

# WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE

## 2023 REGULAR SESSION

Introduced

### House Bill 2841

FISCAL  
NOTE

By Delegate Foster

[Introduced January 19, 2023; Referred to the  
Committee on the Judiciary then Finance]

1 A BILL to amend and reenact §30-1-10 of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, relating to  
2 establishing an Occupational Licensing Legal Fund from existing revenue; creating special  
3 revenue fund; providing for transfer of money from excess receipts of occupational  
4 licensing boards; specifying authorized uses of fund; providing that expenditures are  
5 subject to appropriation by Legislature; requiring transfer of balance excess to General  
6 Revenue Fund; and providing for notification to the Legislative Auditor.

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

**ARTICLE 1. GENERAL PROVISIONS APPLICABLE TO ALL STATE BOARDS OF  
EXAMINATION OR REGISTRATION REFERRED TO IN CHAPTER.**

**§30-1-10. Disposition of money fines; legislative audit; review of board's fee structure.**

1 (a) The secretary of every board referred to in this chapter shall receive and account for all  
2 money which it derives pursuant to the provisions of this chapter which are applicable to it. With  
3 the exception of money received as fines, each board shall pay all money which is collected into a  
4 separate special fund of the State Treasury which has been established for each board. This  
5 money shall be used exclusively by each board for purposes of administration and enforcement of  
6 its duties pursuant to this chapter. Any money received as fines shall be deposited into the General  
7 Revenue Fund of the State Treasury. When the special fund of any board accumulates to an  
8 amount which exceeds ~~twice the annual budget~~ the average actual annual expenses over the past  
9 five years, excluding zero-dollar years, of the board or \$10,000, whichever is greater, the State  
10 Treasurer shall:

11 (1) Transfer the excess amount to the ~~state General Revenue Fund~~ Occupational  
12 Licensing Legal Fund created in subsection (c) of this section; and

13 (2) Notify the Legislative Auditor that the transfer has been made.

14 (b)(1) Every licensing board which is authorized by the provisions of this chapter shall be  
15 subject to audit by the office of the Legislative Auditor.

16           (2) Within a reasonable time after the State Treasurer notifies the Legislative Auditor of a  
17 transfer required to be made under this section, the Legislative Auditor shall conduct a review of  
18 the fee structure of the applicable board to determine if the amount of the board's fees generate  
19 excessive revenue, when compared to the board's normal expenses. If the Legislative Auditor  
20 finds that excess revenue is generated, he or she shall report his or her findings to the  
21 Legislature's Joint Standing Committee on Government Organization, along with  
22 recommendations on how the fees can be adjusted to generate only the amount the board  
23 reasonably needs to operate under this chapter.

24           (c) Beginning July 1, 2023, the Occupational Licensing Legal Fund is hereby created in the  
25 State Treasury. The fund shall be administered by Treasurer and shall consist of all moneys made  
26 available from any source, including, but not limited to, all amounts transferred into the fund by the  
27 boards as required by subsection (a) of this section or transfers from any source, any moneys that  
28 may be appropriated and designated for the fund by the Legislature, and all interests or other  
29 return earned from investment of the fund. Expenditures of the fund shall be used to pay legal fees  
30 and court costs to the West Virginia Attorney General, or other counsel, incurred within the  
31 operation of the licensing boards covered under this chapter and are not authorized from  
32 collections, but are to be made only in accordance with appropriated from the Legislature and in  
33 accordance with §12-3-1 of this code and upon the fulfillment of the provisions set forth in §11B-2-  
34 1 et seq. of this code. Any balance, including accrued interest and other returns, remaining in the  
35 fund at the end of each fiscal year shall not revert to the General Revenue Fund but shall remain in  
36 the fund and be expended as provided by this section: *Provided*, That before this fund may be  
37 used for outside counsel, the Office of the Attorney General must indicate that the office lacks the  
38 required expertise or staff to adequately represent the board.

39           (d) When the balance in the Occupational Licensing Legal Fund exceeds \$2,000,000, the  
40 State Treasurer shall transfer the excess to the General Revenue Fund and notify the Legislative  
41 Auditor that the transfer has been made.

NOTE: The purpose of this bill is to establish a special revenue fund out of existing receipts to pay legal fees and court costs to the West Virginia Attorney General, or other counsel, incurred within the operation of the occupational licensing boards.

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