**A** **BILL**

TO AMEND THE CODE OF LAWS OF SOUTH CAROLINA, 1976, BY ADDING SECTION 17‑13‑180 SO AS TO PROVIDE THAT ANY PROPERTY SEIZED BY A LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCY PURSUANT TO OR WITHOUT A WARRANT MUST BE RETURNED TO ITS LAWFUL OWNER WITHIN THIRTY DAYS OF ITS SEIZURE UNLESS A COURT DETERMINES THAT PROBABLE CAUSE EXISTS TO ALLOW THE LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCY TO MAINTAIN POSSESSION OF THE PROPERTY.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of South Carolina:

SECTION 1. Chapter 13, Title 17 of the 1976 Code is amended by adding:

“Section 17‑13‑180. Any property seized by a law enforcement agency pursuant to or without a warrant must be returned to its lawful owner within thirty days of its seizure unless a court determines that probable cause exists to allow the law enforcement agency to maintain possession of the property.”

SECTION 2. This act takes effect upon approval by the Governor.

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