

WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE

2017 REGULAR SESSION

Introduced

Senate Bill 535

BY SENATORS CARMICHAEL (MR. PRESIDENT) AND PREZIOSO

(BY REQUEST OF THE EXECUTIVE)

[Introduced March 7, 2017; Referred
to the Committee on Government Organization;
Finance]

1 A BILL to repeal §5B-2-8, §5B-2-8a, §5B-2-9, §5B-2-11, §5B-2-12 and §5B-2-12a of the Code of
 2 West Virginia, 1931, as amended; to amend and reenact §5B-1-2 of said code; and to
 3 amend said code of by adding thereto a new article, designated §5B-2I-1, §5B-2I-2, §5B-
 4 2I-3, §5B-2I-4, §5B-2I-5, §5B-2I-6, §5B-2I-7 and §5B-2I-8, all relating to the reorganization
 5 of the Division of Tourism; transferring all powers and duties of the Tourism Commission
 6 to the new West Virginia Tourism Office; requiring quarterly meetings; restructuring the
 7 Tourism Advertising Partnership Program as a cooperative advertising program
 8 administered by the West Virginia Tourism Office; vesting in the executive director all
 9 authority for expenditures of funds in the Tourism Promotion Fund; and requiring
 10 confidentiality of certain private information.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:

1 That §5B-2-8, §5B-2-8a, §5B-2-9, §5B-2-11, §5B-2-12 and §5B-2-12a of the Code of West
 2 Virginia, 1931, as amended, be repealed; that §5B-1-2 of said code be amended and reenacted;
 3 and that said code be amended by adding thereto a new article, designated §5B-2I-1, §5B-2I-2,
 4 §5B-2I-3, §5B-2I-4, §5B-2I-5, §5B-2I-6, §5B-2I-7 and §5B-2I-8, all to read as follows:

ARTICLE 1. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE.

**§5B-1-2. Agencies, boards, commissions, divisions and offices comprising the
 Department of Commerce.**

1 The Department of Commerce consists of the following agencies, boards, commissions,
 2 divisions and offices, including all of the allied, advisory, affiliated or related entities, which are
 3 incorporated in and administered as part of the Department of Commerce:

4 (1) Division of Labor provided in article one, chapter twenty-one of this code, which
 5 includes:

6 (A) Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission provided in article three-a,
 7 chapter twenty-one of this code; and

8 (B) Board of Manufactured Housing Construction and Safety provided in article nine,

9 chapter twenty-one of this code;

10 (2) Office of Miners' Health, Safety and Training provided in article one, chapter twenty-
11 two-a of this code. The following boards are transferred to the Office of Miners' Health, Safety and
12 Training for purposes of administrative support and liaison with the Office of the Governor:

13 (A) Board of Coal Mine Health and Safety and Coal Mine Safety and Technical Review
14 Committee provided in article six, chapter twenty-two-a of this code;

15 (B) Board of Miner Training, Education and Certification provided in article seven, chapter
16 twenty-two-a of this code; and

17 (C) Mine Inspectors' Examining Board provided in article nine, chapter twenty-two-a of this
18 code;

19 (3) The West Virginia Development Office provided in article two, chapter five-b of this
20 code;

21 (4) Division of Natural Resources and Natural Resources Commission provided in article
22 one, chapter twenty of this code;

23 (5) Division of Forestry provided in article one-a, chapter nineteen of this code;

24 (6) Geological and Economic Survey provided in article two, chapter twenty-nine of this
25 code;

26 (7) Workforce West Virginia provided in chapter twenty-one-a of this code, which includes:

27 (A) Division of Unemployment Compensation;

28 (B) Division of Employment Service;

29 (C) Division of Workforce Development; and

30 (D) Division of Research, Information and Analysis;

31 (8) Division of Energy provided in article two-f, chapter five-b of this code; and

32 (9) ~~Division of Tourism~~ West Virginia Tourism Office and the Tourism Commission
33 provided in article ~~two~~ two-i, chapter five-b of this code.

