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LEAVES!**



**¡NADIE
SE MUDE!**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Anti-Foreclosure Ordinance Passes in Springfield

Springfield, MA – City Councilors yesterday (July 18) voted unanimously for the first time on what is now the strongest anti-foreclosure legislation in the state of Massachusetts. Before the vote, the **Springfield No One Leaves/Nadie Se Mude** coalition held a rally with over a hundred supporters and press conference to express support.

The two ordinances that were passed increase requirements for foreclosing institutions. The first ordinance imposes a requirement that foreclosing banks pay a \$10,000 cash bond to assist the city in securing and maintaining vacant properties. The costs associated with foreclosed and vacant homes have a direct impact on both individual families and the city at large. Families and communities are destroyed by the mass foreclosures being carried out by big banks, the city incurs significant costs to maintain these properties, and property values decline significantly throughout the city. The impact per foreclosure has been estimated to cost cities between \$5,400 and \$19,200 (potentially \$34,000 if there is a fire), depending upon whether the properties have been vacated as well as foreclosed.

The second passed ordinance imposes a requirement for foreclosing institutions to enter into good-faith mediation with homeowners before foreclosing. The enforcement mechanism will be worked out in committee before a second vote on the ordinance, but may include penalties of up to \$300 for failure to mediate.

According to a January 2011 report on National Public Radio station 88.5 WFCR, Springfield “earned the dubious distinction of having the state's highest number of foreclosed properties in 2010.” These citywide anti-foreclosure ordinances promise to help to reverse this trend.

“The Springfield City Council has given residents real, tangible tools to fight back against the damage banks have done to our city and our country as a whole,” says Sellou Diaite of **Springfield No One Leaves**.

The ordinances were introduced by Councilor Amaad Rivera, who introduced a resolution which passed in an earlier City Council meeting that called for a voluntary moratorium on all foreclosures and no-fault evictions in the city. The supporters who overflowed the council chambers yesterday came from groups such as the American Friends Service Committee; SEIU locals 509, 1199, and Community Action; UAW 2322; Mass Nurses Association; Jobs with Justice; the North End Organizing Network; the Pioneer Valley Project; and the Alliance to Develop Power. After the ordinances passed, hundreds of supporters chanted together “When we fight, we win!” as they celebrated while exiting the city council chambers.

The **Springfield No One Leaves/Nadie Se Mude** coalition organizes residents—tenants and former homeowners—living in foreclosed homes to stay in their homes and organize against no-fault evictions after foreclosure and the foreclosures that lead to these evictions. For more information, see

www.springfieldnooneleaves.org.

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