

WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE

2023 REGULAR SESSION

Introduced

Senate Bill 674

BY SENATORS TRUMP, TARR, AND WELD

[Introduced February 17, 2023]

1 A BILL to amend the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, by adding thereto a new article,
2 designated §5-30-1, §5-30-2, §5-30-3, §5-30-4, and §5-30-5, all relating to recognizing the
3 creation of the West Virginia First Foundation pursuant to the terms of the West Virginia
4 First Memorandum of Understanding; setting forth legislative findings; defining terms;
5 specifying governing board membership; providing for appointment of an executive
6 director of the governing board and setting forth qualifications; providing for audit and
7 review of the foundation; and requiring local governments, regions, and the foundation to
8 prepare annual reports.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:

ARTICLE 30. THE WEST VIRGINIA FIRST FOUNDATION.

§5-30-1. Legislative findings.

1 (a) The citizens of West Virginia, its local governments, and its communities have entered
2 into a memorandum of understanding. The memorandum of understanding known as the West
3 Virginia First Memorandum of Understanding was filed in the Circuit Court of Kanawha County,
4 calling for, inter alia, the creation of the West Virginia First Foundation.

5 (b) The citizens of West Virginia, its local governments, its communities, and the
6 Legislature are committed to ensure that all opioid funds received in settlement of litigation in the
7 cases which are the subject of the memorandum of understanding are used in a manner
8 consistent with evidence-based strategies, programming, and services used to expand the
9 availability of treatment for individuals affected by substance use disorders and addiction; to
10 develop, promote, and provide evidence-based substance use prevention strategies; to provide
11 substance use avoidance and awareness education; to engage in enforcement to curtail the sale,
12 distribution, and promotion or use of opioids and other drugs; to decrease the oversupply of illicit
13 opioids; and to support recovery from addiction performed by qualified providers.

14 (c) The creation of a private foundation will advance the goal of abating the opioid epidemic
15 by providing a long-term steady stream of money to fund the efforts by both private and
16 governmental entities.

17 (d) All 55 counties and virtually all participating municipalities, representing 99.6 percent
18 of the population of West Virginia, have executed the memorandum of understanding.

19 (e) The circuit court of Kanawha County in Civil Action No. 19-C-9000, has adopted and
20 approved the memorandum of understanding and the abatement structure created in the
21 memorandum of understanding, including, but not limited to, the creation of a private foundation
22 for the purposes set forth in the memorandum of understanding.

§5-30-2. Definitions.

1 "Approved purposes" means those purposes set forth in Appendix A of the memorandum
2 of understanding for which expenditures are authorized.

3 "Expert panel" means the group of individuals, appointed by the governing board, having
4 substantive expertise in the fields of substance abuse, mental health, law enforcement, finance,
5 health care policy and management to assist the foundation.

6 "Foundation" means the West Virginia First Foundation created under the memorandum
7 of understanding.

8 "Governing board" means the board of directors for the non-profit foundation recognized
9 in §5-30-3 of this code.

10 "Local governments" means the counties and municipalities that are parties to the
11 memorandum of understanding.

12 "Memorandum of understanding" means the West Virginia First Memorandum of
13 Understanding approved by order and entered by the circuit court of Kanawha County as
14 referenced in §5-30-1 of this code.

15 "Opioid funds" means funds that are obligated to be transferred or are transferred to the
16 foundation from any source, including, but not limited to, those settlements subject to the terms
17 of the memorandum of understanding.

18 "Order" means the order of the circuit court of Kanawha County referenced in §5-30-1 of
19 this code adopting and approving the memorandum of understanding and the abatement structure
20 created in the memorandum of understanding, including, but not limited to, the creation of a
21 private foundation for the purposes set forth in the memorandum of understanding.

22 "Region" means any of the six geographic regions established pursuant to the order and
23 Exhibit B of the memorandum of understanding.

§5-30-3. West Virginia First Foundation.

1 A private foundation in keeping with the order, known as the West Virginia First
2 Foundation, that qualifies under Internal Revenue Code Section 501(c)(3), and created by the
3 parties to the memorandum of understanding is recognized. The foundation shall have a
4 governing board, an expert panel, and other additional and regional entities necessary for the
5 purpose of receiving and disbursing opioid funds and other purposes set forth in the order and
6 the memorandum of understanding. The operation of the West Virginia First Foundation shall be
7 governed by its articles of incorporation and any by-laws adopted consistent with the provisions
8 of the memorandum of understanding and the order.

§5-30-4. West Virginia First Foundation board composition; executive director.

1 (a) The governing board shall consist of 11 members representing:

2 (1) The interests of the State of West Virginia. The Governor shall appoint five members
3 to the governing board with the advice and consent of the Senate. The Governor may not appoint
4 more than one member from a region, unless authorized by a vote of four of the six governing
5 board members selected by the regions; and

6 (2) The interests of local government. The local governments in each of the six regions
7 shall make the selection of the governing board member to represent their region.

8 (b) The terms for governing board members shall be staggered three-year terms.
9 Governing board members may be reappointed.

10 (c) Governing board members shall serve as fiduciaries of the West Virginia First
11 Foundation separate and apart from any representational capacity of the entity approving the
12 governing board member. Members of any regional governing structure shall also serve as
13 fiduciaries of their region separate and distinct from any representational capacity of the entity
14 appointing the member.

15 (d) Governing board members should have expertise in a variety of disciplines, such as
16 substance abuse treatment, mental health, law enforcement, pharmacology, finance, and health
17 care policy and management. Drawing governing board members from these disciplines will help
18 to ensure that the governing board makes appropriate and prudent investments in order to meet
19 short-term and long-term goals and ensure that expenditures by the governing board are
20 consistent with the mission and purpose of the foundation.

21 (e) The Attorney General shall appoint an executive director after consultation with the
22 board. The governing board may reject the Attorney General's selection of the executive director
23 only on the affirmative vote of eight members of the governing board. The executive director shall
24 have at least six years of experience in health care, finance, and management and is responsible
25 for the management, organization, and preservation of the public/private partnership's records.
26 The executive director may be removed by the governing board upon the concurrence of the votes
27 of three fourths of the members of the governing board.

§5-30-5. Audits and annual reports.

1 (a) The operations of the foundation and the entities it supervises are subject to audit and
2 review by the Attorney General.

3 (b) Each local government shall submit an annual financial report to the foundation no
4 later than April 30 of each year specifying the amounts spent on approved purposes within the
5 region during the previous fiscal year. A report for each region shall be prepared no later than 30

6 days thereafter. Each region's report shall incorporate the information disclosed in each local
7 government's annual report. Each region's report shall specify: (1) the amount of opioid funds
8 received; (2) the amount of opioid funds disbursed or applied during the previous fiscal year,
9 broken down by categories of approved uses; and (3) impact information measuring or describing
10 the progress of the approved use strategies. The foundation shall publish a consolidated report
11 detailing annual financial expenditures within 15 days of the last day of the state fiscal year
12 covered by the report.