

WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE

2026 REGULAR SESSION

Introduced

Senate Bill 177

**FISCAL
NOTE**

By Senator Fuller

[Introduced January 14, 2026; referred
to the Committee on Education; 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 §8-14-25, relating to providing all certified law-enforcement officers tuition-free
3 education up to the highest rate for higher education in this state.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:

**ARTICLE 14. LAW AND ORDER; POLICE FORCE OR DEPARTMENTS; POWERS,
AUTHORITY AND DUTIES OF LAW-ENFORCEMENT OFFICIALS AND
POLICEMEN; POLICE MATRONS; SPECIAL SCHOOL ZONE AND PARKING
LOT OR PARKING BUILDING POLICE OFFICERS; CIVIL SERVICE FOR
CERTAIN POLICE DEPARTMENTS.**

**§8-14-25. Tuition and fees for certified law-enforcement officers at institutions of higher
education.**

1 (a) Any certified law-enforcement officer who is enrolled in an educational program which
2 leads to a certificate, undergraduate degree, master's degree, doctor of medicine, or doctor of
3 osteopathic medicine, and is attending any accredited community and technical college, college,
4 university, or business, career-technical, vocational, trade, or aviation school, located in West
5 Virginia, may be entitled to payment of tuition and fees for that program during the period of his or
6 her service as a certified law enforcement officer.

7 (1) The Secretary of Homeland Security may prescribe criteria of eligibility for payment of
8 tuition and fees. The payment is contingent upon appropriations being made by the Legislature for
9 the express purpose of this section.

10 (2) A certified law-enforcement officer may receive payment for only one certificate,
11 undergraduate degree, and master's degree pursuant to this section.

12 (3) Not more than two certified law-enforcement officers a year may be selected by the
13 Secretary of Homeland Security to receive payment for either a doctor of medicine or doctor of
14 osteopathic medicine degree program. Any candidate selected for this program must remain a

15 certified law-enforcement officer after receiving a doctor of medicine or doctor of osteopathic
16 medicine degree for a mandatory service obligation as prescribed by the Secretary of Homeland
17 Security, or be subject to recoupment for all moneys paid pursuant to this subdivision.

18 (b) The amount of the payment for a certified law-enforcement officer attending a state-
19 supported school is determined by the Secretary of Homeland Security and may not exceed the
20 actual cost of tuition and fees at the school. The amount of the payment for a certified law-
21 enforcement officer attending a private school is determined by the Secretary of Homeland
22 Security and may not exceed the highest amount payable at any state-supported school.

23 (c) Any certified law-enforcement officer who is receiving payments under a federally
24 funded continuing education system and is eligible to receive tuition and fee payments pursuant to
25 this section may be entitled to payment of tuition and fees under this section. The sum of payments
26 received under this section and a federally funded continuing education system may not exceed
27 the actual amount of tuition and fees at the school and in any event may not exceed the highest
28 amount payable at any state-supported school. If a certified law-enforcement officer uses
29 education benefits that are administered by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, such as the
30 Post 9/11 GI Bill or any other program that pays tuition or fees directly to the institutions of higher
31 education, the institution of higher education shall first assess the U.S. Department of Veterans
32 Affairs for payment of tuition and fees payable by those programs, with the remaining tuition and
33 fees, if any, then being payable in accordance with this section.

34 (d) For any certified law-enforcement officer who is participating in the PROMISE
35 Scholarship program provided in §18C-7-1 et seq. of this code, the Secretary of Homeland
36 Security may pay directly to the certified law-enforcement officer an amount equal to the amount of
37 tuition and fees which otherwise would have been paid to the school.

38 (e) The Secretary of Homeland Security shall administer the tuition and fee payments
39 authorized under this section and shall establish policies to implement the provisions of this
40 section.

41 (f) All certified law-enforcement officers shall serve a minimum of one year for every year of
42 paid tuition or reimbursed tuition provided to them.

NOTE: The purpose of this bill relates to providing all certified Law-Enforcement Officers ("LEOs") tuition free education up to the highest rate for higher education in this state.

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