

BUSINESS

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HOUSING CRISIS



CARL JUSTE/MIAMI HERALD STAFF

DISCUSSING FORECLOSURE CRISIS: State Rep. Julio Robaina speaks at a meeting in Hallandale Wednesday. He will host a separate meeting in Kendall next Wednesday.

Push continues for aid to condos

■ Condo owners are meeting to demand that lawmakers take up condo foreclosure reform, which fizzled in the last legislative session.

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Momentum continues to build among condo owners angered by the lack of action from state lawmakers to alleviate the foreclosure crisis that is threatening the viability of their communities.

About 100 condo owners from associations in Miami-Dade and Broward gathered Wednesday evening at The Hemispheres Condominium in Hallandale Beach for the second in a series of meetings called There Ought to Be A Law.

A third but separate town hall meeting hosted by State Rep. Julio Robaina, R-Miami, will take place at 7:30 p.m. Wednesday at the clubhouse of The Kings Creek Village condominium, 8333 SW 81st Ave., in Kendall.

Statewide, such meetings have become common over the past year,

as associations have endured staggering hits to their operating budgets caused by lenders and owners in foreclosure who have abandoned their maintenance fees. The meetings continue in response to failed efforts by Florida lawmakers to solve the problem in the last legislative session.

Some associations have been forced to raise fees on all owners and cut back on services. In the worst cases, deficits have resulted in lights and water being shut off. Last month, high delinquencies and an onerous lease contract forced a Miami Beach association, Maison Grande, to file for Chapter 11 bankruptcy.

"My heart goes out to you because I know a lot of you are on fixed incomes," said state Sen. Eleanor Sobel, D-Hollywood, a speaker Wednesday night.

Rep. Robaina; Aventura Commissioner Bob Diamond; Hollywood Commissioner Linda Sherwood; condo attorney Robert Kaye, and Alexander Lewy, a staff member of U.S. Rep. Kendrick Meek, D-Miami, joined Sobel.