

**PUBLIC HEARING
ON
BILL 20-583 “The Bezner Real Property Tax Relief
Act of 2013”**

**Before the
Committee on Finance and Revenue
Council of the District of Columbia**

The Honorable Jack Evans, Chair

**June 12, 2014, 10:00 AM
John A. Wilson Building, Room 120**



**Testimony of
Bazil Facchina
Assistant General Counsel
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**Jeff DeWitt
Chief Financial Officer
Government of the District of Columbia**

Good morning, Chairman Evans and members of the Committee on Finance and Revenue. I am Bazil Facchina, Assistant General Counsel for the Office of Tax Revenue. I am pleased to testify today on Bill 20-583, the Bezner Real Property Tax Relief Act of 2013.

In general, the Bill would forgive all real property taxes, penalties, interest and fees assessed against certain property owned by Richard Bezner and Kuniko Yasuda (known as Lot 860 in Square 777) for the period 1991 through 2009, and would cancel all outstanding tax sales of this property. The Bill does not affect taxes imposed on the property for tax year 2010 forward.

The property in question is a small strip of land abutting a townhouse owned by Mr. Bezner and Ms. Yasuda and was acquired at the time the townhouse was purchased in 1991. Although this strip of land was included in the description of the property in the deed which conveyed the townhouse to them, the lot number was not set forth in the deed. The taxes were not paid, and the lot went to tax sale in 2009, where the lien was purchased by an investor. The tax sale purchaser has filed suit to foreclose the equity of redemption in Superior Court, and the case is currently pending. Cancellation of the pending tax sale would entail payment of the purchaser's legal fees.

The status of the property has been adjusted for tax year 2010 forward by the Office of Tax and Revenue pursuant to its statutory authority to correct erroneous assessments and classifications. However, because the Office of Tax and Revenue does not have authority to correct the assessments and classification for prior years, this Bill is necessary to afford complete relief to the owners.

Thank you, Chairman Evans, for the opportunity to comment on this Bill. I would be glad to answer any questions on these matters.