ARTICLE 2I. WEST VIRGINIA TOURISM OFFICE.

§5B-2I-1. Short title.

1 This article shall be known and cited as the “West Virginia Tourism Act of 2017.”

§5B-2I-2. West Virginia Tourism Office.

1 The Division of Tourism is continued within the Department of Commerce but is hereafter
2 designated and shall be known as the West Virginia Tourism Office. All references in this code
3 to the Division of Tourism shall be construed as references to the West Virginia Tourism Office.

§5B-2I-3. Appointment and compensation of the Executive Director of the West Virginia Tourism Office.

1 (a) The West Virginia Tourism Office is under the direction and charge of the Executive
2 Director of the West Virginia Tourism Office.

3 (b) The Executive Director shall be appointed by the Governor: *Provided*, That the person
4 -serving as Commissioner of Tourism at the time of enactment of this section in 2017, shall be the
5 Executive Director of the West Virginia Tourism Office and serve at the will and pleasure of the
6 Governor. The Executive Director’s salary shall be set by the Governor. The Executive Director
7 shall be a competent person, having executive ability and knowledge of publicity, advertising and
8 tourism promotion.

§5B-2I-4. Powers and duties of the West Virginia Tourism Office.

1 (a) The West Virginia Tourism Office, under the direction and charge of the Executive
2 Director of the West Virginia Tourism Office, shall develop and implement a comprehensive
3 tourism advertising, promotion and development strategy for West Virginia. “Comprehensive
4 tourism advertising, promotion and development strategy” means a plan that outlines strategies
5 and activities designed to continue, diversify and expand the tourism base of the state as a whole;
6 create tourism jobs; develop a highly skilled tourism work force; facilitate business access to
7 capital for tourism; advertise and market the resources offered by the state with respect to tourism
8 advertising, promotion and development; facilitate cooperation among local, regional and private
9 tourism enterprises; improve infrastructure on a state, regional and community level in order to

10 facilitate tourism development; improve the tourism business climate generally; and leverage
11 funding from sources other than the state, including local, federal and private sources. In addition
12 to all other power and duties of the West Virginia Tourism Office by other provisions of this code,
13 the West Virginia Tourism Office shall:

14 (1) Coordinate media events to promote a positive image of West Virginia and new
15 investment in the tourist industry;

16 (2) Provide comprehensive strategic planning services to existing tourism enterprises;

17 (3) Promote attractions of West Virginia in other states;

18 (4) Provide advertising, marketing and communications goods and services, including
19 without limitation a cooperative advertising program to facilitate and allow participation in the West
20 Virginia Tourism Office's advertising and marketing campaigns and activities, to state agencies,
21 departments, units of state or local government, private tourism enterprises, and other persons,
22 entities or private enterprises, including without limitation, convention and visitors' bureaus; and

23 (5) Distribute West Virginia informational publications and manage the West Virginia
24 Welcome Centers.

25 (b) In developing its strategies, plans and campaigns, the West Virginia Tourism Office
26 shall consider the following:

27 (1) Improvement and expansion of existing tourism marketing and promotion activities;

28 (2) Promotion of cooperation among municipalities, counties, and the West Virginia
29 Infrastructure and Jobs Development Council in funding physical infrastructure to enhance the
30 potential for tourism development.

31 (c) The West Virginia Tourism Office shall have the power and duty:

32 (1) To acquire for the state in the name of the West Virginia Tourism Office by purchase,
33 lease or agreement, or accept or reject for the state, in the name of the West Virginia Tourism
34 Office, gifts, donations, contributions, bequests or devises of money, security or property, both
35 real and personal, and any interest in such property, to effectuate or support the purposes of this

36 article:

37 (2) To make recommendations to the Governor and the Legislature of any legislation
38 deemed necessary to facilitate the carrying out of any of the foregoing powers and duties and to
39 exercise any other power that may be necessary or proper for the orderly conduct of the business
40 of the West Virginia Tourism Office and the effective discharge of the duties of the West Virginia
41 Tourism Office;

