

2021 Regular Session

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 197

BY SENATOR HARRIS

SANITARY CODE. Requests the New Orleans City Council to implement a comprehensive plan to address property blight in New Orleans East.

1 A RESOLUTION

2 To urge and request the New Orleans City Council to implement a comprehensive plan to
3 address property blight in New Orleans East.

4 WHEREAS, dilapidated properties and overgrown lots, otherwise known as blight,
5 have long been among New Orleans' most vexing challenges; and

6 WHEREAS, concentrations of blighted properties reduce property values, harm
7 quality of life, and threaten public safety; and

8 WHEREAS, New Orleans East was once a thriving area with quality real estate and
9 a unique place to live, work, play, and do business; and

10 WHEREAS, "blighted properties" as described in Chapter 26 of the New Orleans
11 City Code specifies the minimum standards to which property owners must comply and
12 provides for enforcement by the city's code enforcement and hearings bureau; and

13 WHEREAS, in 2010, a strategic plan was implemented by the mayor and city council
14 to reduce blight within the city of New Orleans; and

15 WHEREAS, the strategy consisted of data-driven decision-making, blight tool
16 alignment and improvement, organizational architecture and processes, strategic deployment
17 of resources and place-based revitalization; and

18 WHEREAS, in 2012, the strategy put in place to abate the blight problem within the

1 city of New Orleans reduced blight by thousands of properties, and won the prestigious
2 Bright Idea in Government award presented by Harvard University's Ash Center for
3 Democratic Governance and Innovation; and

4 WHEREAS, that same blight abatement plan also won the Department of Housing
5 and Urban Development Secretary's Award; and

6 WHEREAS, part of the 2012 plan focused on code enforcement and lien foreclosure
7 sales and a monthly meeting called Blight Stat, and with code enforcement, the New Orleans
8 Redevelopment Authority and other city department officials tracking the project's progress;
9 and

10 WHEREAS, as of May 2021, Blight Stat and the other award winning initiatives are
11 no longer in operation and blighted properties in New Orleans East remain extremely high;
12 and

13 WHEREAS, state statute authorizes the city of New Orleans to issue sanitation
14 tickets as an enforcement tool for violations of nuisance, sanitation, health, safety, and
15 welfare ordinances of Orleans Parish; and

16 WHEREAS, state statute also authorizes the use of criminal enforcement when the
17 blighted property owner intentionally or in a criminally negligent manner permits the
18 existence of a condition of deterioration of his property, which is deemed to have occurred
19 when the property has been declared or certified as blighted after an administrative hearing,
20 and after all reviews or appeals have occurred; and

21 WHEREAS, the city council is encouraged to seek ways to eliminate blight in New
22 Orleans East in order for the area to once again become a thriving place with a pro business
23 climate and an unmatched quality of life which offers the essential elements to ensure the
24 growth and development of the community.

25 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana
26 does hereby urge and request the New Orleans City Council to implement a comprehensive
27 plan to address property blight in New Orleans East.

28 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the comprehensive plan includes a mechanism
29 to address the following:

30 (1) The appropriate city officials who may issue sanitation tickets in accordance with

