

WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE

2024 REGULAR SESSION

Introduced

House Bill 4642

By Delegate Hornbuckle

[Introduced January 12, 2024; Referred
to the Committee on Economic Development and
Tourism then Finance]

1 A BILL to amend the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, by adding thereto a new section,
 2 designated §5B-1-11, relating to creating the West Virginia Small Business COVID Relief
 3 Act to be established under the West Virginia Department of Commerce; providing
 4 legislative findings; creating the act and providing qualifications for relief; and providing an
 5 effective date.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:

ARTICLE 1. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE.

§5B-1-11. West Virginia Small Business COVID Relief Act.

1 (a) Legislative findings.— The West Virginia Legislature finds that West Virginians were
 2 greatly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 and are still feeling the effects in 2023.
 3 Among those hardest hit were those West Virginia small businesses. Most small businesses had
 4 to close for a period of time, and some were unable to survive. The Legislature finds that many of
 5 those businesses could use assistance to help get them back on their feet.

6 (b) West Virginia Small Business COVID Relief Act established. — There shall hereby be
 7 established a grant in an amount not to exceed \$25,000 for small businesses in West Virginia who
 8 were impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. This grant shall be established using federal relief
 9 money allocated to West Virginia. This grant is intended to assist the most affected businesses
 10 across the state of West Virginia, including, but not limited to:

11 (1) Restaurants;

12 (2) Breweries;

13 (3) Event businesses;

14 (4) Furniture stores;

15 (5) Home furnishings;

16 (6) Clothing stores;

17 (7) Shoe stores;

18 (8) Jewelry, luggage, and leather goods;

- 19 (9) Sporting goods, hobby, and music instrument stores;
- 20 (10) Book Stores and news dealers;
- 21 (11) Florists;
- 22 (12) Office supplies and gift stores;
- 23 (13) Used merchandise stores;
- 24 (14) Motion pictures and video industries;
- 25 (15) Gyms;
- 26 (16) Child daycare services;
- 27 (17) Performing arts companies;
- 28 (18) Dance companies;
- 29 (19) Amusement parks and arcades; and
- 30 (20) Salons and barbers.
- 31 To qualify for this grant, eligible businesses must make no more than \$3 million in business
- 32 earnings per year. Applicants for this relief shall be subject to an audit to determine the amount of
- 33 need and the amount to be awarded to that small business. A small business shall use this grant
- 34 money for business purposes only.

NOTE: The purpose of this bill is to create the West Virginia Small Business COVID Relief Act.

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