

WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE

SENATE JOURNAL

EIGHTY-SEVENTH LEGISLATURE
REGULAR SESSION, 2026
SEVENTH DAY

Charleston, West Virginia, Tuesday, January 20, 2026

The Senate met at 11:07 a.m.

(Senator Smith, Mr. President, in the Chair.)

Prayer was offered by the Honorable Mark R. Maynard, a senator from the sixth district.

The Senate was then led in recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance by the Honorable Vince S. Deeds, a senator from the tenth district.

Pending the reading of the Journal of Monday, January 19, 2026,

At the request of Senator Rucker, unanimous consent being granted, the Journal was approved and the further reading thereof dispensed with.

The Senate proceeded to the second order of business and the introduction of guests.

The Senate then proceeded to the third order of business.

A message from the Clerk of the House of Delegates announced the passage by that body, to take effect from passage, and requested the concurrence of the Senate in the passage of

Eng. House Bill 4574—A Bill to amend the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, by adding a new section, designated §18-2-5i; and to amend said code by adding a new section, designated §18-2E-5b, all relating to providing for condition-based emergency funding for financially distressed counties; providing for definitions; setting forth a reserve threshold to be eligible for the fund; providing for conditions; providing for when charges may be proffered against a county officer or member of a board of education; providing for temporary funding supplement during intervention; providing for an effective date; providing a timeline of when funds are to be paid back; providing for a reversion to the general revenue account; establishing the fund; and providing that once the fund is established, the fund shall continue in existence for use by the State Board in the event the Legislature appropriates funds to meet other temporary county board shortfalls of funding.

Referred to the Committee on Education; and then to the Committee on Finance.

A message from the Clerk of the House of Delegates announced the passage by that body, to take effect from passage, and requested the concurrence of the Senate in the passage of

Eng. House Bill 4575—A Bill supplementing and amending the appropriations of public moneys out of the Treasury from the balance of moneys remaining as an unappropriated surplus balance in the State Fund, General Revenue, to the State Board of Education—State Department of Education, fund 0313, fiscal year 2026, organization 0402, by supplementing and amending the appropriations for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2026.

Referred to the Committee on Finance.

The Senate proceeded to the fourth order of business.

Senator Rose, from the Committee on Energy, Industry, and Mining, submitted the following report, which was received:

Your Committee on Energy, Industry, and Mining has had under consideration

Senate Bill 15, Protecting coal and gas minerals from carbon capture practices.

And reports back a committee substitute for same with the following title:

Com. Sub. for Senate Bill 15 (originating in the Committee on Energy, Industry and Mining)—A Bill to amend and reenact §22-11B-4 of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, relating to protecting coal and oil and gas minerals from carbon capture practices.

With the recommendation that the committee substitute do pass.

Respectfully submitted,

Christopher A. Rose,
Chair.

Senator Morris, from the Committee on Government Organization, submitted the following report, which was received:

Your Committee on Government Organization has had under consideration

Senate Bill 66, Modifying classes of state of preparedness declared by Governor or Legislature.

And reports the same back with the recommendation that it do pass.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert L. Morris, Jr.,
Chair.

Senator Rose, from the Committee on Energy, Industry, and Mining, submitted the following report, which was received:

Your Committee on Energy, Industry, and Mining has had under consideration

Senate Bill 76, Providing exemption from state severance tax for coal sold to coal-fired power plants located in WV.

And reports back a committee substitute for same with the following title:

Com. Sub. for Senate Bill 76 (originating in the Committee on Energy, Industry, and Mining)—A Bill to amend and reenact §11-13A-3 of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, relating to providing an exemption from the state severance tax for natural gas and coal sold to natural gas-powered and coal-fired power plants located within the state.

Senate Bill 104, Providing state mine inspectors with raise.

And reports back a committee substitute for same with the following title:

Com. Sub. for Senate Bill 104 (originating in the Committee on Energy, Industry, and Mining)—A Bill to amend the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, by adding a new section, designated §22A-1-10a, relating to providing a \$5,000 salary increase to certain inspectors.

And,

Senate Bill 118, Establishing Forest Carbon Registry.

