

By Senator Soto

14-00027-14

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1                   A bill to be entitled  
2       An act relating to short sale debt relief; creating  
3       the "Short Sale Debt Relief Act"; defining terms;  
4       providing that a debtor does not owe a deficiency to a  
5       lienholder related to an eligible real property sold  
6       pursuant to a bona fide short sale if an offer is  
7       received by the debtor within a specified time period  
8       and under specified conditions; providing for the  
9       distribution of proceeds; requiring a lienholder to  
10      approve the short sale of property and execute any  
11      document necessary to close the sale within a  
12      specified time period if a debtor procures a buyer who  
13      makes an offer in writing equal to the fair market  
14      value of the eligible property; providing that a  
15      debtor has a claim against a lienholder for actual  
16      damages, costs, elimination of the lien, and attorney  
17      fees if the lienholder violates the act; providing an  
18      effective date.

19  
20 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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22       Section 1. (1) This act may be cited as the "Short Sale  
23 Debt Relief Act."

24       (2) As used in this act, the term:

25       (a) "Bona fide short sale" means a sale of eligible real  
26 property which is the result of an arms-length transaction  
27 between two parties who are unrelated by family or contractual  
28 ties other than the short sale.

29       (b) "Deficiency" means a debt owed related to a mortgage,

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30 note, or other lien on eligible real property which exceeds any  
31 money received by a lienholder pursuant to a bona fide short  
32 sale.

33 (c) "Eligible real property" means any first home, second  
34 home, or single-family rental property located in this state  
35 which has total mortgage-related debt greater than 20 percent of  
36 the fair market value of the property as determined by a  
37 licensed appraiser.

38 (d) "Proceeds" means an amount equal to the purchase price  
39 of a bona fide short sale less any applicable fees and taxes;  
40 however, new fees may not be created by a lienholder as a result  
41 of this act.

42 (e) "Short sale" means the purchase and sale of real  
43 property in which all of the following apply:

44 1. The grantor's interest is encumbered by one or more  
45 mortgages securing indebtedness in an aggregate amount greater  
46 than the consideration paid or given by the grantee.

47 2. A mortgagee releases the real property from its mortgage  
48 in exchange for a payment of less than the total of the  
49 outstanding mortgage indebtedness owed to the releasing  
50 mortgagee.

51 3. The releasing mortgagee does not receive, directly or  
52 indirectly, any interest in the property transferred.

53 4. The releasing mortgagee is not controlled by or related  
54 to the grantor or the grantee.

55 (3) A debtor does not owe a deficiency to a lienholder  
56 related to eligible real property sold pursuant to a bona fide  
57 short sale if an offer is received by a debtor pursuant to  
58 subsection (5) within 3 years after July 1, 2014, and closing

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59 occurs within 60 days thereafter.

60 (4) (a) A first lienholder is entitled to 90 percent of the  
61 proceeds of the short sale.

62 (b) A second or subsequent lienholder is entitled to a  
63 combined total of 10 percent of the proceeds of the short sale,  
64 which must be distributed proportionally to the amount of debt  
65 held by the second or subsequent lienholder.

66 (5) If a debtor procures a buyer who makes an offer in  
67 writing equal to the fair market value of the eligible property  
68 for a bona fide short sale, the lienholder shall approve the  
69 sale of the property and execute any document necessary to close  
70 the sale within 45 days after the sale.

71 (6) A debtor may file a claim against a lienholder for  
72 actual damages, costs, elimination of the lien under equity, and  
73 attorney fees if the lienholder violates this act.

74 Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2014.