

WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE

2017 REGULAR SESSION

Introduced

House Bill 2308

BY DELEGATES SHOTT, COOPER AND AMBLER

[Introduced February 9, 2017;

Referred to Committee on Veterans' Affairs and

Homeland Security then Finance]

1 A BILL to amend and reenact §17-16A-29 of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended,
 2 relating to the West Virginia Parkways, Economic Development and Tourism Authority and
 3 requiring the Parkways Authority to provide free daily toll passes for veterans traveling to
 4 the Veterans Administration Hospital for treatment.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:

1 That §17-16A-29 of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, be amended and
 2 reenacted to read as follows:

**ARTICLE 16A. WEST VIRGINIA PARKWAYS, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND
 TOURISM AUTHORITY.**

§17-16A-29. Discount program for purchasers of West Virginia EZ Pass transponders.

1 (a) The Parkways Authority is hereby authorized to create a discount program for
 2 purchasers of West Virginia EZ Pass transponders: *Provided*, That prior to the fixation of any
 3 initial rates, tolls or charges or any increase in any rates, tolls or charges along any portion of the
 4 parkway project, the Parkways Authority shall create a discount program for purchasers of West
 5 Virginia EZ Pass transponders. Any discount program created pursuant to this section shall
 6 provide discounts for each class of motor vehicles.

7 (b) The Authority shall provide public notice and hold public hearings on any proposed
 8 discount program as required in section thirteen-a of this article prior to implementation of such
 9 program.

10 (c) Annually, the Parkways Authority shall hold at least one public informational session in
 11 each of the following counties: Kanawha, Fayette, Raleigh and Mercer counties. The Authority is
 12 to distribute educational materials and other information concerning the discount program for
 13 purchasers of West Virginia EZ Pass transponders described in this section.

14 (d) Upon the effective date of the amendments to this section enacted during the regular
 15 session of the Legislature in the year 2010, the Authority shall make available West Virginia EZ

16 Pass transponders to the public without the payment of any monetary security deposit. The
17 Authority shall credit any individual that has paid a security deposit for a West Virginia EZ Pass
18 transponder prior to July 1, 2010, on the individual's next billing statement.

19 (e) For purposes of this section, a "West Virginia EZ Pass transponder" means a device
20 sold by the Parkways Authority which allows the purchaser to attach the device to his or her motor
21 vehicle and travel through a Parkways toll facility and be billed for such travel by the Authority.

22 (f) The Parkways Authority shall provide to the Beckley VA Medical Center a sufficient
23 number of free daily toll passes to permit a veteran who is scheduled for medical care at the
24 center during the following six months to travel over the parkway project to and from the center
25 without paying any tolls. The authority shall cooperate with the Beckley VA Medical Center to
26 create and implement a program that will provide to the center, in advance, a sufficient supply of
27 daily toll free passes and restrict the use of the passes to only those days on which a veteran
28 needs to travel to and from the center for medical care. For the purposes of this subsection, the
29 word "veteran" has the same meaning as in section seven, article one, chapter nine-a of this code.

NOTE: The purpose of this bill is to require the Parkways Authority to provide the Beckley VA Medical Center a sufficient number of free daily toll passes to permit Veterans who travel to that center for medical care to travel the West Virginia Turnpike without paying tolls.

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