And reports back a committee substitute for same with the following title:

Com. Sub. for Senate Bill 118 (originating in the Committee on Energy, Industry, and Mining)—A Bill to amend the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, by adding a new article, designated §19-1D-1, §19-1D-2, §19-1D-3, and §19-1D-4, relating to the establishment of a Forest Carbon Registry under the administration of the Division of Forestry; providing registration of carbon projects affecting West Virginia forestlands; requiring the inclusion of geographic information system shapefiles for encumbered properties; assigning responsibility to purchasers and certain landowners to record such projects; establishing a deadline for recording; and imposing civil penalties for noncompliance.

With the recommendation that the three committee substitutes do pass; but under the original double committee references first be referred to the Committee on Finance.

Respectfully submitted,

Christopher A. Rose,
Chair.

The bills (Com. Sub. for S. B. 76, 104, and 118), under the original double committee references, were then referred to the Committee on Finance.

Senator Willis, from the Committee on the Judiciary, submitted the following report, which was received:

Your Committee on the Judiciary has had under consideration

Senate Bill 137, Modifying parole eligibility for crime of second-degree murder.

And reports back a committee substitute for same with the following title:

Com. Sub. for Senate Bill 137 (originating in the Committee on the Judiciary)—A Bill to amend and reenact §61-2-3, §61-2-4, and 62-12-13 of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, all relating to increasing the penalties and parole eligibility requirements for homicide by increasing the minimum and maximum term of imprisonment for second degree murder and voluntary manslaughter; increasing the minimum period of imprisonment prior to parole eligibility for individuals convicted of second degree murder and voluntary manslaughter; and increasing the minimum period of imprisonment prior to parole eligibility for individuals sentenced to life imprisonment.

With the recommendation that the committee substitute do pass.

Respectfully submitted,

Thomas E. Willis II,
Chair.

Senator Grady, from the Committee on Education, submitted the following report, which was received:

Your Committee on Education has had under consideration

Senate Bill 166, Relating to eligibility for WV Invests Grant Program.

And reports the same back with the recommendation that it do pass; but under the original double committee reference first be referred to the Committee on Finance.

Respectfully submitted,

Amy N. Grady,
Chair.

The bill, under the original double committee reference, was then referred to the Committee on Finance.

Senator Morris, from the Committee on Government Organization, submitted the following report, which was received:

Your Committee on Government Organization has had under consideration

Senate Bill 207, Clarifying sheriff's compensation for collection of taxes.

And reports back a committee substitute for same with the following title:

Com. Sub. for Senate Bill 207 (originating in the Committee on Government Organization)—A Bill to amend and reenact §11A-1-17 of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, relating to sheriff's commission for collection of taxes; establishing that county commission determines eligibility for commission.

With the recommendation that the committee substitute do pass.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert L. Morris, Jr.,
Chair.

The Senate proceeded to the sixth order of business.

On motions for leave, severally made, the following bills were introduced, read by their titles, and referred to the appropriate committees:

By Senator Chapman:

Senate Bill 510—A Bill to amend and reenact §17A-6-6, §19-2C-5b, §19-23-8, §21-1-6, §21-5-5c, §21-14-6, §21-16-7, §29-3B-4, §29-3C-4, §29-3D-6, §30-1-24, §30-5-9, §30-5-11a, §30-6-8, §30-6-17, §30-20-8a, §30-32-10a, §30-36-10, §31-17A-5, §32A-2-8, §33-13C-3, and §33-13C-4 of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, relating generally to the use of criminal records as disqualification from initial licensure or other authorization to practice a profession or occupation; prohibiting licensing authorities from disqualifying an applicant from initial licensure because of a prior criminal conviction that remains unreversed unless that conviction is for a crime that directly and specifically relates to the activity requiring licensure such that granting the applicant licensure would pose a direct and substantial risk to the public because the applicant has not been rehabilitated; providing factors for a licensing authority to determine whether a criminal conviction directly and specifically relates to a profession or occupation; clarifying that a licensing authority may not disqualify an applicant from initial licensure because of a prior criminal conviction if certain criteria are met; prohibiting consideration of good moral character or crimes of moral turpitude as a basis for disqualifying applicant for initial licensure; authorizing an individual with a criminal record who has not previously held a license from the licensing authority to petition the authority for a determination of whether the individual's criminal record will disqualify the individual from obtaining a license; clarifying that these requirements do not apply to discipline of licensees or reinstatement of a license following discipline; prohibiting a licensing authority from considering, or from requiring, an individual to disclose an arrest not followed by conviction in an application for initial licensure or determination of qualification for license; and requiring licensing authorities to update licensure forms, relevant public-facing documents, and website.

