

WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE

2026 REGULAR SESSION

Introduced

Senate Bill 995

By Senator Helton

[Introduced February 19, 2026; referred
to the Committee on Finance]

1 A BILL to amend the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, by adding a new article,
 2 designated §16-67-1, §16-67-2, and §16-67-3, relating to conducting oversight of Rural
 3 Health Transformation Program; setting forth legislative findings; setting forth purpose;
 4 requiring reporting; setting forth contents of report; and setting forth an effective date.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:

ARTICLE 67. RURAL HEALTH TRANSFORMATION OVERSIGHT ACT.

§16-67-1. Legislative findings and purpose.

1 (a) Findings. — The Legislature finds that:

2 (1) West Virginia ranks 49th in overall health status;

3 (2) West Virginia experiences significantly worse health outcomes compared to
 4 metropolitan areas and national averages;

5 (3) Life expectancy in rural West Virginia is six months lower than in-state metro areas and
 6 approximately 2.5 years below the national average;

7 (4) Residents of McDowell County, West Virginia have a life expectancy 11 years lower
 8 than the national average;

9 (5) West Virginia has the nation's highest adult obesity rate;

10 (6) West Virginia has the highest smoking rate: and

11 (7) West Virginia has the deadliest overdose crisis in the country, and the rural overdose
 12 rate is twice the national average.

13 (b) Purpose. —

14 (1) The purpose of this act is to require the Secretary of Health to provide a detailed
 15 monthly, or more often as required, accounting to the Legislature regarding the Rural Health
 16 Transformation (RHT) Program.

17 (2) The RHT Program is administered by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services
 18 and begins fiscal year 2026 and ends in 2030.

19 (3) The purpose of the RHT Program is to strengthen rural communities across the United

20 States by improving healthcare access, quality, and outcomes by transforming the health care
21 delivery ecosystem.

22 (4) In fiscal year 2026, West Virginia has been awarded approximately \$200 million dollars
23 pursuant to this program, and the purpose of this article is to provide for oversight of the current
24 and future awards made pursuant to the RHT Program.

§16-67-2. Reporting required.

1 (a) The Secretary of Health shall submit a written report on the findings to:
2 (1) The President of the Senate;
3 (2) The Speaker of the House; and
4 (3) The Legislative Oversight Commission on Health and Human Resources
5 Accountability.

6 (b) The report shall include:
7 (1) A detailed RHT Program itemized budget to include but not be limited: total funding in
8 the RHT Program fund, total expenditures made to date, total amount of funding encumbered;
9 (2) A list of vendors paid to date;
10 (3) A list of programs developed with RHT Program funding;
11 (4) Outcomes anticipated to be achieved because of the RHT Program developed;
12 (5) Each data variable that is being tracked for each new program established with RHT
13 Program funding; and

14 (6) Outcomes achieved because of the RHT Program funding spent.
15 (c) The report shall be submitted monthly, beginning April 1, 2026, and be accompanied by
16 a monthly formal presentation to the Legislative Oversight Commission on Health and Human
17 Resources Accountability.

§16-67-3. Effective date.

1 This act shall take effect upon passage.

NOTE: The purpose of this bill is to provide for Oversight of the Rural Health Transformation Program.

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