WEST virginia legislature

2021 regular session

Introduced

**FISCAL NOTE**

Senate Bill 286

By Senators Maynard, Plymale, Phillips, and Swope

[Introduced February 13, 2021; referred
to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure; and then to the Committee on Finance]

A BILL to amend the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, by adding thereto a new section, designated §17-17A-8, relating to providing for special obligation notes to finance construction of completion of Interstate 73 and Interstate 74 through West Virginia; and providing for the repayment of the bonds by unmanned toll booth collections.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:

ARTICLE 17A. CONSTRUCTION FINANCING FOR SURFACE TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENTS.

§17-17A-8. Legislative finding and declaration; commissioner to issue special obligation notes as funding for the completed construction of Interstates 73 and 74 within the boundaries of the state; commissioner to propose legislative rules for the placement of automated toll booths to collect tolls to be dedicated to repayment of special obligation notes.

(a) The Legislature makes the following findings and declarations:

(1) Interstate 73 is planned to continue next to U.S. Route 60 (Corridor Q) from the Virginia state line west to Bluefield. There it will join Interstate 74, which splits from Interstate 77 across the border from Virginia.

(2) For the rest of its path through this state, from Bluefield to Huntington and Ohio, Interstate 73 will follow U.S. Route 52 which is in the process of being upgraded to a four lane divided highway, known as the “King Coal Highway”, to Williamson and the “Tolsia” Highway the rest of the way to Huntington. This section of highway has been designated as the future Interstate 73 and Interstate 74 Corridor, but it is not being built to Interstate standards.

(3) Interstate 73, when completed, will provide much needed interstate access in this state, opening up economic development opportunities that do not currently exist.

(4) Currently, Interstate 73 is an important road project for the West Virginia Department of Transportation, but is not fully funded.

(b) In accordance with the findings and declarations contained in subsection (a) of this section, as well as the provisions of this article, the commissioner is directed, where feasible, to issue special obligation notes and where available, to secure federal matching funds, to contribute to the cost of completing the construction of Interstates 73 and 74 through the borders of this state in accordance with Interstate standards.

(c) The commissioner is further directed to seek as a revenue source proceeds from automated toll booths capable of obtaining payment from credit and debit cards and United States currency. The commissioner shall propose rules for legislative approval in accordance with §29A-3-1 *et seq.* of this code designed to implement the placement of tolls along appropriate highways located in appropriate regions and to designate appropriate intervals of distance from one toll booth to another. The commissioner is authorized to seek agreements with the United States Department of Transportation and the West Virginia Parkways Authority for the placement of automated toll booths along Interstate highways in order to generate revenue to pay special obligation notes issued in accordance with this section and to otherwise pay towards the cost of completion of construction of Interstate 73 and Interstate 74 within the boundaries of the state.

NOTE: The purpose of this bill is to seek funding, where feasible, for completing construction of Interstates 73 and 74 in the state.

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