Referred to the Committee on the Workforce; and then to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Senator Deeds:

Senate Bill 511—A Bill to amend the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, by adding a new section, designated §49-4-611, relating to the imposition of a time limitation on disposition decisions in child abuse and neglect proceedings.

Referred to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Senator Chapman:

Senate Bill 512—A Bill to amend and reenact §33-15-4t, §33-16-3ee, §33-24-7t, §33-25-8q, and §33-25A-8t of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, relating to cost-sharing calculations on behalf of an insured; defining terms; requiring insurer to provide credit toward in-network cost sharing; prohibiting insurer from discriminating in the form of payment; and setting effective date.

Referred to the Committee on Finance.

By Senator Chapman:

Senate Bill 513—A Bill to amend the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, by adding a new section, designated §2-2-10a, relating to interpretation of statutes, regulations, and rules by courts and administrative judges and other administrative officers.

Referred to the Committee on Government Organization; and then to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Senator Rucker:

Senate Bill 514—A Bill to amend the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, by adding a new article, designated §22-37-1, §22-37-2, §22-37-3, and §22-37-4, relating to protecting the environment and humans by prohibiting geoengineering activities; providing definitions; and creating penalties for violations.

Referred to the Committee on Natural Resources; and then to the Committee on Finance.

By Senator Takubo:

Senate Bill 515—A Bill to amend the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, by adding a new section, designated §16B-13-4a, relating to drug testing for individuals in an office-based, medication-assisted treatment program; and providing a schedule of drug tests.

Referred to the Committee on Health and Human Resources; and then to the Committee on Finance.

By Senator Takubo:

Senate Bill 516—A Bill to amend and reenact §18A-4-2 of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, relating to raising the state minimum salary for teachers to \$50,000 beginning in school year 2026-2027; updating the state minimum salary schedule to provide an additional \$2,000 annual salary increase for all teachers; and providing a minimum salary increase of \$1,200 for teachers providing math instruction and special education services.

Referred to the Committee on Education; and then to the Committee on Finance.

By Senator Weld:

Senate Bill 517—A Bill to amend and reenact §61-12-10 of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, relating to postmortem examinations.

Referred to the Committee on Health and Human Resources; and then to the Committee on Finance.

By Senator Chapman:

Senate Bill 518—A Bill to amend the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, by adding six new sections, designated §5-16-7h, §33-15-4y, §33-16-3ii, §33-24-7z, §33-25-8w, and §33-25A-8z, relating to cost-sharing requirements for breast examinations; defining terms; prohibiting cost-sharing requirements; permitting existing utilization review; addressing health savings account ineligibility; permitting rulemaking; and providing effective date.

Referred to the Committee on Health and Human Resources; and then to the Committee on Finance.

By Senator Chapman:

Senate Bill 519—A Bill to amend and reenact §33-16-3g and §33-24-7b of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended; and to amend the code by adding six new sections, designated §5-

16-7h, §33-15-4y, §33-16-3pp, §33-24-7z, §33-25-8w, and §33-25A-8z, relating to insurance coverage for annual breast cancer screening.

Referred to the Committee on Banking and Insurance; and then to the Committee on Finance.

By Senator Rucker:

Senate Bill 520—A Bill to amend the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, by adding a new article, designated §3-13-1, §3-13-2, §3-13-3, and §3-13-4, relating to elections; providing definitions; clarifying acts prohibited by a foreign national; establishing a cause of action; creating civil and criminal penalties; and clarifying donor rights to privacy.

Referred to the Committee on the Judiciary; and then to the Committee on Finance.

By Senators Deeds, Grady, M. Maynard, Roberts, and Tarr:

Senate Bill 521—A Bill to amend the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, by adding a new section, designated §49-2-802b, relating to statewide prevention plan.

Referred to the Committee on Health and Human Resources; and then to the Committee on Finance.

By Senators Helton, Bartlett, Fuller, Rose, and Thorne:

Senate Bill 522—A Bill to amend the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, by adding a new article, designated §21-18-101, §21-18-102, §21-18-103, §21-18-104, §21-18-105, §21-18-106, §21-18-107, §21-18-108, §21-18-109, and §21-18-110, relating to creating the West Virginia Jobs Protection Act; mandating the use of the federal E-Verify system for employment eligibility verification by all employers in the state; requiring enrollment in and use of E-Verify for all new hires; establishing penalties for noncompliance; and setting an effective date of July 1, 2026.

