as a direct result of that 17 entity's agreement with the agency, upon the terms and limitations 18 the agency deems reasonable and appropriate. An agreement to 19 defend and indemnify pursuant to this subsection shall not bar, 20 reduce, limit or affect any remedies the agency may have to enforce 21 the agency's agreement or to assert a claim for damages to which 22 the agency may be entitled arising out of the entity's failure to 23 perform the agreement, or for the recovery of funds expended for 24 the defense of an entity if the defense was undertaken in response to 25 a claim or cause of action brought against the entity which arose 26 from gross negligence, willful misconduct, fraud, intentional tort, 27 bad faith, or criminal conduct of the entity or one or more of its 28 officials or employees. No one other than an entity which is a party 29 to the agreement with the agency may enforce any agreement for 30 defense or indemnification between that entity and the agency.

31 b. The agency may create a reserve fund, procure insurance or 32 take other such appropriate action in order to meet its future 33 obligations, if any, created by such indemnification obligations. 34 Any agreement to indemnify pursuant to subsection a. may be made 35 only as necessary or appropriate to the exercise of any power herein 36 granted or reasonably implied, provided that: (1) such 37 indemnification shall be payable solely from the funds of the 38 agency on deposit in its General Fund or placed in a reserve fund 39 for that purpose; and (2) such indemnification shall not constitute a 40 debt, obligation or liability of the State, and the State shall not be 41 liable for any obligation as a result of the agency's indemnification 42 obligation.

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44 9. N.J.S.2A:17-38 is amended to read as follows:

2A:17-38. <u>a.</u> When a sheriff or other officer makes a sale by
virtue of an execution or executions to [him] the sheriff or officer
directed, [he] the sheriff or officer shall, within 30 days thereafter,
make and file, with his bill of costs or execution fees, in the office

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1 of the clerk of the court out of which the execution or executions 2 issued, a true statement and calculation, in order of time, of the 3 execution or executions by virtue of which the sale was made, the 4 amount or amounts due thereon, respectively, at the time of the 5 sale, the time or times of sale and the amount of the sales. 6 b. (1) When calculating the amount due thereon, as described in 7 subsection a. of this section, the sheriff or officer shall additionally ¹[consider] collect¹ \$350 per sale to be utilized by the fund within 8 9 the New Jersey Housing and Mortgage Finance Agency established 10 in section 6 of P.L., c. (C.) (pending before the Legislature 11 as this bill). 12 (2) The revenues obtained from these increased amounts, after 13 deduction of any actual administrative costs incurred by the sheriff 14 or officer in carrying out the provisions of this subsection, shall be 15 transmitted no later than the first day of each quarter by the sheriff 16 or officer to the fund with an accounting of collections and 17 foreclosure actions during the corresponding quarter. 18 c. The statement shall be certified under the hand of the officer 19 making and filing it, and shall be conclusive against the officer only. If there be more sales than [1] <u>one</u>, the statement shall be 20 21 made and filed within 30 days after the final sale. 22 (cf: N.J.S.2A:17-38) 23 24 10. Section 7 of P.L.1983, c.530 (C.55:14K-7) is amended to 25 read as follows: 26 7. a. Loans made by the agency to finance housing projects 27 shall be subject to the following terms and conditions: 28 (1) The loan shall be for a period of time not in excess of 50 29 years as determined by the agency; 30 (2) The amount of the loan shall not exceed 90% of the total 31 project cost as determined by the agency, except that as to projects 32 to be owned, constructed, improved, rehabilitated, operated, 33 managed and maintained as mutual housing or by any corporation 34 or association organized not for profit which has as one of its 35 purposes the construction, improvement or rehabilitation of housing 36 projects, the amount of the loan shall not exceed 100% of the total 37 project cost as determined by the agency; but the agency may 38 make additional loans to a housing sponsor to which a loan by the 39 agency for the cost of a project is outstanding if and to the extent 40 that the agency finds that such additional loan is required to more 41 adequately secure and protect the project or to avoid a default by 42 the sponsor on the original loan for the cost of the project and is in 43 the best interest of the agency and the holders of its bonds issued to 44 finance the original loan for the cost of the project; 45 (3) The interest rate on the loan shall be established by the 46 agency at the lowest level consistent with the agency's cost of 47 operation and its responsibilities to the holders of its bonds;

1 (4) The loan shall be evidenced by a mortgage note or bond and 2 by a mortgage which shall be a first lien on the project and which 3 shall contain such terms and provisions and be in a form approved 4 by the agency. The agency shall require the qualified housing 5 sponsor receiving a loan or its contractor to post security in 6 amounts related to the project cost as established by regulation and 7 to execute such other assurances and guarantees as the agency may 8 deem necessary and may require its principals or stockholders to 9 also execute such other assurances and guarantees as the agency 10 may deem necessary;

