

WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE

2026 REGULAR SESSION

ENGROSSED

Committee Substitute

for

House Bill 4126

By Delegate Riley

[Originating in the Committee on Finance; February

20, 2026]

1 A BILL amend and reenact §20-5A-1 of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, relating to
2 the distribution of royalties received from certain state-owned gas, oil, and other mineral
3 rights.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:

ARTICLE 5A. STATE PARKS AND RECREATION ENDOWMENT FUND.

§20-5A-1. Establishment of fund; deposits; expenditures; investments; use of fund for the

State Parks Enhancement Loan Insurance Program.

1 (a) There is ~~created~~ continued in the office of the State Treasurer a special revenue
2 account fund to be known as the West Virginia State Parks and Recreation Endowment Fund.

3 (b) The following shall be deposited into the fund:

4 (1) The royalties received from the leasing of state-owned gas, oil, and other mineral rights
5 beneath the Ohio River and its tributaries; and

6 (2) The proceeds of any gifts, grants, contributions, or other moneys accruing to the state
7 which are specifically designated for inclusion in the fund.

8 ~~(d)~~ (c) The board of trustees established pursuant to this article shall invest the assets of
9 the fund consistent with the provisions of §12-6-1 of this code.

10 ~~(e)~~ (d) Expenditures from the fund shall be for the purposes set forth in this section and are
11 to be made in accordance with appropriation of the Legislature under the provisions of §12-3-1 *et*
12 *seq.* of this code, and in compliance with the provisions of §11B-2-1 *et seq.* of this code as follows:
13 *Provided, That income*

14 (1) Income accruing from investments of the fund pursuant to this article shall be
15 distributed or expended at the direction of the board for either of the following purposes:

16 ~~(4)~~ (A) Maintenance, repair, and improvement of any existing recreational facilities,
17 including any supporting or related infrastructure and associated recreational features, all to
18 provide uninterrupted enjoyment and public use of state parks, state forests, and state rail trails.

19 ~~(2) (B)~~ Maintenance, repair, and procurement of any fixture, furnishing, and equipment
20 necessary to provide uninterrupted enjoyment and public use of state parks, state forests, and
21 state rail trails.

22 ~~(d)~~ The board of trustees established pursuant to this article shall invest the assets of the
23 fund consistent with the provisions of §12-6-1 of this code. The board may accumulate investment
24 income of the fund within the fund until the income, in the sole judgment of the board, can provide a
25 significant supplement to the budget of the Division of Natural Resources. After that time, the
26 board may direct expenditures from the income for the purposes set forth in this section.

27 (2) On and after July 1, 2026, fifty percent of the royalties received from the leasing of
28 state-owned gas, oil, and other mineral rights beneath the Ohio River and its tributaries deposited
29 into the fund shall be distributed or expended for the operation, maintenance and improvement of
30 the state parks, state forests and state rail trails by the director: *Provided*, That when the balance
31 in the fund equals or exceeds \$100 million, one hundred percent of the royalties received from the
32 leasing of state-owned gas, oil, and other mineral rights beneath the Ohio River and its tributaries
33 deposited into the fund shall be distributed or expended for the operation, maintenance and
34 improvement of the state parks, state forests and state rail trails by the director: *Provided*,
35 *however*, That if the balance in the fund is less than \$100 million, the amount of the royalties
36 received from the leasing of state-owned gas, oil, and other mineral rights beneath the Ohio River
37 and its tributaries that may be distributed or expended for the operation, maintenance and
38 improvement of the state parks, state forests and state rail trails shall be reduced to fifty percent
39 until such time as the balance equals or exceeds \$100 million.

40 (e) Notwithstanding any other provision of this article to the contrary, the assets of the fund
41 may be used by the board of trustees to facilitate or provide collateral for the State Parks
42 Enhancement Loan Insurance Program established in §20-5A-3 of this code: *Provided*, That no
43 amount of the fund's income from investments may be used to provide loan insurance.