Referred to the Committee on Government Organization; and then to the Committee on Finance.

By Senators Deeds, Grady, M. Maynard, Roberts, and Tarr:

Senate Bill 523—A Bill to amend and reenact §49-4-605 and §49-4-610 of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, relating to increasing circumstances where the Department of Human Services is required to seek termination of parental rights; and increasing circumstances where the time limit for a respondent parent's improvement period, or combination or extension of the respondent parent's improvement period, applies.

Referred to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Senators Deeds, Grady, M. Maynard, Roberts, and Tarr:

Senate Bill 524—A Bill to amend the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, by adding a new section, designated §49-2-131, relating to monthly status meetings of county entities; providing legislative findings and intent; designating meeting participants; and requiring reporting.

Referred to the Committee on Health and Human Resources; and then to the Committee on Finance.

By Senators Deeds, Grady, M. Maynard, Roberts, and Tarr:

Senate Bill 525—A Bill to amend the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, by adding a new section, designated §49-2-815, relating to the establishment of a pilot program for the use of

mobile devices in child abuse and neglect investigations; setting forth effective date; setting forth requirements for system; setting forth term of pilot program; and requiring reporting.

Referred to the Committee on Health and Human Resources; and then to the Committee on Finance.

By Senators Oliverio, Deeds, Grady, Hamilton, Morris, Queen, Takubo, Weld, and Woodrum:

Senate Bill 526—A Bill to amend and reenact §5-16-5 of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, relating to modifying the method of calculation of the employer and employee contribution percentages for public employee insurance premiums.

Referred to the Committee on Banking and Insurance; and then to the Committee on Finance.

By Senators Deeds, Grady, M. Maynard, Roberts, and Tarr:

Senate Bill 527—A Bill to amend and reenact §29-21-2, §44-10-3, §44-10-5, and §49-4-601b of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended; and to amend the code by adding a new section, designated §49-4-607a, relating to the creation of the process of obtaining and adjudicating a pre-adjudicatory alternative disposition.

Referred to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Senators Rose, Hart, Helton, M. Maynard, and Rucker:

Senate Bill 528—A Bill to amend and reenact §5-1-25 of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, relating to the designation of daylight saving time as the official time of the state.

Referred to the Committee on Government Organization.

By Senators Deeds, Grady, M. Maynard, Roberts, and Tarr:

Senate Bill 529—A Bill to amend the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, by adding a new section, designated §49-2-131, relating to requiring the Department of Human Services to establish a pilot program to contract for supplemental caseworker aide services for the Bureau for Social Services.

Referred to the Committee on Health and Human Resources; and then to the Committee on Finance.

By Senators Deeds, Grady, M. Maynard, Roberts, and Tarr:

Senate Bill 530—A Bill to amend and reenact §15-2-15 of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, relating to the Child Abuse and Neglect Investigations Unit; expanding the number of members in the unit; expanding the number of regional members to assist Child Protective Services; establishing offices for the unit in each State Police district; providing parameters for supervision of the unit; providing retired members of the State Police the ability to be part of the unit; and establishing requirements to be followed when reemploying a retired State Police officer.

Referred to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Senators Azinger, Phillips, Charnock, Rose, Helton, Rucker, and Morris:

Senate Bill 531—A Bill to amend the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, by adding a new article, designated §5A-3D-1, §5A-3D-2, §5A-3D-3, §5A-3D-4, §5A-3D-5, and §5A-3D-6, relating to establishment of the First Amendment Preservation Act; providing definitions;

prohibiting state contracts with media monitoring organizations; requiring written certifications that state purchasing contracts are in compliance with the act; and clarifying the applicability of the act to state contracts.

Referred to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Senators Rucker, Deeds, Phillips, M. Maynard, and Woodrum:

Senate Bill 532—A Bill to amend and reenact §30-9-2, §30-9-5, §30-9-7, §30-9-8, §30-9-9, §30-9-10, §30-9-11, §30-9-16, and §30-9-26 of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, relating to certified public accountants; clarifying and updating definitions; modifying rule-making authority of the Board of Accountancy; updating education, examination, and experience requirements for certification; clarifying issuance of certificates to out-of-state applicants; revising provisions on substantial equivalency practice privileges; establishing conditions for issuance and renewal of authorizations; and updating unlawful acts and disciplinary provisions applicable to licensees, firms, and substantial equivalency practitioners.

