

WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE

2017 REGULAR SESSION

Introduced

House Bill 2303

BY DELEGATES PHILLIPS, WESTFALL, FOLK,

SOBONYA, OVERINGTON AND PAYNTER

[Introduced February 9, 2017; Referred

to the Committee on the Judiciary]

1 A BILL to amend and reenact §22-15A-4 of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, relating
2 to increasing criminal penalties for littering.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:

1 That §22-15A-4 of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, be amended and
2 reenacted to read as follows:

**ARTICLE 15A. THE A. JAMES MANCHIN REHABILITATION ENVIRONMENTAL
ACTION PLAN.**

**§22-15A-4. Unlawful disposal of litter; civil and criminal penalty; litter control fund;
evidence; notice violations; litter receptacle placement; penalty; duty to enforce
violations.**

1 (a) (1) No person ~~shall~~ may place, deposit, dump, throw or cause to be placed, deposited,
2 dumped or thrown any litter as defined in section two of this article, in or upon any public or private
3 highway, road, street or alley; any private property; any public property; or the waters of the state
4 or within one hundred feet of the waters of this state, except in a proper litter or other solid waste
5 receptacle.

6 (2) It is unlawful for any person to place, deposit, dump, throw or cause to be placed,
7 deposited, dumped or thrown any litter from a motor vehicle or other conveyance or to perform
8 any act which constitutes a violation of the motor vehicle laws contained in section fourteen, article
9 fourteen, chapter seventeen-c of this code.

10 (3) If any litter is placed, deposited, dumped, discharged, thrown or caused to be placed,
11 deposited, dumped or thrown from a motor vehicle, boat, airplane or other conveyance, it is prima
12 facie evidence that the owner or the operator of the motor vehicle, boat, airplane or other
13 conveyance intended to violate the provisions of this section.

14 (4) Any person who violates the provisions of this section by placing, depositing, dumping
15 or throwing or causing to be placed, deposited, dumped or thrown any litter, not collected for

16 commercial purposes, in an amount not exceeding one hundred pounds in weight or twenty-seven
17 cubic feet in size, is guilty of a misdemeanor. Upon conviction, he or she ~~is subject to a fine of not~~
18 ~~less than \$100 nor more than~~ shall be fined \$1,000, or in the discretion of the court, sentenced to
19 perform community service by cleaning up litter from any public highway, road, street, alley or any
20 other public park or public property, or waters of the state, as designated by the court, for ~~not less~~
21 ~~than eight nor more than sixteen hours, or both~~ one hundred hours.

22 (5) Any person who violates the provisions of this section by placing, depositing, dumping
23 or throwing or causing to be placed, deposited, dumped or thrown any litter, not collected for
24 commercial purposes, in an amount greater than one hundred pounds in weight or twenty-seven
25 cubic feet in size, but less than five hundred pounds in weight or two hundred sixteen cubic feet
26 in size is guilty of a misdemeanor. Upon conviction he or she ~~is subject to a fine of not less than~~
27 ~~\$1,000 nor more than~~ shall be fined \$2,000, or in the discretion of the court, may be sentenced to
28 perform community service by cleaning up litter from any public highway, road, street, alley or any
29 other public park or public property, or waters of the state, as designated by the court, for ~~not less~~
30 ~~than sixteen nor more than thirty-two hours, or both~~ two hundred hours.

31 (6) Any person who violates the provisions of this section by placing, depositing, dumping
32 or throwing or causing to be placed, deposited, dumped or thrown any litter in an amount greater
33 than five hundred pounds in weight or two hundred sixteen cubic feet in size or any amount which
34 had been collected for commercial purposes is guilty of a misdemeanor. Upon conviction, the
35 person ~~is subject to a fine~~ shall be fined not less than \$2,500 or not more than \$25,000 or
36 confinement in jail for not more than one year or both. In addition, the violator may be guilty of
37 creating or contributing to an open dump as defined in section two, article fifteen, chapter twenty-
38 two of this code and subject to the enforcement provisions of section fifteen of ~~said~~ that article.

39 (7) Any person convicted of a second or subsequent violation of this section is subject to
40 double the authorized range of fines and community service for the subsection violated.

41 (8) The sentence of litter clean up shall be verified by environmental inspectors from the

42 Department of Environmental Protection. Any defendant receiving the sentence of litter clean up
43 shall provide, within a time to be set by the court, written acknowledgment from an environmental
44 inspector that the sentence has been completed and the litter has been disposed of lawfully.

45 (9) Any person who has been found by the court to have willfully failed to comply with the
46 terms of a litter clean up sentence imposed by the court pursuant to this section is subject to, at
47 the discretion of the court, double the amount of the original fines and community service penalties
48 originally ordered by the court.

