

# **WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE**

**2023 REGULAR SESSION**

**Committee Substitute**

**for**

**Senate Bill 239**

By Senator Azinger, Takubo, and Deeds

[Originating in the Committee on Health and Human  
Resources; reported on January 25, 2023]

1 A BILL to amend the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, by adding thereto a new section,  
2 designated §9-5-31 relating to requiring the Commissioner of the Bureau for Behavioral  
3 Health to engage behavioral health providers, substance use disorder providers, municipal  
4 leaders, and county government leaders to study a breakdown of homeless demographic  
5 information throughout West Virginia; reporting the findings of the study to the President of  
6 the Senate, Speaker of the House of Delegates, and the Joint Committee on Government  
7 and Finance; and providing a date report is due.

*Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:*

**ARTICLE 5. MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS.**

**§9-5-31. Commissioner to conduct study.**

1 (a) The Commissioner of the Bureau for Behavioral Health shall engage the following  
2 stakeholders: Behavioral health providers, substance use disorder providers, municipal leaders,  
3 and county government leaders to study a breakdown of homeless demographic information  
4 throughout West Virginia. The study shall be responsible for:

5 (1) Presenting a breakdown of homeless demographic information throughout West  
6 Virginia and regionally;

7 (2) Quantifying and inventorying of homelessness resources by region;

8 (3) Conducting an epidemiological analysis of homeless populations in West Virginia;

9 (4) Identifying key metrics to measure homelessness across West Virginia in a more  
10 consistent manner;

11 (5) Conducting analysis of whether West Virginia's homeless populations concentrate in  
12 certain counties or municipalities and any reasons for such population concentrations;

13 (6) Determining if state policies cause the state's homeless population to relocate to  
14 certain counties or municipalities;

15 (7) Determining the percentage of homeless individuals that lived in another state or  
16 jurisdiction in the past three years or are from another state or jurisdiction; and

17           (8) Conducting an analysis of whether any health and human service benefits offered in  
18 West Virginia attract populations that are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

19           (b) On or before July 1, 2024, the commissioner shall submit a report of the findings of the  
20 study to the President of the Senate, Speaker of the House of Delegates, and the Joint Committee  
21 on Government and Finance for consideration of legislation that may be appropriate relating to the  
22 homeless in West Virginia.