

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA

SESSION 1999

S

4

SENATE BILL 1152  
Finance Committee Substitute Adopted 4/28/99  
Third Edition Engrossed 4/29/99  
House Committee Substitute Favorable 6/21/00

Short Title: Nonresidential Abandoned Structures.

(Public)

Sponsors:

Referred to:

April 15, 1999

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
2 AN ACT AUTHORIZING CITIES WITH A POPULATION OF MORE THAN TWO  
3 HUNDRED THOUSAND, THE CITIES OF WINSTON-SALEM, STATESVILLE,  
4 HIGH POINT, THOMASVILLE, MOORESVILLE, HAMLET, LEXINGTON, AND  
5 TROUTMAN TO DEMOLISH AND REMOVE CERTAIN NONRESIDENTIAL  
6 BUILDINGS AND STRUCTURES TO ENHANCE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
7 EFFORTS.  
8 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:  
9 Section 1. G.S. 160A-426 reads as rewritten:  
10 "§ 160A-426. Unsafe buildings condemned.  
11 (a) Residential Building. – Every building which shall appear to the inspector to  
12 be especially dangerous to life because of its liability to fire or because of bad condition  
13 of walls, overloaded floors, defective construction, decay, unsafe wiring or heating  
14 system, inadequate means of egress, or other causes, shall be held to be unsafe, and the  
15 inspector shall affix a notice of the dangerous character of the structure to a conspicuous  
16 place on the exterior wall of said building.

1 (b) Nonresidential Building or Structure. – An inspector in a city whose population  
2 exceeds 200,000, according to the most recent annual population statistics certified by the  
3 State Planning Officer, shall declare a nonresidential building or structure within a  
4 community development target area to be unsafe if it meets both of the following  
5 conditions:

6 (1) It appears to the inspector to be vacant or abandoned.

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

11 If an inspector declares a nonresidential building or structure to be unsafe, the inspector  
12 must affix a notice of the unsafe character of the structure to a conspicuous place on the  
13 exterior wall of the building. For the purposes of this subsection, the term 'community  
14 development target area' means an area that has characteristics of a development zone  
15 under G.S. 105-129.3A, a 'nonresidential development area' under G.S. 160A-503(10), or  
16 an area with similar characteristics designated by the city council as being in special need  
17 of revitalization for the benefit and welfare of its citizens."

18 Section 2. G.S. 160A-428 reads as rewritten:

19 "**§ 160A-428. Action in event of failure to take corrective action.**

20 If the owner of a building or structure that has been condemned as unsafe pursuant to  
21 G.S. 160A-426 shall fail to take prompt corrective action, the local inspector shall give  
22 him written notice, by certified or registered mail to his last known address or by personal  
23 service,

24 (1) That the building or structure is in a condition that appears to ~~constitute a~~  
25 ~~fire or safety hazard or to be dangerous to life, health, or other property;~~ meet  
26 one or more of the following conditions:

27 a. Constitutes a fire or safety hazard.

28 b. Is dangerous to life, health, or other property.

29 c. Is likely to cause or contribute to blight, disease, vagrancy, or  
30 danger to children.

31 d. Has a tendency to attract persons intent on criminal activities or  
32 other activities which would constitute a public nuisance.

33 (2) That a hearing will be held before the inspector at a designated place  
34 and time, not later than 10 days after the date of the notice, at which  
35 time the owner shall be entitled to be heard in person or by counsel and  
36 to present arguments and evidence pertaining to the matter; and

37 (3) That following the hearing, the inspector may issue such order to repair,  
38 close, vacate, or demolish the building or structure as appears  
39 appropriate.

40 If the name or whereabouts of the owner cannot after due diligence be discovered, the  
41 notice shall be considered properly and adequately served if a copy thereof is posted on  
42 the outside of the building or structure in question at least 10 days prior to the hearing

1 and a notice of the hearing is published in a newspaper having general circulation in the  
2 city at least once not later than one week prior to the hearing."

3 Section 3. G.S. 160A-432 reads as rewritten:

4 "**§ 160A-432. Equitable enforcement. Civil and equitable enforcement.**

5 (a) Civil Enforcement. – Whenever any violation is denominated a misdemeanor  
6 under the provisions of this Part, the city, either in addition to or in lieu of other remedies,  
7 may initiate any appropriate action or proceedings to prevent, restrain, correct, or abate  
8 the violation or to prevent the occupancy of the building or structure involved.

9 (b) Equitable Enforcement. – In the case of a nonresidential building or structure  
10 declared unsafe under G.S. 160A-426(b), a city may, in lieu of taking action under  
11 subsection (a), cause the building or structure to be removed or demolished. The  
12 amounts incurred by the city in connection with the removal or demolition shall be a lien  
13 against the real property upon which the cost was incurred. The lien shall be filed, have  
14 the same priority, and be collected in the same manner as liens for special assessments  
15 provided in Article 10 of this Chapter. If the building or structure is removed or  
16 demolished by the city, the city shall sell the usable materials of the building and any  
17 personal property, fixtures, or appurtenances found in or attached to the building. The  
18 city shall credit the proceeds of the sale against the cost of the removal or demolition.  
19 Any balance remaining from the sale shall be deposited with the clerk of superior court of  
20 the county where the property is located and shall be disbursed by the court to the person  
21 found to be entitled thereto by final order or decree of the court.

22 (c) Nothing in this section shall be construed to impair or limit the power of the  
23 city to define and declare nuisances and to cause their removal or abatement by summary  
24 proceedings, or otherwise."

25 Section 4. Notwithstanding G.S. 160A-426, as enacted in Section 1 of this act,  
26 the provisions of this act apply to the cities of Winston-Salem, Statesville, High Point,  
27 Thomasville, Mooresville, Hamlet, Lexington, and Troutman.

28 Section 5. This act is effective when it becomes law.