Referred to the Committee on Government Organization.

By Senators Morris, Azinger, and Bartlett:

Senate Bill 533—A Bill to amend the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, by adding a new section, designated §35-1-6, relating to disaffiliation from religious denominations and property of religious organizations; requiring a two-thirds vote of the membership for disaffiliation; establishing classes of property for purposes of disaffiliation; treating each separately deeded parcel of real property as a distinct unit for Class A purposes; providing that a local religious organization that disaffiliates from a parent religious denomination or conference may retain ownership of each parcel of real property (Class A) if more than 50 percent of the costs for acquiring and improving that specific parcel were raised locally by or from the organization, subject to reimbursement of investments made by the parent religious denomination or conference; providing for ownership of chattel and personal property (Class B) based on the purchaser; providing for pro-rata ownership of intangible property (Class C) based on sources of funds over a two-year lookback period; providing a catch-all provision for classification of property by a court, mediator, or arbitrator; establishing a burden of proof on the parent religious denomination or conference; requiring the parent religious denomination or conference to provide accounting within a specified timeline; and providing for severability and application to affiliations entered into or reaffirmed on or after the effective date.

Referred to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Senator Deeds:

Senate Bill 534—A Bill to amend the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, by adding a new article, designated §60-11-1, §60-11-2, §60-11-3, §60-11-3a, §60-11-4, §60-11-5, §60-11-6, §60-11-7, §60-11-8, §60-11-9, §60-11-10, §60-11-11, and §60-11-12; and to repeal §19-12F-1, §19-12F-2, §19-12F-3, §19-12F-4, §19-12F-5, §19-12F-6, §19-12F-7, §19-12F-8, §19-12F-9, §19-12F-10, §19-12F-11, §60-10-1, and §60-10-2, relating to the West Virginia Kratom Consumer Protection Act; providing a short title and findings; defining terms; regulating and permitting the sale of kratom; prohibiting certain practices; giving rule-making authority; requiring age verification; taxing kratom business; creating an application process; permitting cooperative enforcement agreements; permitting seizure of contraband; creating criminal penalties; establishing a licensing fund; and permitting coordination.

Referred to the Committee on the Judiciary; and then to the Committee on Finance.

By Senator Chapman:

Senate Bill 535—A Bill to amend and reenact §24-1-2 of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended; and to amend the code by adding a new article, designated §24-2B-1, §24-2B-2, §24-2B-3, and §24-2B-4, relating to imposing a one-year moratorium on approval of certain public utility rate increases; defining terms; articulating legislative findings and purpose; requiring comprehensive study on methods and means to reduce certain utility rates; and requiring report on findings, conclusions, and recommendations of study.

Referred to the Committee on Energy, Industry, and Mining; and then to the Committee on Finance.

By Senator Rucker:

Senate Bill 536—A Bill to amend and reenact §18-5G-15 and §18B-2A-1 of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, relating to qualifications for serving on certain academic boards; revising requirements for serving as appointed voting member of Professional Charter School Board; and revising eligibility for appointment of members of institutional boards of governors.

Referred to the Select Committee on School Choice.

By Senator Deeds:

Senate Bill 537—A Bill to amend the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, by adding a new article, designated §5-11C-1, relating to enacting the Closed Captioning Act; requiring public places that have televisions for use by the public to have at least one half of those televisions to have their closed captioning feature activated at all times; providing an exception; defining terms; and establishing an effective date.

Referred to the Committee on Government Organization; and then to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Senators Deeds, Grady, M. Maynard, Roberts, and Tarr:

Senate Bill 538—A Bill to amend and reenact §29-21-13a of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, relating to increasing compensation for panel attorneys; and requiring the Public Defender Services to annually provide to the Legislative Oversight Commission on Health and Human Resources Accountability, the Foster Care Ombudsman, and the West Virginia Supreme Court of Appeals a report summarizing legal services that are being provided by panel attorneys.

Referred to the Committee on the Judiciary; and then to the Committee on Finance.

By Senators Deeds, Grady, M. Maynard, Roberts, and Tarr:

Senate Bill 539—A Bill to amend and reenact §29-21-13a, §49-1-201, §49-4-405, §49-4-601, §49-4-602, §49-4-604, §49-4-608, and §49-4-610 of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, relating to abuse and neglect cases.

