



SENATE OF PENNSYLVANIA BILL SUMMARY

Senate Bill 330 Printer's No. 221

Prime Sponsor: Senator Ward
Committee: Urban Affairs and Housing

SYNOPSIS:

An Act amending Title 53 (Municipalities Generally) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in neighborhood blight reclamation and revitalization, providing for failure to comply with a code requirement.

SUMMARY:

Senate Bill 330 aims to give municipalities the ability to address dilapidated properties sooner than they now can. Currently, municipalities must issue citations four times for the same building code violation before a criminal offense of failure to comply may be charged against a neglectful property owner. This criminal offense was passed into law in 1999 as part of a package of bills addressing urban blight. It was intended to be used against property owners who are continually cited for multiple building code violations and who do nothing to remedy those violations. To date, this criminal offense has only been charged in a handful of cases and even far fewer convictions.

Senate Bill 330 would do the following:

- Allows the criminal offense to be charged when the number of code violation convictions is two or more of the same subsection under the municipal housing code.
- Clarifies that the offense applies for all residential, commercial and industrial properties.
- A second conviction of a violation of the same subsection under the municipal building code related to the same property would be a 2nd degree misdemeanor, and the person convicted would have to serve a term of at least 10 days in jail, undergo a mandatory minimum of six months' probation and pay a fine of no less than \$1,000.
- A third or more conviction of building violation under this section would be a 1st degree misdemeanor, and the person convicted would serve a term of at least 30 days in jail, undergo a year's probation and pay a fine of no less than \$3,000. Effective Date: This act shall take effect in 60 days.

BILL HISTORY:

Previously introduced as Senate Bill 1242 of 2014; Passed the Senate Urban Affairs and Housing Committee in 2014 (11-0)

Prepared by: Ribic 2/26/2015