

A BILL

IN THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

To declare the existence of an emergency with respect to the need to amend the Rental Housing Act of 1985 to extend the deadline by which the Office of the Tenant Advocate must develop the Rent Control Housing Database and transfer administration and maintenance of the database to the Rental Accommodations Division.

RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, That this resolution may be cited as the “Rent Control Housing Database Deadline Extension Emergency Declaration Resolution of 2020”.

Sec. 2. (a) On July 20, 2017, the Publicly Accessible Rent Control Housing Clearinghouse Emergency Amendment Act of 2017 went into effect, tasking the Office of the Tenant Advocate (“OTA”) with the development of a “user-friendly, Internet-accessible, and searchable database for the submission, management, and review of all documents and relevant data” that housing providers are required to submit to the Rental Accommodations Division (“RAD”) within the Department of Housing and Community Development pursuant to the Rent Stabilization Program. The current statutory deadline by which OTA is required to complete the database and transfer administration and maintenance to RAD is September 30, 2020.

(b) To complete the database and transfer it to RAD by the statutory deadline, OTA proposed and began implementation of a six-phase process including assessment, design, vendor selection, development, testing and modification, and demo completion, with an anticipated completion date of July 20, 2019. OTA completed the assessment and design phases of the

33 project by April 30, 2018, and moved on to the vendor selection phase in coordination with the
34 Office of Contracting and Procurement (“OCP”). However, as of September 2020, the project is
35 just entering the development phase due to delays during the vendor selection phase that were
36 beyond OTA’s control. Initially, OCP provided a timeline for vendor selection that anticipated
37 the contract would be awarded by July 30, 2018. However, the contract was not awarded until
38 August 7, 2020.

39 (c) The selected vendor requires time to understand RAD’s workflows and processes
40 associated with housing provider submissions. Taking this into account, along with the time
41 needed for the development itself, the vendor estimates that it will need 12 months to complete
42 its work on the database. This timeline would allow OTA to complete the final two phases of the
43 database project (testing and modification, and demo completion) and transfer the database to
44 RAD by December 31, 2021, with an expected rollout of the demo version for internal testing by
45 August 2021.

46 (d) Accordingly, the Rent Control Housing Database Deadline Extension Emergency
47 Amendment Act of 2020 would extend the deadline by which OTA must develop the database
48 from September 30, 2020 to December 31, 2021.

49 (e) It is important that the deadline be extended in order to accommodate the delays
50 described herein and to provide OTA with a reasonable amount of time by which to complete the
51 database project.

52 Sec. 3. The Council of the District of Columbia determines that the circumstances
53 enumerated in section 2 constitute emergency circumstances making it necessary that the Rent
54 Control Housing Database Deadline Extension Emergency Amendment Act of 2020 be adopted
55 after a single reading.

Sec. 4. This resolution shall take effect immediately.