11 (5) The loan shall be subject to an agreement between the 12 agency and the housing sponsor which will subject the housing sponsor and its principals or stockholders to limitations established 13 14 by the agency as to rentals and other charges, builders' and 15 developers' profits and fees, and the disposition of its property and 16 franchises to the extent more restrictive limitations are not 17 provided by the law under which the borrower is incorporated or 18 organized;

19 (6) The loan shall be subject to an agreement between the 20 agency and the housing sponsor limiting the housing sponsor and its 21 principals or stockholders to such rate of return on its investment in 22 the housing project to be assisted with a loan from the agency as 23 shall be fixed from time to time by the agency in its regulations 24 which shall take into account the prevailing rates of return available 25 for similar investments and the risks associated with the 26 development of the project, together with factors designed to the 27 promote objectives of providing affordable housing, 28 encouraging investment in urban development areas, maintaining 29 and improving the existing housing stock, and other objectives of 30 this act; but agreements entered into by the predecessors of the 31 agency prior to the effective date of this act shall continue to be subject to any restrictions on rate of return imposed by prior law 32 33 unless those restrictions are expressly modified pursuant to 34 regulations of the agency. No housing sponsor which is permitted 35 by the provisions of the law under which it is organized or 36 incorporated to earn a return on its investment, nor any of the 37 principals or stockholders of that housing sponsor, shall earn, 38 accept or receive a return on investment greater than the rate of 39 return fixed by the agency in any housing project assisted with a 40 loan from the agency, whether upon the completion of the 41 construction, improvement or rehabilitation of the project, or upon 42 the operation thereof, or upon the sale, assignment or lease of the 43 project to any other person, association or corporation. Any person, 44 association or corporation who violates the provisions of this 45 subsection is guilty of a crime of the fourth degree;

46 (7) No loan shall be executed except a loan made to a
47 corporation or association organized not for profit which has as one
48 of its purposes the development, construction, improvement or

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1 rehabilitation of housing projects or for mutual housing unless the 2 housing sponsor agrees (a) to certify upon completion of project 3 construction, improvement or rehabilitation, subject to audit by the 4 agency, either that the actual project cost as defined herein 5 exceeded the amount of the loan proceeds by 10% or more, or the 6 amount by which the loan proceeds exceed 90% of the total project 7 cost, and (b) to pay forthwith to the agency, for application to 8 reduction of the principal of the loan, the amount, if any, of such 9 excess loan proceeds, subject to audit and determination by the 10 agency. No loan shall be made to a corporation or association 11 organized not for profit or for mutual housing unless the 12 corporation or association organized not for profit or for mutual 13 housing agrees to certify the actual project cost upon completion of 14 the project, subject to audit and determination by the agency, and 15 further agrees to pay forthwith to the agency, for application to 16 reduction of the principal of the loan, the amount, if any, by which 17 the proceeds of the loan exceed the certified project cost subject to 18 audit and determination by the agency. Notwithstanding the 19 provisions of this paragraph, the agency may accept, in lieu of any 20 certification of project cost as provided herein, such other 21 assurances of the project cost in any form or manner whatsoever, as 22 will enable the agency to determine with reasonable accuracy the 23 amount of the project cost;

(8) No loan shall be made for the construction, improvement or
rehabilitation of a housing project for which tax exemption is
granted by a municipality unless the tax exemption remains in
effect during the entire term of the loan, unless a lesser period of
tax exemption is approved by the agency; and

29 (9) The loan shall be subject to an agreement between the 30 agency and the qualified housing sponsor which contains a 31 provision stating the prevailing wage rate, as determined by either the Commissioner of Labor and Industry or the Secretary of the 32 33 United States Department of Labor in accordance with the 34 provisions of section 42 of this act, which can be paid to the 35 workmen employed in the performance of any contract for the 36 construction or rehabilitation of any housing project, and which 37 stipulates that the qualified housing sponsor, or any builder, 38 contractor or subcontractor thereof, shall pay to such workmen not 39 less than the applicable prevailing wage rate pursuant to that 40 section.

b. As a condition of any loan to finance a housing project, the
agency shall have the power at all times during the construction,
improvement or rehabilitation of a housing project and the
operation thereof:

(1) To enter upon and inspect without prior notice any project,
including all parts thereof, for the purpose of investigating the
physical and financial condition thereof, and its construction,
improvement, rehabilitation, operation, management and

maintenance, and to examine all books and records with respect to
capitalization, income and other matters relating thereto and to
make such charges as may be required to cover the cost of such
inspections and examinations;

5 (2) To order such alterations, changes or repairs as may be 6 necessary to protect the security of its investment in a housing 7 project or the health, safety, and welfare of the occupants thereof;

