

# WEST VIRGINIA CODE: §31-18E-2

## **§31-18E-2. Legislative findings.**

The Legislature finds and declares that:

- (1) Strong communities are important to the social and economic vitality of this state. Whether urban, suburban or rural, many communities are struggling to cope with vacant, abandoned and tax-delinquent properties.
- (2) Citizens of this state are affected adversely by vacant, abandoned and tax-delinquent properties, including properties which have been vacated or abandoned due to mortgage foreclosure.
- (3) Vacant, abandoned and tax-delinquent properties impose significant costs on neighborhoods, communities, municipalities and counties by lowering property values, increasing fire and police protection costs, decreasing tax revenues and undermining community cohesion.
- (4) Vacant, abandoned and tax-delinquent properties contribute to blight, invite crime and pests and provide unsafe play spaces.
- (5) There is an overriding public need to confront the problems caused by vacant, abandoned and tax-delinquent properties through the creation of new tools to enable municipalities and counties to turn vacant, abandoned and tax-delinquent spaces into vibrant places.
- (6) Land reuse agencies, often called land banks in other jurisdictions, are one of the tools that municipalities and counties may use to facilitate the return of vacant, abandoned and tax-delinquent properties to productive use.