42 (3) To cooperate and assist in the production of motion pictures and television and other
43 communications;

44 (4) To purchase advertising time or space in or upon any medium generally engaged or
45 employed for said purpose to advertise and market the resources of the state or to inform the
46 public at large or any specifically targeted group or industry about the benefits of living in, investing
47 in, producing in, buying from, contracting with, or in any other way related to, the State of West
48 Virginia or any business, industry, agency, institution or other entity therein;

49 (5) To promote and disseminate information related to the attractions of the state through
50 the operation of the state's telemarketing initiative, which telemarketing initiative shall include a
51 centralized reservation and information system for state parks and recreational facilities;

52 (6) To take such additional factors as may be necessary to carry out the duties and
53 programs described in this article; and

54 (7) To provide assistance to and assist with retention and expansion of existing tourism
55 related enterprises in the state and to recruit or assist in the recruitment of new tourism related
56 enterprises to the state.

57 (d) The West Virginia Tourism Office may charge and collect reasonable fees for goods
58 and services it provides to state agencies, departments, units of state or local government or other
59 person, entity or enterprise. All moneys collected by the West Virginia Tourism Office shall be
60 deposited in the Tourism Promotion Fund and used in accordance with the provisions of this
61 article.

62 (e) The West Virginia Tourism Office may engage and retain one or more advertising and
63 marketing agencies, consultants, enterprises, firms or persons, as deemed by the Executive
64 Director of the West Virginia Tourism Office, in his or her sole discretion, necessary or advisable
65 to assist the West Virginia Tourism Office in carrying out its powers and duties as set forth in the
66 article. In the procurement of advertising agencies, consultants, enterprises or persons, from time
67 to time, estimated to cost \$250,000 or more, the Executive Director of the West Virginia Tourism
68 Office shall encourage such advertising and marketing agencies, consultants, enterprises, firms
69 or persons to submit an expression of interest, which shall include a statement of qualifications,
70 including anticipated concepts and proposed advertising marketing and advertising campaigns.
71 All potential contracts shall be announced by public notice published as a Class II legal
72 advertisement in compliance with the provisions of article three, chapter fifty-nine of this code. A
73 committee of three to five representatives of the West Virginia Tourism Office and/or the Tourism
74 Commission, as selected by the chair of the Tourism Commission, shall evaluate the statements
75 of qualifications and other materials submitted by interested firms and select three firms which, in
76 their opinion, are best qualified to perform the desired service. The committee shall then rank, in
77 order of preference, the three firms selected, and shall commence scope of service and price
78 negotiations with the first ranked firm. If the West Virginia Tourism Office is unable to negotiate
79 a satisfactory contract with the first ranked firm, at a fee determined to be fair and reasonable,
80 price negotiations with the firm of second choice shall commence. Failing accord with the second
81 ranked firm, the committee shall undertake price negotiations with the third ranked firm. If the
82 West Virginia Tourism Office is unable to negotiate a satisfactory contract with any of the selected
83 firms, the office shall select additional firms in order of their competence and qualifications and it
84 shall continue negotiations in accordance with this section until an agreement is reached.

85 It the procurement of the services is estimated by the Executive Director to cost less than
86 \$250,000, the West Virginia Tourism Office shall conduct discussions with three or more firms
87 solicited on the basis of known or submitted qualifications for the assignment prior to the awarding

88 of any contract: *Provided*, That if a judgment is made that special circumstances exist and that
89 seeking competition is not practical, the West Virginia Tourism Office may, with the prior written
90 approval of the Secretary of Commerce, select a firm on the basis of previous satisfactory
91 performance and knowledge of the West Virginia Tourism Office's needs. After selection, the
92 West Virginia Tourism Office and selected firm shall develop the scope of desired services and
93 negotiate a contract.

