

WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE

2025 REGULAR SESSION

Introduced

Senate Bill 161

FISCAL
NOTE

By Senator Chapman

[Introduced February 12, 2025; referred
to the Committee on Natural Resources; and then to
the Committee on Finance]

1 A BILL to amend the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, by adding a new section,
 2 designated §16-1-9h, relating to water quality affecting residents of the state; establishing
 3 findings; requiring Department of Health evaluate whether public water sources contain
 4 levels of contaminants making them unsafe; providing water filtration equipment or
 5 technology to residents whose water is deemed unsafe; and providing for rulemaking.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:

ARTICLE 1. STATE PUBLIC HEALTH SYSTEM.

§16-1-9h. Provision of house water filtration for residents in designated areas.

1 (a) The Legislature finds that water quality is essential to the health of all West Virginians.
 2 Despite the efforts of local and state government, and the intent to provide high quality water for
 3 residents, there are areas in the state in which the water has high levels of contaminants. If
 4 drinking water contains unsafe levels of contaminants, it can cause health effects, such as
 5 gastrointestinal illnesses, nervous system or reproductive effects, and chronic diseases such as
 6 cancer. Factors that can influence whether a contaminant will lead to health effects include the
 7 type of contaminant, its concentration in the water, individual susceptibility, the amount of water
 8 consumed, and the duration of exposure. Water containing high levels of contaminants are not
 9 only unsafe for drinking but may also be unsafe for other household purposes like bathing.

10 (b) The Department of Health shall establish a program to examine water quality from
 11 public water systems throughout the state and determine thresholds of various contaminants that
 12 may make the use of that water unsafe for residents. If a public water source is found to exceed
 13 any level of contaminant, and deemed unsafe, the department shall provide water filtration
 14 equipment or technology to residents served by that water source. Factors to be considered in
 15 making determinations regarding water quality are levels of contaminants, including per- and
 16 polyfluoroalkyl substances, microorganisms, inorganic chemicals, organic chemicals, and
 17 disinfection byproducts, as well as any other factor the department determines to be necessary.

18 (c) The department may propose rules for legislative approval in accordance with the

19 provisions of §29A-3-1 et seq. to effectuate the provisions of this section.

NOTE: The purpose of this bill is regarding water quality affecting residents of the state; establishing findings; requiring Department of Health evaluate whether public water sources contain levels of contaminants making them unsafe; providing water filtration equipment or technology to residents whose water is deemed unsafe; and providing for rulemaking.

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