

**Senate Bill No. 234**

(By Senators Jenkins and Miller)

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[Introduced January 8, 2014; referred to the Committee on the  
Judiciary; and then to the Committee on Finance.]

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**FISCAL  
NOTE**

A BILL to amend and reenact §7-8-14 of the Code of West Virginia,  
1931, as amended, relating to requiring defendants who are  
sentenced to jail to pay the costs of incarceration; limiting  
the amount to be paid to thirty days; and requiring the  
sentencing court to conduct a hearing at or before sentencing  
to determine the individual's ability to pay the costs.

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

That §7-8-14 of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended,  
be amended and reenacted to read as follows:

**ARTICLE 8. JAIL AND JAILER.**

**§7-8-14. Reimbursement for costs of incarceration.**

(a) Notwithstanding any provision ~~to the~~ in this code to the  
contrary and in addition to any fine, cost assessment or fee

1 authorized or required to be imposed upon a ~~person~~ defendant by  
2 virtue of his or her conviction of a criminal provision of this  
3 code, or a lawfully enacted ordinance of a political subdivision of  
4 this state, a ~~person~~ defendant convicted and incarcerated in a  
5 regional jail by virtue of ~~said~~ the conviction ~~may~~ shall, subject  
6 to this section, be assessed the costs of up to thirty days of ~~his~~  
7 ~~or her~~ the defendant's incarceration.

8 (b) Prior to any ~~person~~ defendant being required to pay the  
9 cost of his or her incarceration pursuant to the provisions of  
10 subsection (a) of this section, the sentencing court, at or before  
11 sentencing, shall hold a hearing ~~shall be held before the~~  
12 ~~sentencing court~~ to determine ~~his or her~~ the defendant's ability to  
13 pay. The court may not sentence a defendant to pay his or her  
14 costs of incarceration unless ~~he or she~~ the defendant is, or in the  
15 foreseeable future will be, able to pay them. In determining the  
16 amount and method of payment of costs, the court shall take account  
17 of the financial resources of the defendant and the nature of the  
18 burden that payment of costs will impose.

19 (c) A defendant who has been sentenced to pay costs and who is  
20 not in willful default in the payment of the costs may at any time  
21 petition the sentencing court for remission of the payment of costs  
22 or of any unpaid portion of the costs. If it appears to the  
23 satisfaction of the court that payment of the amount due will

1 impose manifest hardship on the defendant or the defendant's family  
2 or dependents, the court may excuse payment of all or part of the  
3 amount due in costs, or modify the method of payment.

NOTE: The purpose of this bill is to require a court to conduct a hearing at the time it sentences a defendant to jail to determine the defendant's ability to pay the costs of the defendant's incarceration. The bill requires the court to require the defendant to pay for up to thirty days of incarceration in jail if it finds the defendant is or will be able in the foreseeable future to pay.

Strike-throughs indicate language that would be stricken from the present law, and underscoring indicates new language that would be added.