Referred to the Committee on the Judiciary; and then to the Committee on Finance.

By Senators Deeds, Grady, M. Maynard, Roberts, and Tarr:

Senate Bill 540—A Bill to amend and reenact §49-2-802 of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, relating to body-worn cameras; requiring Child Protective Services workers to attempt to wear body-worn cameras during investigations; requiring workers to obtain consent to use body-worn cameras; permitting workers to refrain from using cameras in specific

circumstances; requiring audio and video to be maintained for specified time frame; and stating that audio and video file is part of the confidential child welfare record.

Referred to the Committee on the Judiciary; and then to the Committee on Finance.

By Senators Deeds, Grady, M. Maynard, Roberts, and Tarr:

Senate Bill 541—A Bill to amend and reenact §49-4-601, §49-4-602, §49-4-604, §49-4-608, and §49-4-610 of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, relating to requiring the circuit court to make certain designated findings of fact and conclusions of law in its juvenile child abuse and neglect orders.

Referred to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Senators Deeds, Grady, M. Maynard, Roberts, and Tarr:

Senate Bill 542—A Bill to amend the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, by adding a new section, designated §49-4-611, relating to the imposition of a time limitation on disposition decisions in child abuse and neglect proceedings.

Referred to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Senators Deeds, Grady, M. Maynard, Roberts, and Tarr:

Senate Bill 543—A Bill to amend and reenact §49-2-121 of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, relating to requiring the Bureau for Social Services to file a legislative rule.

Referred to the Committee on Health and Human Resources; and then to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Senators Deeds, Grady, M. Maynard, Roberts, and Tarr:

Senate Bill 544—A Bill to amend the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, by adding a new section, designated §49-2-815, relating to the temporary payment to a kinship parent of a subsidy equal to that of a foster parent.

Referred to the Committee on Health and Human Resources; and then to the Committee on Finance.

By Senators Deeds, Grady, M. Maynard, Roberts, and Tarr:

Senate Bill 545—A Bill to amend and reenact §49-2-125 of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, relating to creating a special revenue account to expand in-state residential treatment capacity for children; specifying the purposes of the fund; establishing funding sources; authorizing disbursements; and providing for administration.

Referred to the Committee on Finance.

By Senators Deeds, Grady, M. Maynard, Roberts, and Tarr:

Senate Bill 546—A Bill to amend the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, by adding a new article, designated §49-13-101, §49-13-102, §49-13-103, and §49-13-104, relating to clothing and necessity allowance; setting forth the purpose of the article; defining terms; setting forth the requirements to obtain funding from the Bureau for Social Services for approved necessities, an adequate wardrobe, and any supplementary clothing assistance; and setting forth the amount and form of payment.

Referred to the Committee on Health and Human Resources; and then to the Committee on Finance.

By Senator Barrett:

Senate Bill 547—A Bill to amend the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, by adding a new article, designated §29-19A-1, §29-19A-2, §29-19A-3, §29-19A-4, and §29-19A-5, relating to creating the Truth in Giving Act; providing a short title and purpose; defining terms; requiring certain information to be disclosed by thrift operators to donors and customers; specifying manner of disclosure; authorizing the Secretary of State to investigate violations; establishing criminal and civil penalties; providing for deposit of recovered funds; and authorizing Secretary of State to promulgate legislative rules.

Referred to the Committee on the Judiciary; and then to the Committee on Finance.

By Senator Barrett:

Senate Bill 548—A Bill to amend the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, by adding a new article, designated §33-64-1, §33-64-2, §33-64-3, §33-64-4, §33-64-5, and §33-64-6, relating to dental health care service plans; defining terms; providing for transparency of expenditures of patient premiums; requiring carriers to file annual reports; prohibiting certain restrictions on method of payment to providers; prohibiting certain contracts, clauses, or waivers; providing for enforcement by the Insurance Commissioner; authorizing third-party network contracts; requiring annual rebates in the form of premium reductions if funds spent for patient care is less than a certain percentage of premium funds; and providing for rulemaking.

Referred to the Committee on Banking and Insurance; and then to the Committee on Finance.

Senator Oliverio offered the following resolution:

Senate Resolution 8—Congratulating Anthony "Tony" Deal on being named Agent of the Year.

