WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE

2021 REGULAR SESSION

ENROLLED

House Bill 3129

BY DELEGATES CAPITO, KEATON AND L. PACK

[Passed April 10, 2021; in effect ninety days from passage.]
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AN ACT to amend §24A-5-2a of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended; relating to how
the federal index rate increase percentage is calculated regarding solid waste motor
carrier rate increases; requiring revised tariff showing rate increase be filed; requiring
appropriate notice be provided; allowing covered carriers to correct excessive requested
rates in lieu of administrative hearing; and providing when such increases become
effective in each instance.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:

ARTICLE 5. POWERS AND DUTIES OF COMMISSION.

§24A-5-2a. Procedure for changing rates for collection and hauling of solid waste by motor
carriers; rural rates.

(a) Unless a motor carrier collecting and hauling solid waste elects to increase rates under
§24A-5-2 and the commission's existing rules and regulations, effective July 1, 2020, no solid
waste motor carrier subject to this chapter shall change, suspend, or annul any individual rate,
joint rate, fare, charge, or classification for the collection or hauling of solid waste, except after 30
days' notice to the commission and the carrier's customers, with such notice to customers being
sent as a bill insert or separately mailed statement that plainly states the changes proposed to be
made in the schedule then in force and the time when the changed rates or charges will go into
effect. The motor carrier shall file its proposed public notice with the commission for review. Within
five business days of the filing of the notice with the commission, the commission shall issue an
order approving the notice.

(b) Any proposed rate changes shall be shown by printing new schedules, or shall be
plainly indicated upon the schedules in force at the time, and kept open to public inspection:
Provided, That the commission may, in its discretion, and for good cause shown, allow changes
upon less time than the notice herein specified, or may modify the requirements of this section in
respect to publishing, posting and filing of tariffs, either by particular instructions or by general
order.
(c) Whenever a solid waste motor carrier shall file with the commission any schedule stating a change in the rates or charges, or joint rates or charges, or stating a new individual or joint rate or charge or joint classification or any new individual or joint regulation or practice affecting any rate or charge, except as set forth in subsection (d) below, the commission shall have authority, on its own initiative, or upon substantial protest filed with the commission within 30 days’ notice of the proposed increase or change demonstrated by the complaints submitted by the lesser of: (i) 25 percent of the customers impacted by the proposed change in rates or charges; or (ii) 750 customers impacted by the proposed change in rates or charges to suspend the rates pending a hearing and final determination that the rate, charge, classification, regulation or practice is just, reasonable, and based primarily on the cost of service. At any hearing involving a rate sought to be increased or involving the change of any fare, charge, classification, regulation, or practice, the burden of proof to show that the increased rate or proposed increased rate, or the proposed change of fare, charge, classification, regulation or practice, is just, reasonable, and based primarily on the cost of service, shall be upon the motor carrier making application for such change. Any suspension of a rate, charge classification, regulation, or practice under this subsection shall not extend beyond such time that the commission enters a final decision in the case or 120 days from the date notice was first given. The commission may extend the time in which a final decision is due by an additional 30 days if a motor carrier fails to provide material information requested by the commission more than 30 days in advance of the hearing.

(d) Urban Consumer Garbage Trash Collection Index rate change – Effective July 1, 2020, solid waste motor carriers shall be permitted to increase rates for the collection and hauling of solid waste once on or after January 1 of each year, without the filing of an application for approval by the commission and such increase shall be considered just and reasonable and not unfairly discriminatory, prejudicial, or preferential if: (1) the percentage increase over the prior rate is equal to or less than the percentage increase in the United States Department of Labor Bureau of Labor Statistics Garbage and Trash Collection Index (the “Index”) between September of the year...
preceding the effective date of the requested rate increase and September of the year prior to the
year preceding the effective date of the requested rate increase (the “relevant time period”); (2)
the carrier files a revised tariff in compliance with the commission’s rules and regulations; and (3)
otice is provided as directed by the commission. After September 30 of each year, the
commission shall issue a general order stating the percentage increase in the Index and the
inflation factor to apply to the rates currently in effect to calculate the maximum rate increase
authorized under this subsection. Any rate increase that a motor carrier believes is at or below
the aforementioned increase in the Index shall be identified as such when filed with the
commission. Such rate increases shall be subject to challenge by the commission only if it
determines that the increase is in fact in excess of the amount of the increase in the Index for the
relevant time period. If the commission determines a rate increase filed pursuant to this
subsection is in excess of the increase in the Index for the relevant time period, it may enter an
order suspending the rate increase. If such an order is entered, the motor carrier shall be entitled
to a hearing pursuant to the process authorized in subsection (c) of this section or it may correct
its requested rates, in which case the suspension will be lifted and the rates may go into effect as
of the original requested effective date or the date that the carrier corrects its rates, whichever
comes later. Notwithstanding any provision to the contrary, the fact that a solid waste motor carrier
has already raised its rates in a given year pursuant to this subsection shall not preclude that
carrier from applying for and receiving from the commission a rate increase pursuant to
subsection (c) of this section: Provided, That the commission shall take into account the prior rate
increase taken pursuant to this subsection when considering the carrier’s application to increase
rates. A motor carrier may implement up to four annual indexed rate increases under this
subsection before filing for a rate increase under chapter 24A of this code: Provided, That the
commission shall not engage in retroactive rate making.
(e) The commission shall prescribe such rules and regulations as to the giving of notice of a change in rates pursuant to this section as are reasonable and are deemed proper in the public interest.
The Joint Committee on Enrolled Bills hereby certifies that the foregoing bill is correctly enrolled.

Chairman, House Committee

Chairman, Senate Committee

Originating in the House.

In effect ninety days from passage.

Clerk of the House of Delegates

Clerk of the Senate

Speaker of the House of Delegates

President of the Senate

The within ........... approved ........... this the ........... day of .......... 2021.

Governor