

WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE

2026 REGULAR SESSION

Introduced

House Bill 4448

By Delegates Hillenbrand, Pritt, Funkhouser, Coop-
Gonzalez, Mazzocchi, Ridenour, Chiarelli, T. Howell,
Kimble, Horst, and White

[Introduced January 16, 2026; referred to the
Committee on Education then the Judiciary]

1 A BILL to amend and reenact §61-8A-3 of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, relating
2 to removing bona fide schools, public libraries, and museums from the list of exemptions
3 from criminal liability relating to distribution and display to minor of obscene matter.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:

ARTICLE 8A. PREPARATION, DISTRIBUTION OR EXHIBITION OF OBSCENE

| MATTER | TO | MINORS. |
|---------------|-----------|----------------|
|---------------|-----------|----------------|

| | | | | |
|------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| §61-8A-3. | Exemptions | from | criminal | liability. |
| 1 | The criminal provisions of section two of this article do not apply to: | | | |
| 2 | (a) A bona fide school, in the presentation of local or state approved curriculum; | | | |
| 3 | (b) A public library, or museum, which is displaying or distributing any obscene matter to a | | | |
| 4 | minor only when the minor was accompanied by his or her parent | | | |
| 5 | (c) (a) A licensed medical or mental health care provider, or judicial or law-enforcement | | | |
| 6 | officer, during the course of medical, psychiatric, or psychological treatment or judicial or law- | | | |
| 7 | enforcement activities; | | | |
| 8 | (d) (b) A person who did not know or have reason to know, and could not reasonably have | | | |
| 9 | learned, that the person to whom the obscene matter was distributed or displayed was a minor and | | | |
| 10 | who took reasonable measures to ascertain the identity and age of the minor; | | | |
| 11 | (e) (c) A person who routinely distributes obscene matter by the use of telephone, | | | |
| 12 | computer network or the Internet and who distributes such matter to any minor under the age of 18 | | | |
| 13 | years after the person has taken reasonable measures to prevent access by minors to the | | | |
| 14 | obscene matter; or | | | |
| 15 | (f) (d) A radio or television station, cable television service or other telecommunications | | | |
| 16 | service regulated by the federal communications commission. | | | |

NOTE: The purpose of this bill is to remove schools, museums, and public libraries from the exemption which protects these types of entities from prosecution for distribution and display to minor of an obscene matter.

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