Which, under the rules, lies over one day.

The Senate proceeded to the seventh order of business.

Senate Concurrent Resolution 2, Supporting practices of freedom of religion in public spaces.

On unfinished business, coming up in regular order, was reported by the Clerk and referred to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Senate Resolution 6, Recognizing invaluable service of WV school custodians.

On unfinished business, coming up in regular order, was reported by the Clerk.

At the request of Senator Oliverio, unanimous consent being granted, reference of the resolution to a committee was dispensed with, and it was taken up for immediate consideration and adopted.

Senate Resolution 7, Proposing approval for Ohio River Restoration Program Act.

On unfinished business, coming up in regular order, was reported by the Clerk.

At the request of Senator Oliverio, unanimous consent being granted, reference of the resolution to a committee was dispensed with, and it was taken up for immediate consideration and adopted.

The Senate proceeded to the twelfth order of business.

Remarks were made by Senator Phillips.

The Senate then proceeded to the thirteenth order of business.

Under the provisions of Rule 15 of the Rules of the Senate, the following senators were added as co-sponsors to the following bills and resolutions on January 19, 2026:

Senate Bill 1: Senators Hamilton and Roberts;

Senate Bill 20: Senator Roberts;

Senate Bill 21: Senator Phillips;

Senate Bill 23: Senator Roberts;

Senate Bill 24: Senator Roberts;

Senate Bill 25: Senator Roberts;

Senate Bill 27: Senator Oliverio;

Senate Bill 28: Senator Oliverio;

Senate Bill 30: Senator Hart;

Senate Bill 47: Senator Hart;

Senate Bill 50: Senator Roberts;

Senate Bill 61: Senator Hart;

Senate Bill 76: Senator Hart;

Senate Bill 82: Senator Roberts;

Senate Bill 104: Senators Oliverio and Woelfel;

Senate Bill 105: Senator Woelfel;

Senate Bill 106: Senator Oliverio;

Senate Bill 111: Senator Woelfel;

Senate Bill 122: Senator Hamilton;

Senate Bill 125: Senator Hamilton;
Senate Bill 139: Senator Woelfel;
Senate Bill 145: Senator Woelfel;
Senate Bill 151: Senator Woelfel;
Senate Bill 154: Senators Hamilton and Hart;
Senate Bill 157: Senator Woelfel;
Senate Bill 169: Senator Hamilton;
Senate Bill 179: Senator Woelfel;
Senate Bill 193: Senator Woelfel;
Senate Bill 205: Senator Hamilton;
Senate Bill 208: Senator Woelfel;
Senate Bill 248: Senator Woelfel;
Senate Bill 396: Senator Woelfel;
Senate Bill 419: Senator Woelfel;
Senate Bill 425: Senator Woelfel;
Senate Bill 428: Senator Hamilton;
Senate Bill 436: Senator Hamilton;
Senate Bill 441: Senator Hamilton;
Senate Bill 450: Senator Woelfel;
Senate Bill 460: Senator Hart;
Senate Bill 472: Senator Takubo;
Senate Bill 473: Senator Woelfel;
Senate Bill 492: Senator Woelfel;
Senate Bill 498: Senator Thorne;
Senate Bill 502: Senator Rose;
Senate Bill 503: Senator Rose;

Senate Bill 504: Senator Thorne;

Senate Bill 506: Senator Thorne;

Senate Bill 507: Senator Thorne;

Senate Concurrent Resolution 2: Senator Bartlett;

Senate Resolution 6: Senators Morris, Clements, and Hamilton;

And,

Senate Resolution 7: Senator Clements.

Pending announcement of meetings of standing committees of the Senate,

On motion of Senator Martin, at 11:29 a.m., the Senate adjourned until tomorrow, Wednesday, January 20, 2026, at 11 a.m.

SENATE CALENDAR

**Wednesday, January 21, 2026
11:00 AM**

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

S. R. 8 - Congratulating Anthony "Tony" Deal on being named Agent of Year

FIRST READING

Com. Sub. for S. B. 15 - Protecting coal and gas minerals from carbon capture practices

S. B. 66 - Modifying classes of state of preparedness declared by Governor or Legislature

Com. Sub. for S. B. 137 - Modifying parole eligibility for crime of second degree murder and
voluntary manslaughter

Com. Sub. for S. B. 207 - Clarifying sheriff's compensation for collection of taxes