

**Senate Assessment and Taxation Committee  
Hearing on SB 319  
March 14, 2022,  
Testimony of Jesse Loomis, On behalf of Bid4Assets.com**

Opposition testimony – Written Only

Madam Chair and Senators, my name is Jesse Loomis and I'm the president of Bid4Assets.com, an online auction site that has been conducting internet-based public auctions since we pioneered the field in the year 2000.

In 2020, largely in response to COVID shutdowns, we observed an increase in sheriff sales across the country using online auctions. The outcomes from those experiences were so positive in terms of promoting competitive bidding that sheriffs have consistently said that they would not return to live auctions as COVID restrictions ease. In fact, Washington state passed a law last year supporting virtual sheriff's sales and Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Oklahoma have bills in the legislature to do the same. This is the only proposed legislation that we are aware of going the other route and proposing to ban virtual sales, despite the fact that counties like Wyandotte have already adopted online auctions.

Promoting competitive bidding at sheriff's sales is important because these auctions are about satisfying a debt. A property owner is being deprived of their real property, because they have an outstanding property tax balance that they simply cannot satisfy. In some cases, this may be a family's home. Maximizing the bidding is important because if the property sells for more than the debt balance owed on the property, the party losing their property may claim that overage. In the case of someone losing their home, this is an important measure to combat homelessness. Bidding is always higher in an online auction because those who would attend the live auction will undoubtedly bid online, as will many others.

There are numerous other benefits. Online auctions sell more property and therefore decrease the number of properties off the tax rolls. They are cheaper, easier to administer, more transparent and they reduce our carbon footprint.

On behalf of my company, we suggest instead that next year you consider an update to the statutes that simply allows sheriffs who wish to utilize virtual sales for judicial foreclosure sales and tax sales, but also allows sheriffs who wish to continue holding live sales to do so at their discretion.

Sheriff's sales are conducted by sheriffs, who act as impartial third-parties looking out for the person losing their home as well as the county's interests, and we should empower sheriffs to explore their options and make the best decision for their county.

Thank you again and I would be happy to answer any questions you have.

Regards,

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