94 (f) The Executive Director of the West Virginia Tourism Office may, in order to carry out
95 the powers and duties of the West Virginia Tourism Office described in this article, employ
96 necessary personnel, contract with professional or technical experts or consultants and purchase
97 or contract for the necessary equipment or supplies.

98 (g) The Executive Director of the West Virginia Tourism Office may designate, in writing,
99 with the written consent of the Secretary of Commerce, a list of positions within the West Virginia
100 Tourism Office that shall be exempt from coverage under the state's classified service.

101 (h) The West Virginia Tourism Office shall submit a report annually to the Governor,
102 Secretary of Commerce and the Legislature about the development of the tourism industry in the
103 state and the necessary funding required by the state to continue the development of the tourism
104 industry.

105 (i) The West Virginia Tourism Office and the Executive Director of the West Virginia
106 Tourism Office shall engage, collaborate, assist and cooperate with the West Virginia
107 Development Office, when and as appropriate, to facilitate retention, expansion, recruitment and
108 location of existing and new tourism-related enterprises.

§5B-2I-5. Public-private partnerships.

1 (a) The West Virginia Tourism Office may enter into contractual or joint venture
2 agreements with one or more nonprofit corporations organized pursuant to the corporate laws of
3 the state, organized to permit qualification pursuant to Section 501(c) of the Internal Revenue
4 Code and organized for purposes of the promotion and development of tourism in West Virginia,

5 and funded from sources other than the state. Members of the Tourism Commission provided in
6 this article are authorized to sit on the board of directors of such private nonprofit corporations.

7 (b) From time to time the West Virginia Tourism Office may enter into joint ventures
8 wherein the West Virginia Development Office and one or more said nonprofit corporations share
9 in the development and funding of tourism advertising, promotion and development programs and
10 campaigns.

11 (c) All contracts and joint venture agreements entered into pursuant to this section for
12 longer than one fiscal year shall contain, in substance, a provision that the contract shall be
13 considered canceled without further obligation on the part of the state if the Legislature, or, where
14 appropriate, the federal government shall fail to appropriate sufficient funds therefor or shall act
15 to impair the contract or cause it to be canceled.

§5B-2I-6. Tourism Promotion Fund; use of funds.

1 (a) There is continued in the State Treasury the special revenue fund known as the
2 Tourism Promotion Fund created under prior enactment of section nine, article one, chapter five-
3 b of this code.

4 (b) Moneys deposited in the fund each year shall be used solely for marketing, direct
5 advertising, business development and public relations promoting travel and tourism within the
6 state and the state's image and brand identify at the discretion and direction of the Executive
7 Director of the West Virginia Tourism Office. "Direct advertising" means advertising which
8 includes, but is not limited to, television, radio, mailings, newspaper, magazines, digital marketing,
9 including the Internet and social media, and outdoor billboards or any combination thereof. Any
10 balance remaining at the end of any fiscal year does not revert to the General Revenue Fund, but
11 shall remain in the fund for expenditures in accordance with the provisions of this section.

12 (c) Effective July 1, 2017, the Tourism Advertising Partnership Program and all related
13 legislative or procedural rules shall cease, except as necessary for the Tourism Commission to
14 settle, finalize and conclude all outstanding advertising grants or other financial obligations of the

15 Tourism Commission respecting funds in the Tourism Promotion Fund previously approved,
16 expended or obligated by the Tourism Commission as of the effective date of this article pursuant
17 to subdivision (2), subsection (e) of section seven of this article and be replaced by a cooperative
18 advertising program to be created and established by the West Virginia Tourism Office, under
19 and pursuant to section four of this article, to offer, facilitate and allow participation in the West
20 Virginia Tourism Office's advertising and marketing campaigns and activities, to state agencies,
21 departments, units of state or local government, private tourism enterprises, and other persons,
22 entities or private enterprises, including without limitation convention and visitor's bureaus. The
23 Executive Director of the West Virginia Tourism Office shall, on or before July 1 of each year
24 establish and publish a fee schedule, which shall include a match of state funds to program
25 participant's funds, for participation in the cooperative advertising program.

