

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
SESSION 2017

SESSION LAW 2017-109  
HOUSE BILL 530

AN ACT GRANTING COUNTIES THE SAME AUTHORITY AS CITIES TO DECLARE CERTAIN BUILDINGS OR STRUCTURES UNSAFE AND TO REMOVE OR DEMOLISH UNSAFE BUILDINGS OR STRUCTURES AND TO PLACE A LIEN ON THE OWNER'S REAL PROPERTY FOR THE COSTS INCURRED.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

**SECTION 1.** G.S. 153A-366 reads as rewritten:

**"§ 153A-366. Unsafe buildings condemned.**

(a) Residential Building and Nonresidential Building or Structure. – The inspector shall condemn as unsafe each building that appears to him to be especially dangerous to life because of its liability to fire, bad conditions of walls, overloaded floors, defective construction, decay, unsafe wiring or heating system, inadequate means of egress, or other causes; and he shall affix a notice of the dangerous character of the building to a conspicuous place on its exterior wall.

(b) Nonresidential Building or Structure. – In addition to the authority granted in subsection (a) of this section, an inspector may declare a nonresidential building or structure within a community development target area to be unsafe if it meets both of the following conditions:

- (1) It appears to the inspector to be vacant or abandoned.
- (2) It appears to the inspector to be in such dilapidated condition as to cause or contribute to blight, disease, vagrancy, fire, or safety hazard, to be a danger to children, or to tend to attract persons intent on criminal activities or other activities that would constitute a public nuisance.

(c) If an inspector declares a nonresidential building or structure to be unsafe under subsection (b) of this section, the inspector must affix a notice of the unsafe character of the structure to a conspicuous place on the exterior wall of the building. For the purposes of this section, the term "community development target area" means an area that has characteristics of an urban progress zone under G.S. 143B-437.09, a "nonresidential redevelopment area" under G.S. 160A-503(10), or an area with similar characteristics designated by the board of commissioners as being in special need of revitalization for the benefit and welfare of its citizens.

(d) A county may expand subsections (b) and (c) of this section to apply to residential buildings by adopting an ordinance. Before adopting the ordinance, the county shall hold a public hearing and shall provide notice of the hearing at least 10 days in advance of the hearing."

**SECTION 2.** G.S. 153A-368 reads as rewritten:

**"§ 153A-368. Action in event of failure to take corrective action.**

If the owner of a building that has been condemned as unsafe pursuant to G.S. 153A-366 fails to take prompt corrective action, the local inspector shall by certified or registered mail to his last known address or by personal service give him written notice:

- (1) That the building or structure is in a condition that appears to ~~constitute~~ meet one or more of the following conditions:



- a. Constitutes a fire or safety hazard or to be hazard.
  - b. Is dangerous to life, health, or other ~~property~~ property.
  - c. Is likely to cause or contribute to blight, disease, vagrancy, or danger to children.
  - d. Has a tendency to attract persons intent on criminal activities or other activities that would constitute a public nuisance.
- (2) That a hearing will be held before the inspector at a designated place and time, not later than 10 days after the date of the notice, at which time the owner is entitled to be heard in person or by counsel and to present arguments and evidence pertaining to the matter; and
- (3) That following the hearing, the inspector may issue any order to repair, close, vacate, or demolish the building that appears appropriate.

If the name or whereabouts of the owner cannot after due diligence be discovered, the notice shall be considered properly and adequately served if a copy thereof is posted on the outside of the building in question at least 10 days before the day of the hearing and a notice of the hearing is published at least once not later than one week before the hearing."

**SECTION 3.** G.S. 153A-372 reads as rewritten:

**"§ 153A-372. Equitable enforcement.**

(a) Action Authorized. – Whenever a violation is denominated a misdemeanor under the provisions of this Part, the county, either in addition to or in lieu of other remedies, may initiate any appropriate action or proceeding to prevent, restrain, correct, or abate the violation or to prevent the occupancy of the building involved.

(b) Removal of Building. – In the case of a building or structure declared unsafe under G.S. 153A-366 or an ordinance adopted pursuant to G.S. 153A-366, a county may, in lieu of taking action under subsection (a) of this section, cause the building or structure to be removed or demolished. The amounts incurred by the county in connection with the removal or demolition shall be a lien against the real property upon which the cost was incurred. The lien shall be filed, have the same priority, and be collected in the same manner as liens for special assessments provided in Article 9 of this Chapter. If the building or structure is removed or demolished by the county, the county shall sell the usable materials of the building and any personal property, fixtures, or appurtenances found in or attached to the building. The county shall credit the proceeds of the sale against the cost of the removal or demolition. Any balance remaining from the sale shall be deposited with the clerk of superior court of the county where the property is located and shall be disbursed by the court to the person found to be entitled thereto by final order or decree of the court.

(b1) Additional Lien. – The amounts incurred by the county in connection with the removal or demolition shall also be a lien against any other real property owned by the owner of the building or structure and located within the county's jurisdictional limits, except for the owner's primary residence. The provisions of subsection (b) of this section apply to this additional lien, except that this additional lien is inferior to all prior liens and shall be collected as a money judgment.

(c) Nonexclusive Remedy. – Nothing in this section shall be construed to impair or limit the power of the county to define and declare nuisances and to cause their removal or abatement by summary proceedings or otherwise."

**SECTION 4.** This act is effective when it becomes law.

In the General Assembly read three times and ratified this the 29<sup>th</sup> day of June,  
2017.

s/ Daniel J. Forest  
President of the Senate

s/ Tim Moore  
Speaker of the House of Representatives

s/ Roy Cooper  
Governor

Approved 6:56 p.m. this 12<sup>th</sup> day of July, 2017