

SECTION 1. *Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Maryland,* That Section 198 of Article 56 of the Annotated Code of Maryland (1972 Replacement Volume), title "Licenses," subtitle "Dog Licenses in the Counties," be and it is hereby repealed and re-enacted, with amendments, to read as follows:

198.

(a) [When] If any inhabitant of [any] a county [shall have] *has* any sheep, poultry, or livestock destroyed or injured by a dog or dogs, he may apply to any [trial magistrate] *District Court Judge SHERIFF* of [said] *the* county, who shall appoint three disinterested persons as appraisers to view and appraise the damages by him sustained. [, at] *At* least one of [said] *the* appraisers shall be a deputy sheriff of [said] *the* county, and they, under oath, shall state in writing to the county commissioners of [said] *the* county, the number of sheep, poultry, or livestock killed, the character and extent of the injury, if any done, and the amount of the damages, upon which they shall all agree, sustained by the owner. [; and both the] *The* appraisers and the owner of the sheep, poultry or livestock shall make oath that they believe the [same] *sheep, poultry or livestock* to have been destroyed or injured by a dog or dogs. [, and] [when] (b) *When* the report of [such] *the* proceedings has been filed, the county commissioners of [said] *the* county shall review [said] *the* report, and if in their judgment the amount of damages stated is unfair, they shall award [such] *an* amount as they may deem fair. [; which] *The* award shall be paid out of the fund hereby created [; provided, however, that the said]. *The* sworn report of the appraisers shall be deemed prima facie evidence of the fairness of the award of damages in each instance [; and provided further, that the]. *The* county commissioners shall not change [such] an award unless they [shall] have personal knowledge of its unfairness, or shall receive competent testimony to the effect that the award is in excess of a fair commercial valuation of the sheep, poultry or livestock injured or destroyed by dogs. [And if] (c) *If* the owner of the dog or dogs doing the damage be known, it [shall be] *is* the duty of the county commissioners to notify [such] *the* owner or owners to kill [said] *the* dog or dogs immediately. If [such] *the* dog or dogs be killed by the owner, after notice as aforesaid, he shall be exempt from all further liability [, but in case]. *If* the [said] owner or owners [shall] refuse or neglect to kill [said] *the* dog or dogs upon notice as aforesaid, the [said] owner or owners shall be liable to the county commissioners for [said] *the* damages to the same extent as he would be liable in case of negligence or malicious destruction of property [, and the said]. *The* county commissioners may in their discretion have the special officers or constables to kill [said] *the* dog or dogs. (d) In Montgomery County, the County Council shall prescribe by law the manner in which the powers, duties and responsibilities placed within its jurisdiction and control by this section shall be exercised. (e) In Washington County no payments shall be made under this section unless the occurrence is reported to [the] [justice of the peace] *a District Court Judge, Sheriff or any Deputy Sheriff*, in order to have appraisers appointed, within 48 hours of the damage complained of, and unless [such] *the* appraisers file their report with the County Commissioners of Washington County within 15 days after their appointment. (f) In Frederick