§5B-2I-7. Tourism Commission; members, appointment and expenses.

1 (a) There is continued within the Department of Commerce an independent Tourism
2 Commission, which is a body corporate and politic, constituting a public corporation and
3 government instrumentality.

4 (b) The Tourism Commission consists of the following fifteen members:

5 (1) The Secretary of Commerce, or his or her designee, ex officio;

6 (2) The Secretary of Transportation or his or her designee, ex officio;

7 (3) Twelve members appointed by the Governor, with the advice and consent of the
8 Senate, representing participants in the state's tourism industry. Ten of the members shall be
9 from the private sector, one shall be a director employed by a convention and visitor's bureau and
10 one shall be a member of a convention and visitor's bureau. In making the appointments the
11 Governor may select from a list provided by the West Virginia Hospitality and Travel Association
12 of qualified applicants. Of the twelve members so appointed, no less than three shall be from
13 each congressional district within the state and shall be appointed to provide the broadest
14 geographic distribution which is feasible;

15 (4) One member to be appointed by the Governor to represent public sector nonstate
16 participants in the tourism industry within the state;

17 (c) Each member appointed by the Governor serves a staggered term of four years. Any
18 member whose term has expired serves until his or her successor has been appointed. Any
19 person appointed to fill a vacancy serves only for the unexpired term. Any member is eligible for
20 reappointment. In case of a vacancy in the office of a member, the vacancy shall be filled by the
21 Governor in the same manner as the original appointment.

22 (d) The chair of the Tourism Commission shall be appointed by the Governor from
23 members then serving on the commission, and serves at the will and pleasure of the Governor.

24 (e) The Tourism Commission shall:

25 (1) Assist the Executive Director of the West Virginia Tourism Office in the development
26 and implementation of the state's comprehensive tourism advertising, marketing, promotion and
27 development strategy, and

28 (2) Take all actions necessary to settle, finalize and conclude all outstanding advertising
29 grants or other financial obligations of the Tourism Commission respecting funds in the Tourism
30 Promotion Fund previously approved, expended or obligated by the Tourism Commission as of
31 the effective date of this article.

32 (f) Members of the Tourism Commission are not entitled to compensation for services
33 performed as members. Each member from the private sector is entitled to reimbursement for
34 reasonable expenses incurred in the discharge of their official duties. All expenses incurred by
35 members from the private sector shall be paid in a manner consistent with guidelines of the Travel
36 Management Office of the Department of Administration and are payable solely from the funds of
37 the West Virginia Tourism Office or from funds appropriated for that purpose by the Legislature.
38 Liability or obligation is not incurred by the West Virginia Tourism Office beyond the extent to
39 which moneys are available from funds of the authority or from the appropriations.

40 (g) Members shall meet quarterly as designated by the chair.

§5B-2I-8. Confidentiality.

1 Any documentary material, data or other writing made or received by the West Virginia
2 Tourism Office, the West Virginia Development Office or the Tourism Commission, for the
3 purpose of furnishing assistance to a new or existing business are exempt from the provisions of
4 article one, chapter twenty-nine-b of this code: *Provided*, That any agreement entered into or
5 signed by the West Virginia Tourism Office or the West Virginia Development Office which
6 obligates public funds is subject to inspection and copying pursuant to the provisions of that article
7 as of the date the agreement is entered into, signed or otherwise made public.

NOTE: The purpose of this bill is to reorganize the Division of Tourism as the new West Virginia Tourism Office. It transfers certain powers and duties of the Tourism Commission to the new West Virginia Tourism Office, and sets a requirement for quarterly meetings. Additionally, the bill restructures the Tourism Advertising Partnership Program as a cooperative advertising program administered by the new West Virginia Tourism Office and vests in the Executive Director all authority for expenditures of funds in the Tourism Promotion Fund.

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