8 (3) To order any managing agent, project manager or owner of a 9 housing project to do such acts as may be necessary to comply with 10 the provisions of all applicable laws or ordinances or any rule or 11 regulation of the agency or the terms of any agreement concerning 12 the project or to refrain from doing any acts in violation thereof and 13 in this regard the agency shall be a proper party to file a complaint 14 and to prosecute thereon for any violations of law or ordinances as 15 set forth herein;

16 (4) To require the adoption and continuous use of uniform 17 systems of accounts and records for a project and to require all 18 owners or managers of a project to file annual reports containing 19 that information and verified in such manner as the agency shall 20 require, and to file at the times and on the forms as it may 21 prescribe, reports and answers to specific inquiries required by the 22 agency to determine the extent of compliance with any agreement, 23 the terms of the loan, the provisions of this act and any other 24 applicable law;

25 (5) To enforce, by court action if necessary, the terms and 26 provisions of any agreement between the agency and the housing 27 sponsor and the terms of any agreement between the housing 28 sponsor and any municipality granting tax exemption, as to 29 schedules of rental or carrying charges, income limits as applied to 30 tenants or occupants, or any other limitation imposed upon the 31 housing sponsor as to financial structure, construction or operation 32 of the project;

33 (6) (a) Subject to the provisions of paragraph (7) of subsection 34 b. of this section, in the event of a violation by the housing sponsor 35 of the terms of any agreement between the agency and the housing sponsor, or between the municipality granting tax exemption and 36 37 the housing sponsor, or in the event of a violation by the housing 38 sponsor of this act or of the terms of the loan agreement or of any 39 rules and regulations of the agency duly promulgated pursuant to 40 this act, or in the event that the agency shall determine that any loan 41 or advance from the Housing Development Fund pursuant to section 42 30 of this act is in jeopardy of not being repaid, the agency may, 43 without resort to any judicial process, assume all of the powers and 44 duties of the housing sponsor in the management and operation of 45 the project, including but not limited to the power to receive all 46 revenues and pay all expenses of the project and the power to 47 control all property, including bank accounts and cash, owned by 48 the housing sponsor. The agency may appoint such person or

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1 persons whom the agency in its sole discretion deems advisable, 2 including officers or employees of the agency, to perform the 3 functions of the officers or other controlling persons of the housing 4 sponsor. Persons so appointed need not be stockholders or meet 5 other qualifications which may be prescribed by the certificate of 6 incorporation, bylaws or partnership agreement of the housing 7 sponsor. In the absence of fraud or bad faith, persons so appointed 8 shall not be personally liable for debts, obligations or liabilities of 9 the housing sponsor. Persons so appointed shall serve only for a 10 period coexistent with the duration of the violation or until the 11 agency is assured in a manner satisfactory to it that the violation, or 12 violations of a similar nature, will not recur. Persons so appointed 13 shall serve in such capacity without compensation, but shall be 14 entitled to be reimbursed, if and as the certificate of incorporation, 15 bylaws or partnership agreement of the housing sponsor may 16 provide, for all necessary expenses incurred in the discharge of their 17 duties as determined by the agency; and

(b) the provisions of section 18 of P.L. 1991, c. 431 (C.40A:2018) concerning housing projects in financial difficulty shall not
apply to housing projects financed by the agency; and

21 (7) The provisions of this subsection and this act pertaining to 22 the regulation of housing sponsors shall be for purposes of 23 protecting the collateral for any loan or loans; implementing or 24 enforcing any condition, requirement or criterion for loans as 25 provided in this act or other applicable law; and securing the rights 26 and remedies of lenders and bond holders to the extent of the 27 undertakings of the agency. Subject to the foregoing, the agency 28 shall permit, provide for and encourage the right of local housing 29 sponsors to exercise their own initiative and competence in the 30 administration of their assets and the conduct and operation of 31 housing projects and exercise their rights and responsibilities to the fullest extent permitted by law. Therefore, the agency shall 32 33 exercise its remedies and powers under paragraph (6) of this 34 subsection only with regard to material violations and only after 35 reasonable notice and reasonable opportunity to correct the 36 violation is provided to the housing sponsor in accordance with 37 regulations adopted by the agency.

38 c. Notwithstanding any law, rule or regulation to the contrary,
39 the provisions of paragraphs (5) and (6) of subsection a. of this
40 section shall not be applicable to market rate units.

41 <u>d. As used in this section, "market rate unit" means a housing</u>
42 <u>unit for which occupancy is not subject to limitations based on</u>
43 <u>tenant income.</u>
44 (cf: P.L.1983, c.530, s.7)

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46 11. This act shall take effect immediately.

47 48 1 Establishes "New Jersey Foreclosure Prevention Act."