

WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE

2020 REGULAR SESSION

Introduced

House Bill 4916

BY DELEGATE S. BROWN

[Introduced February 11, 2020; Referred to the
Committee on the Judiciary]

1 A BILL to amend the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, by adding thereto a new section
 2 designated §15A-4-13a, relating to charges assessed against inmates for services;
 3 providing that services includes reading books online, making or receiving video calls,
 4 sending or receiving emails, making or receiving phone calls, or accessing news or other
 5 permissible media; and permitting the commissioner to assess a fee under certain
 6 conditions.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:

ARTICLE 4. CORRECTIONS MANAGEMENT.

§15A-4-13a. Charges assessed against inmates for other services.

1 The commissioner may not contract with organizations that charge fees above the market
 2 price to inmates for services, including, but not limited to, using tablets to read books accessible
 3 for free online, to make or receive video calls, to send or receive emails, to make or receive phone
 4 calls, or to access news or other permissible media. The commissioner may contract with
 5 organizations that assess a fee for services: *Provided*, That any fee charged to an inmate for
 6 services is not exorbitant or exploitative.

NOTE: The purpose of this bill is to prevent inmates being charged exorbitant or exploitative fees for services provided by prisons, such as reading books available for free online.

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