49 (10) All law-enforcement agencies, officers and environmental inspectors shall enforce
50 compliance with this section within the limits of each agency's statutory authority.

51 (11) No portion of this section restricts an owner, renter or lessee in the lawful use of his
52 or her own private property or rented or leased property or to prohibit the disposal of any industrial
53 and other wastes into waters of this state in a manner consistent with the provisions of article
54 eleven, chapter twenty-two of this code. But if any owner, renter or lessee, private or otherwise,
55 knowingly permits any ~~such~~ of these materials or substances to be placed, deposited, dumped or
56 thrown in ~~such a~~ location that high water or normal drainage conditions will cause ~~any such~~ these
57 materials or substances to wash into any waters of the state, it is prima facie evidence that the
58 owner, renter or lessee intended to violate the provisions of this section: *Provided*, That if a
59 landowner, renter or lessee, private or otherwise, reports any placing, depositing, dumping or
60 throwing of these substances or materials upon his or her property to the prosecuting attorney,
61 county commission, the Division of Natural Resources or the Department of Environmental
62 Protection, the landowner, renter or lessee will be presumed to not have knowingly permitted the
63 placing, depositing, dumping or throwing of the materials or substances.

64 (b) Any indication of ownership found in litter ~~shall be~~ is prima facie evidence that the
65 person identified violated the provisions of this section: *Provided*, That no inference may be drawn
66 solely from the presence of any logo, trademark, trade name or other similar mass reproduced
67 things of identifying character appearing on the found litter.

68 (c) Every person who is convicted of or pleads guilty to disposing of litter in violation of
69 subsection (a) of this section shall pay a civil penalty ~~in the sum of not less than \$200 nor more~~
70 ~~than \$1,000~~ of \$2,000 as costs for clean-up, investigation and prosecution of the case, in addition
71 to any other court costs that the court is otherwise required by law to impose upon a convicted
72 person.

73 The clerk of the circuit court, magistrate court or municipal court in which these additional
74 costs are imposed shall, on or before the last day of each month, transmit fifty percent of a civil
75 penalty received pursuant to this section to the State Treasurer for deposit in the State Treasury
76 to the credit of a special revenue fund ~~to be known as the Litter Control Fund which is hereby~~
77 ~~continued and~~ was transferred to the Department of Environmental Protection. Expenditures for
78 purposes set forth in this section are not authorized from collections but are to be made only in
79 accordance with appropriation and in accordance with the provisions of article three, chapter
80 twelve of this code and upon fulfillment of the provisions set forth in article two, chapter five-a of
81 this code. Amounts collected which are found from time to time to exceed the funds needed for
82 the purposes set forth in this article may be transferred to other accounts or funds and designated
83 for other purposes by appropriation of the Legislature.

84 (d) The remaining fifty percent of each civil penalty collected pursuant to this section shall
85 be transmitted to the county or regional solid waste authority in the county where the litter violation
86 occurred. Moneys shall be expended by the county or regional solid waste authority for the
87 purpose of litter prevention, clean up and enforcement. The county commission shall cooperate
88 with the county or regional solid waste authority serving the respective county to develop a
89 coordinated litter control program pursuant to section eight, article four, chapter twenty-two-c of
90 this code.

91 (e) The Commissioner of the Division of Motor Vehicles, upon registering a motor vehicle
92 or issuing an operator's or chauffeur's license, shall issue to the owner or licensee, as the case
93 may be, a summary of this section and section fourteen, article fourteen, chapter seventeen-c of

94 the code.

95 (f) The Commissioner of the Division of Highways shall cause appropriate signs to be
96 placed at the state boundary on each primary and secondary road, and at other locations
97 throughout the state, informing those entering the state of the maximum penalty provided for
98 disposing of litter in violation of subsection (a) of this section.

99 (g) Any state agency or political subdivision that owns, operates or otherwise controls any
100 public area ~~as may be~~ designated by the secretary by rule promulgated pursuant to subdivision
101 (8), subsection (a), section three of this article shall procure and place litter receptacles at its own
102 expense upon its premises and shall remove and dispose of litter collected in the litter receptacles.
103 After receiving two written warnings from any law-enforcement officer or officers to comply with
104 this subsection or the rules of the secretary, any state agency or political subdivision that fails to
105 place and maintain the litter receptacles upon its premises in violation of this subsection or the
106 rules of the secretary shall be fined \$30 per day of the violation.

NOTE: The purpose of this bill is to increase the fines and community service hours for littering.

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