

1 SB495  
2 135555-2  
3 By Senator McGill (N & P)  
4 RFD: Local Legislation No. 1  
5 First Read: 10-APR-12

9 A BILL  
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11 TO BE ENTITLED  
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13 AN ACT  
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19 Relating to Jackson County; authorizing the sheriff  
20 to sell certain abandoned, stolen, and unclaimed property at  
21 public auction; providing for such an auction and for the  
22 disposition of proceeds; and authorizing the sheriff to sell  
23 or destroy certain abandoned, stolen, or unclaimed firearms.  
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25 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA:

19 Section 1. (a) The Sheriff of Jackson County shall  
20 keep and maintain a permanent record of all abandoned and  
21 stolen personal property recovered by the sheriff's office.  
22 These records shall state the description of the property, the  
23 date of recovery of the property, and the serial or other  
24 identifying number of the property. The records shall be open  
25 to public inspection at all reasonable times.

(b) All abandoned or stolen property recovered by the sheriff's office shall be stored in a suitable place to protect the property from deterioration.

Section 2. If the abandoned or stolen personal property is of a perishable nature and reasonable attempts to locate and identify the owner of the property are not successful, the property may be sold at once without notice. The sheriff shall attempt to obtain the best possible price for the property. The proceeds of such a sale shall be held in a separate account for a period of six months for the owner. During this period, the proceeds will be paid to the owner upon demand, less any cost of recovery, storage, maintenance, and sale. If the proceeds are not claimed within six months, after deducting and paying all expenses incurred in the recovery, storage, maintenance, and sale of the property, the net funds shall be paid to the office of the Sheriff of Jackson County.

Section 3. (a) The sheriff shall keep and maintain a permanent record of all abandoned or stolen firearms, not subject to disposition by general law. The records shall state the description of the firearm, the date of recovery of the firearm, and the serial or other identifying number, if any, of the firearm. Firearm as used in this act shall have the same meaning as defined in Section 13A-8-1 of the Code of Alabama 1975.

(b) Unless otherwise provided by law, the sheriff may sell or destroy these firearms if the owner of the firearm does not claim the firearm within six months of the date the sheriff obtained it.

(c) The sheriff may sell the firearms only to gun dealers who have held an active business license in this state for at least one year immediately prior to the date of the sale. The sheriff shall establish a procedure to notify gun dealers of a sale. A firearm shall be sold to the gun dealer submitting the highest sealed bid. All sales shall be on a cash basis. The proceeds of the sale, after deducting and paying all expenses incurred in the recovery, maintenance, and sale of the firearms shall be paid to the office of the Sheriff of Jackson County.

(d) The sheriff may establish a procedure to destroy firearms and may expend necessary sheriff's office funds for that purpose.

(e) Any firearm held by the sheriff on the effective date of this act shall be subject to this section, but shall be held for at least six months after the effective date of this act.

Section 4. (a) As often as necessary, the sheriff shall sell at public auction to the highest bidder all abandoned or stolen personal property, other than firearms, which has been recovered by the sheriff's office and has

1 remained unclaimed by the rightful owner for a six-month  
2 period.

3 (b) Prior to the sale, notice shall be given by  
4 publication in a newspaper of general circulation in Jackson  
5 County once a week for two successive weeks or by posting  
6 notice in a conspicuous place at the Jackson County Courthouse  
7 or on the Sheriff's Office website for a period of at least 20  
8 days. The notice shall contain the place, date, and time of  
9 each auction and a general description of items of personal  
10 property to be sold at the auction. If publication of notice  
11 is made in the newspaper, the first notice shall run at least  
12 20 days prior to the auction.

13 Section 5. The owner of any abandoned or stolen  
14 personal property recovered by the Jackson County Sheriff's  
15 Office, including firearms, may claim the property at any time  
16 prior to its sale by submitting sufficient proof of ownership  
17 as determined by the sheriff and by paying any reasonable  
18 expenses incurred in the recovery of the property, its  
19 maintenance, storage, and a pro rata share of the costs, if  
20 any, of publication of notice of the sale of the property.

21 Section 6. If property is sold at public auction, as  
22 provided in this act, a notation in the storage record shall  
23 be made of the sale and of the amount received for the  
24 property. The person making the sale may reject any and all  
25 bids if the amount bid is unreasonably low and may continue  
26 the sale, from time to time, if no bidders are present.

Section 7. The proceeds from the sale of property at an auction conducted under the authority of this act, after deducting and paying all expenses incurred in the recovery, storage, maintenance, and sale of property, shall be paid to the office of the Sheriff of Jackson County and shall be used solely for law enforcement purposes.

Section 8. This act shall become effective on the first day of the third month following its passage and approval by the Governor, or its otherwise becoming law.