

WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE

2024 REGULAR SESSION

Introduced

Senate Bill 752

BY SENATORS HAMILTON AND DEEDS

[Introduced February 12, 2024; referred
to the Committee on Agriculture and Natural
Resources]

1 A BILL to amend and reenact §19-1-4 of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, relating
2 to authorizing the Department of Agriculture to complete certain land transfers.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:

ARTICLE 1. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE.

§19-1-4. Duties of commissioner.

1 The Commissioner of Agriculture shall perform the following duties:

2 (a) Devise means of advancing the agricultural interests of the state and, in the
3 performance of such duty, he or she shall have authority to call upon any state department, or
4 officer of the state or county, to cooperate in promoting the agricultural interests of the state. It
5 shall be the duty of any such department, or officer, upon request of the commissioner to render
6 the assistance desired;

7 (b) Promote and encourage the organization of such societies and associations as have
8 for their object the improvement and development of the state's agricultural, horticultural and
9 kindred interests, especially in production, processing for market, and distribution;

10 (c) Conduct cooperative work with the United States Department of Agriculture in
11 inspecting and determining the grade and condition of farm produce at collecting centers,
12 receiving centers, and shipping points;

13 (d) Induce the investment of capital in, and immigration into, this state by the dissemination
14 of information relative to the soil, climate, health, natural resources, market opportunities, and
15 advantages of the state;

16 (e) Investigate and report upon the kinds, conditions, and extent of the mineral products
17 of the state and their value;

18 (f) Take charge of the museum of the Department of Agriculture, collect, preserve, and
19 exhibit therein specimens of agricultural, horticultural, and kindred products, products of the
20 forests, minerals, flora, and fauna of the state;

21 (g) Publish and distribute, from time to time, such reports and bulletins concerning
22 agriculture, horticulture, and kindred subjects as may be of value to the farmers of the state and,
23 as conditions may demand, publish a handbook giving the resources of the several counties of
24 the state, the varieties of soil and products, both mineral and vegetable, and the adaptability of
25 the different sections of the state to the different branches of agriculture, horticulture, and kindred
26 interests;

27 (h) Submit a biennial report to the Governor and Legislature containing such information
28 as to the operations of the department as may be helpful to the agricultural interests of the state,
29 together with an itemized statement of all receipts and disbursements during the biennial period
30 covered thereby and giving the name of every person employed during such period, the time
31 employed, and the amount paid each employee;

32 (i) Perform such other duties and exercise such other powers as are provided in this
33 chapter and by general law;

34 (j) Enter into an agreement with the Secretary of the Department of Veterans' Assistance
35 to transfer without consideration all or part of the approximately 17 acres of Department of
36 Agriculture property in Beckley, West Virginia, located adjacent to the Jackie Withrow Hospital
37 which was formerly known as Pinecrest Hospital, for construction of a veterans skilled nursing
38 facility;

39 (k) Propose rules, including regulatory standards, for legislative approval in accordance
40 with the provisions of §29A-3-1 *et seq.* of this code for the purpose of carrying out the
41 requirements of this chapter; ~~and~~

42 (l) Cooperate with the State Resiliency Office to the fullest extent practicable to assist that
43 office in fulfilling its duties;

44 (m) Notwithstanding any provision of this code to the contrary, transfer to the Village of
45 Barboursville, without consideration, all the approximately 250 acres of land known as the

46 Huntington State Hospital institutional farm, located at Barboursville, Cabell County, for the
47 purpose of providing public services; and

48 (n) Notwithstanding any provision of this code to the contrary, transfer to the City of
49 Ellenboro, without consideration, all the lots owned by the Department of Agriculture located in
50 the City of Ellenboro, for public services.