

SENATE No.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Mr. Galluccio

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in General Court assembled:

The undersigned legislators and/or citizens respectfully petition for the passage of the accompanying bill:

An Act relative to preserving homeownership.

PETITION OF:

NAME:

Mr. Galluccio

DISTRICT/ADDRESS:

Middlesex, Suffolk and Essex

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the Year Two Thousand and Nine

AN ACT RELATIVE TO PRESERVING HOMEOWNERSHIP.

Whereas, The deferred operation for this act would tend to defeat its purpose, which is forthwith to protect citizens of the Commonwealth involved in the mortgage foreclosure crisis and reduce the number of abandoned properties, therefore it is hereby declared to be an emergency law, necessary for the immediate preservation of the public convenience.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Chapter 244 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2006 Official Edition, is
2 hereby amended by inserting, after section 35A, the following section:—

3 Section 35B. Partial Payment

4 (a) For purposes of this section, the following words shall, unless the context otherwise requires,
5 have the following meanings:-

6 “Borrower”, the owner of a one-to-four family residential real property located in the state that is
7 occupied in whole or in part by the owner or of a condominium unit created pursuant to chapter
8 183A of the general laws that is occupied in whole or in part by the owner, who is the obligor on
9 the mortgage debt encumbering such real property or condominium unit.

10 “Mortgagee”, a creditor that makes a loan secured by residential real property or a condominium
11 created pursuant to chapter 183A of the general laws, or any successor in interest and/or assignee
12 of the mortgagee’s rights, interests or obligations under the mortgage agreement.

13 “Mortgage Servicer”, an entity which administers the mortgage loan, including, but not limited
14 to, calculating principal and interest, collecting payments from the mortgagor, acting as an
15 escrow agent, and foreclosing in the event of a default by the borrower.

16 “Partial Payment”, payment of at least 60% of the total monthly mortgage payment.

17 “Total Monthly Mortgage Payment”, principal, interest, and any taxes and insurance paid by the
18 mortgagee or mortgage servicer on behalf of the borrower.

19 (b) A partial payment by a borrower shall be accepted by a mortgagee or mortgage servicer and
20 applied to mortgage debt, provided that the debt arises from a mortgage loan with high points,
21 fees or interest in violation of chapter 183C or a mortgage loan having the following
22 characteristics: (i) adjustable rate loans with an introductory period of three years or less; (ii) a
23 debt-to income ratio in excess of 50% of recurring debt under the fully indexed rate; (iii) the loan
24 was approved on a stated income basis; (iv) interest only loans or (v) the loan-to-value ratio is
25 100% or the loan carries pre-payment penalties of greater than three months interest.

26 (c) The partial payment shall be applied in the following priority order: (i) interest, (ii) principal,
27 and (iii) any taxes and insurance that the mortgagee or mortgage servicer is obligated to pay on
28 the mortgage loan on behalf of the borrower. A regularly scheduled mortgage payment
29 subsequent to a partial payment shall be applied as if the partial payment was a full payment.

30 (d) No mortgagee or mortgage servicer shall be required to accept a partial payment in
31 consecutive months or more than two partial payments in a twelve month period. A partial
32 payment shall not constitute a default of the mortgage loan if made in accordance with this
33 section, provided that the difference between the total monthly mortgage payment and the partial
34 payment is remitted within ninety (90) days of the date that the total monthly mortgage payment
35 was due and the mortgagee has paid the amount of monthly mortgage payment owed by that date
36 in full by said date.

37 (e) Upon receipt of a partial payment, the mortgagee or mortgage servicer shall issue to the
38 borrower a statement reflecting the deficiency payment due and specifying that the next regularly
39 scheduled payment will not be reduced by the amount of any deficiency payments. A borrower
40 who has made a partial payment under this section shall clearly identify the funds being remitted
41 to complete the mortgage payment on which a partial payment was previously made.

42 (f) Late fees shall not be assessed in connection with a partial payment or deficiency payment
43 made in accordance with this section. Nothing in this section shall preclude or limit the right to
44 initiate a foreclosure proceeding pursuant to chapter 244.

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46 (g) The attorney general shall enforce this section and may obtain injunctive or declaratory relief
47 for this purpose.