
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO SECURITY INTERESTS IN REAL PROPERTY.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that the records of the
2 bureau of conveyances reflect numerous instruments evidencing
3 assignments of borrower's interests in leases and rents that
4 were given as security for mortgage loans, and that the records
5 for many of these assignments have not subsequently been
6 reassigned or released even though the underlying loans have
7 been fully paid or otherwise satisfied. The legislature has
8 recognized that it is in the public's interest to clear the
9 public record of unreleased mortgages and has authorized title
10 insurers or underwritten title companies to make a demand on the
11 mortgagee and, in the absence of compliance, to execute and
12 record a release of a fully satisfied mortgage under certain
13 conditions. However, there is no comparable provision for
14 compelling and accomplishing a release of a recorded assignment
15 of leases or rents, which sometimes accompanies the mortgage as
16 additional security for the loan. Accordingly, many
17 unenforceable assignments continue to exist in the public record
18 and may cloud title to real estate.



1 The purpose of this Act is to amend the procedure for
2 clearing titles by adding a reference to recorded assignments of
3 leases and rents for which the underlying debt has been fully
4 paid or satisfied, which will help clarify the public record.

5 SECTION 2. Section 506-8, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
6 amended to read as follows:

7 "§506-8 Release of mortgages of real property or
8 fixtures[-] and reassignment of security interests. (a) The
9 mortgagee of real property or the record assignee of a mortgage
10 interest shall provide to the mortgagor a release of mortgage
11 upon full satisfaction of the mortgage and discharge of any
12 secured debt. If the debt secured by the mortgage is also
13 secured by an assignment of the borrower's or mortgagor's
14 interest in leases or rents to the mortgagee, then the mortgagee
15 or record assignee shall also provide to the borrower or
16 mortgagor, as applicable, a reassignment or release of the
17 security interest upon full satisfaction and discharge of the
18 secured debt. The instrument or instruments shall be duly
19 acknowledged, shall sufficiently describe the mortgage or
20 assignment that has been satisfied, and be recordable in the



1 bureau of conveyances or office of the assistant registrar of
2 the land court, or both, as appropriate.

3 (b) If the mortgagee or record assignee fails to provide a
4 release of the mortgage and reassignment or release of security
5 interest as required by this section within sixty days from the
6 date of a request made in writing by any party in interest, and
7 sent by certified or registered mail to the mortgagee or record
8 assignee at its last known address, then:

9 (1) Any title insurer or underwritten title company as
10 defined in section 431:20-102 may execute the release
11 of mortgage or reassignment or release of the
12 mortgagee's security interest in leases and rents on
13 behalf of the mortgagee or record assignee; provided
14 that:

15 (A) The release or reassignment shall have attached
16 to it an affidavit setting forth proof, such as a
17 canceled check or written confirmation from the
18 mortgagee[7] or recorded assignee, that
19 reasonably establishes that the [mortgage] debt
20 secured by the mortgage or assignment of leases
21 and rents has been discharged and the mortgage or



1 assignment of leases and rents has been fully
2 satisfied; and

3 (B) The release or reassignment shall be executed by
4 an officer of the title insurer or underwritten
5 title company.

6 In the event that a mortgage is released or the
7 mortgagee's security interest in the leases and rents
8 is reassigned or released by a title insurer or
9 underwritten title company under [~~the provisions of~~]
10 this section but the mortgage debt has not been
11 discharged, the mortgage has not been fully satisfied,
12 and the title insurer or underwritten title company
13 acted with gross negligence or in bad faith in
14 releasing the mortgage[~~7~~] or reassigning or releasing
15 the security interest in the leases and rents, the
16 title insurer or underwritten title company releasing
17 the mortgage or reassigning or releasing the security
18 interest in the leases and rents shall be liable to
19 the mortgagee for treble damages and reasonable
20 attorneys' fees and costs; or



1 (2) The mortgagor or a company issuing title insurance to
2 a new owner of the mortgaged subject real property or
3 to another mortgagee of the subject real property, or
4 the escrow company charged by the mortgagor with
5 obtaining the release of mortgage[~~7~~] or reassignment
6 or release of the security interest in the leases and
7 rents, or any other interested party, as plaintiff,
8 may institute an action in any circuit court to obtain
9 the appropriate release [~~of mortgage~~] or reassignment
10 instrument; provided that:

11 (A) The plaintiff in the action shall mail a copy of
12 the complaint to the mortgagee or record assignee
13 by certified or registered mail addressed to the
14 mortgagee or record assignee at its last known
15 address;

16 (B) If the mortgagee or record assignee does not file
17 an answer to the complaint within forty-five days
18 after the mailing, the court, upon receipt of an
19 affidavit of mailing required by this section and
20 upon satisfactory proof that the mortgage debt
21 has been discharged and the mortgage has been



1 fully satisfied, shall issue an order releasing
 2 the mortgage[+] and reassigning or releasing the
 3 security interest in the leases and rents, as
 4 applicable;

5 (C) This order shall be recorded in the bureau of
 6 conveyances or office of the assistant registrar
 7 of the land court, or both, as appropriate; and

8 (D) Upon a finding of good cause by the court, the
 9 plaintiff shall be entitled to treble damages and
 10 reasonable attorneys' fees and costs incurred in
 11 the action unless the court finds that the
 12 mortgagee had a reasonable basis for believing
 13 that a dispute existed regarding whether the
 14 mortgage should have been released[+] or the
 15 security interest in the leases and rents should
 16 have been reassigned or released."

17 SECTION 3. Statutory material to be repealed is bracketed
 18 and stricken. New statutory material is underscored.

19 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.
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Report Title:

Security Interests; Reassignment or Release of Security Interests; Leases and Rents

Description:

Requires a mortgagee or record assignee to provide to a mortgagor or borrower, upon full satisfaction of the mortgage and discharge of the secured debt, a reassignment or release of security interests in leases and rents that served as additional security for the mortgage. Authorizes title insurers or underwritten title companies to make demands on mortgagees and, in the absence of compliance, to reassign or release mortgagees' security interests in leases and rents on behalf of the mortgagee or record assignee, under certain conditions. Authorizes certain entities to institute an action in any circuit court to obtain the release or reassignment instrument in the absence of compliance of a mortgagee or record assignee. (SD1)

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