

April 12, 2000

Jim Bennett
Secretary of State
State Capital
Montgomery, AL 36130

Dear Jim,

I'm enclosing a copy of the proposed Draft Regulations for the Alabama Underwater Cultural Resources Act. If you recall, last year, we talked about this when it was slipped through the legislature. Now, these regulations are totally crazy. The only people authorized to find artifacts are professional archeologists. I've yet to see a professional archeologist that is a knowledgeable diver. Anyway, where do they get off? Claiming everything belongs to the state? They're even claiming gold dust now! It looks like these museum people are going to take whatever they can. They don't seem to know that they don't own the people of Alabama and we have the right to pursue our hobbies without their permission. After all, who died and put them in charge?

I know that you are very knowledgeable about relics and museums and you're realistic. Please read these proposed regulations and if you feel like I do, maybe you can influence these people to clean up their act. I don't particularly want to be arrested, but if this stands the way it is then I will be arrested along with thousands of other people. There are many divers, prospectors and relic hunters and we are all good people who pay taxes and shouldn't be put upon like this.

Thanks for any help you can give.

Sincerely,

Steve Phillips