

Senate Bill No. 561

(By Senators Laird and Kessler)

[Introduced February 23, 2015; referred to the Committee on Finance.]

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9 A BILL to amend the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, by adding thereto a new article,
10 designated §18B-20-1, §18B-20-2 and §18B-20-3, all relating to establishment of an
11 Economic Adjustment Evaluation Task Force to study the impact of the closure or substantial
12 change in the scope of operation of any campus of a state two- or four-year institution of
13 higher learning; composition of task force; and report of task force to Joint Committee on
14 Government and Finance.

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

16 That the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, be amended by adding thereto a new
17 article, designated §18B-20-1, §18B-20-2 and §18B-20-3, all to read as follows:

18 **ARTICLE 20. ECONOMIC ADJUSTMENT EVALUATION TASK FORCE.**

19 **§18B-20-1. Establishment of task force.**

20 (a) An Economic Adjustment Evaluation Task Force is hereby established. The task force
21 is an ad hoc entity, whose functions are triggered when any campus of a state two-or four-year
22 institution of higher learning is scheduled for closure or substantial change in its scope of operation

1 which would result in a major and permanent change or redefinition of the historical educational
2 mission of that institution within its geographic service area. Closure or substantial change of scope
3 of operation of any campus of a state two-or four-year institution of higher learning may not occur
4 without the creation of a task force as set out in this article. Each task force created under this article
5 shall serve only with respect to a campus of a state two-or four-year institution of higher learning.
6 The task force shall cease when its responsibilities as set out in this article are completed.

7 **§18B-20-2. Composition of task force; appointment by Governor.**

8 When any campus of a state two-or four-year institution of higher learning is slated for
9 closure or substantial change in its scope of operation, the Governor shall convene a task force which
10 shall consist of the following members, appointed by the Governor, or their assigns:

11 The Chancellor of the Higher Education Policy Commission;

12 The Chancellor of the Community and Technical College System of West Virginia;

13 The Executive Director of the West Virginia Economic Development Authority;

14 A representative (or representatives) of the Regional Planning and Development Authority
15 (or Authorities) which service the area (or areas) in which each campus is located;

16 A representative (or representatives) of the Workforce West Virginia Career Center (or
17 centers) which service the area (or areas) in which a campus is located;

18 A representative (or representatives) of the local economic development agency (or agencies)
19 which service the area (or areas) in which a campus is located;

20 A county commissioner from each county in which a campus is located; and

21 A city council member (if applicable) from each municipality in which a campus is located.

22 **§18B-20-3. Task force report.**

1 (a) The task force shall create a report within one year of its establishment which shall
2 include, but not be limited to, the following:

3 (1) Social and economic impact of the closure or substantial change in the scope of operation
4 on current students of the institution;

5 (2) Current and potential future uses of the land, physical structures and improvements, and
6 other assets of the institution;

7 (3) Costs associated with the closure or substantial change in the scope of operation;

8 (4) Local and regional economic impact of the closure or substantial change in the scope of
9 operation;

10 (5) Present and future jobs affected by the closure or substantial change in the scope of
11 operation;

12 (6) Current and future tax implications of the closure or substantial change in the scope of
13 operation;

14 (7) Ways to mitigate the social and economic impact of the closure or substantial change in
15 the scope of operation; and

16 (8) Input from the community or communities in which the campus is located, by means of
17 no less than four community forums, open to the news media and public. The task force shall give
18 the community at least two weeks' notice for each forum, informing the community of the time and
19 location for the forum, that members of the community may speak to the closure and providing
20 reasonable time limits.

21 (b) The task force report shall be delivered within the one-year time frame to the Joint
22 Committee on Government and Finance, and shall simultaneously be made public by a paper copy

1 and the Internet.

NOTE: The purpose of this bill is to establish an Economic Adjustment Evaluation Task Force to study the impact of the closure or substantial change in the scope of operation of any campus of a state two-or four-year institution of higher learning. It provides for the composition of a task force to be appointed by the Governor and requires a report from the task force to the Joint Committee on Government and Finance on the overall economic impact of such a campus closure or substantial change in the scope of operation.

This article is new; therefore, strike-throughs and underscoring have been omitted.