

# **WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE**

## **2026 REGULAR SESSION**

**Enrolled**

**Committee Substitute**

**for**

**Committee Substitute**

**for**

**Senate Bill 502**

BY SENATORS TAYLOR, CHARNOCK, HELTON, OLIVERIO,

ROSE, GRADY, AND WILLIS

[Passed March 14, 2026; to take effect July 1, 2026]



1 AN ACT to amend the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, by adding a new article,  
2 designated §18B-23-1, §18B-23-2, §18B-23-3, §18B-23-4, §18B-23-5, §18B-23-6,  
3 §18B-23-7, §18B-23-8, and §18B-23-9, relating to women’s collegiate athletics; creating  
4 a short title; providing legislative findings and purpose; creating definitions; establishing  
5 permanent protections for women’s collegiate sports programs through endowment  
6 funding; providing for efficiency-based matching funds; limiting use of earnings from a  
7 women’s athletics endowment; ensuring compliance with Title IX; providing for oversight  
8 and reporting; providing rule-making authority; and providing an effective date.

*Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:*

**ARTICLE 23. WOMEN'S COLLEGIATE SPORTS PROTECTION ACT.**

**§18B-23-1. Short title.**

1 This article shall be known and may be cited as the Women’s Collegiate Sports Protection  
2 Act.

**§18B-23-2. Legislative findings and purpose.**

1 The Legislature finds that women’s collegiate Olympic sports provide significant  
2 educational, athletic, and leadership opportunities for students of this state; that such programs  
3 face increasing financial instability due to shifting athletic funding priorities and external market  
4 pressures; that operational efficiency within public institutions of higher education should be  
5 encouraged and rewarded; and that permanent endowment funding provides protection against  
6 program elimination, budget volatility, and inequities arising from fluctuations in athletic funding.

7 The purpose of this article is to protect and sustain women’s collegiate Olympic sports  
8 programs through permanent endowment funding; to reward verified institutional efficiencies; and  
9 to ensure full compliance with federal Title IX requirements.

**§18B-23-3. Definitions.**

1 For purposes of this article:

2 "Commission" means the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission.

3 "Eligible institution" means a public institution of higher education in this state that has  
4 women's collegiate sports.

5 "Qualified contribution" means a private monetary donation made to a women's athletics  
6 endowment.

7 "Verified cost savings" means documented reductions in expenditures achieved through  
8 operational efficiencies, administrative consolidation, renegotiated contracts, shared services,  
9 energy efficiencies, or similar measures, certified by the commission at the close of a fiscal year.

10 "Women's athletics endowment" means a permanent endowment fund established  
11 pursuant to this article, the principal of which shall not be expended.

**§18B-23-4. Establishment of women's athletics endowments.**

1 (a) An eligible institution may establish a women's athletics endowment to support  
2 women's collegiate Olympic sports programs.

3 (b) The commission may establish or designate a statewide women's athletics endowment  
4 trust for the benefit of eligible institutions.

5 (c) Funds contributed to an endowment shall be invested in accordance with applicable  
6 state investment standards, and only earnings may be expended.

**§18B-23-5. Efficiency-based matching contributions.**

1 (a) The commission may certify verified cost savings realized by an eligible institution at  
2 the close of a fiscal year.

3 (b) Subject to appropriation, the eligible institution may provide matching contributions to  
4 a women's athletics endowment based upon verified cost savings.

5 (c) Matching contributions shall be subject to annual caps established by the Legislature.

6 (d) Savings eligible for matching under this section may not result from reductions in  
7 academic programs, faculty positions, essential student services, or actions impairing compliance  
8 with federal Title IX requirements.

**§18B-23-6. Use of endowment earnings.**

1           Earnings from a women’s athletics endowment may be used solely for scholarships,  
2 coaching and training staff, equipment, facilities, travel, and other expenses directly related to  
3 women’s collegiate Olympic sports programs.

**§18B-23-7. Oversight and reporting.**

1           (a) Each participating institution shall submit an annual report to the commission detailing  
2 verified cost savings, matching contributions received, private contributions, expenditures, and  
3 compliance with Title IX.

4           (b) The commission shall submit an annual consolidated report to the Joint Committee on  
5 Government and Finance.

6           (c) Endowments established pursuant to this article shall be subject to periodic  
7 independent audit.

**§18B-23-8. Rule-making authority.**

1           The commission may promulgate legislative rules in accordance with §29A-3A-1 *et seq.*  
2 of this code to implement the provisions of this article.

**§18B-23-9. Effective date.**

1           This article shall take effect July 1, 2026.



The Clerk of the Senate and the Clerk of the House of Delegates hereby certify that the foregoing bill is correctly enrolled.

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*Clerk of the Senate*

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*Clerk of the House of Delegates*

Originated in the Senate.

To take effect July 1, 2026.

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*President of the Senate*

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*Speaker of the House of Delegates*

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The within is ..... this the.....  
Day of ....., 2026.

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*Governor*