

WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE

2024 REGULAR SESSION

Introduced

House Bill 5234

By Delegates Winzenreid, Cooper, Sheedy, Smith,
Hillenbrand, Hornby, Heckert, Horst, Ridenour, E.
Pritt, and Griffith

[Introduced January 26, 2024; Referred to the
Committee on Veterans' Affairs and Homeland
Security then Finance]

1 A BILL to amend the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, by adding thereto a new section,
 2 designated §20-2-28a, all relating to providing for free hunting licenses and fishing
 3 licenses for veterans with a post-traumatic stress disorder diagnosis.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:

ARTICLE 2. WILDLIFE RESOURCES.

Part II. Licenses and Permits.

§20-2-28a. Free hunting and fishing licenses for veterans with a Post-Traumatic Stress

Disorder (PTSD) diagnosis.

1 (a) Free hunting and fishing licenses shall be provided to veterans who, at any stage of
 2 disability, have been diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder (hereinafter "PTSD") subject to
 3 the following terms:

4 (1) Licenses shall be free and awarded in five-year terms with unlimited potential for
 5 renewal;

6 (2) No more than 10% of licenses for a region, area, or district can be allocated in a year to
 7 free veteran licenses;

8 (3) Annual, institutional group fishing licenses shall be provided for facilities under the
 9 jurisdiction or licensed by Veterans Affairs (VA) medical centers shall be provided with a limitation
 10 of 20 participants per group;

11 (4) There shall be a quarterly transfer from the general fund to cover the cost of the free
 12 licenses;

13 (5) Free licenses shall only be provided to those veterans with a certification letter from the
 14 VA confirming the diagnosis;

15 (b) The Division of Natural Resources (DNR) are subject to all laws concerning medical
 16 confidentiality. Information used for verification of diagnosis purposes will not be released to any
 17 third party, whether a person or agency, and the documents, digital records, or any other form of

18 record provided for said diagnostic reason shall be destroyed after processing.

NOTE: The purpose of this bill is to provide for free hunting licenses and fishing licenses for veterans with a post-traumatic stress disorder diagnosis.

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