

# **WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE**

## **2026 REGULAR SESSION**

### **Introduced**

## **House Bill 4689**

**FISCAL  
NOTE**

By Delegates Anders, Funkhouser, White, Kump, and

Ferrell

[Introduced January 21, 2026; referred to the

Committee on the Judiciary]

1 A BILL to amend the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, by adding a new section,  
2 designated §1-1-6, relating to admitting localities or territories contiguous to the borders of  
3 West Virginia into the state for all purposes and responsibilities.

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

**ARTICLE 1. LIMITS AND JURISDICTION.**

**§1-1-6. Localities or territories contiguous to West Virginia borders admitted into the state;  
legislative approval; voters' approval; and procedures to effect admission to be part  
of state; and rights to vote and responsibilities in this state.**

1 (a) Any locality contiguous to the border of the State of West Virginia, including but not  
2 limited to towns, townships, cities, municipalities, counties, and hamlets, shall be enabled to join  
3 the state of West Virginia pursuant to the following:

4 (1) A binding referendum by that locality on the next available general election date  
5 following the voting laws of that state, or, failing the existence of such, according to the  
6 requirements of the state of West Virginia for a binding referendum.

7 (2) A vote by simple majority of the Legislature on the admission of the locality into the  
8 state of West Virginia where a "Yea" is to accept the new locality and a "Nay" is a vote to deny the  
9 new locality.

10 (3) The vote shall be taken during the next regular session of the Legislature and the  
11 Legislature may not adjourn sine die until such a vote is taken in that session. The issue of the  
12 admission to the state of West Virginia shall be submitted to the voters at the next general election  
13 for approval. If a majority of the voters approve admission into the state by these localities or  
14 territories, then the Legislature at the next regular session, in conformity with the provisions of  
15 section 11, article VI of the West Virginia Constitution, shall make provision for the number of  
16 members of which each house of the Legislature shall thereafter be increased by representation  
17 assigned to the additional localities or territories.

18           (4) Following the procedures set forth in subsection (3) of this section, the Secretary of  
19   State within seven days issue shall provide notice to Congress and the Post Master General that  
20   the locality or territory is now part of the state of West Virginia and that the Congress and Post  
21   Master General should take such steps as are necessary to conform their records and processes  
22   to reflect that change within 30 days, and to send receipt of the communication and confirmation  
23   upon its completion.

24           (b) The Secretary of State shall send notice to the citizens of the localities or territories  
25   where they are to send their state and county taxes, to begin on July 1 of that year.

26           (1) Citizens of such localities or territories shall have a reasonable grace period before  
27   enforcement shall begin to ensure that all instructions are able to be delivered to them in a timely  
28   manner prior to the enforcement of taxation.

29           (2) The Secretary of State shall send notice to the elected officials of that localities or  
30   territories of the structures, processes, and regulations of the governmental subdivisions that they  
31   are now subject to, and to offer assistance in complying with those structures, processes, and  
32   regulations.

33           (3) Businesses and business owners in the newly admitted localities or territories may file  
34   with the appropriate licensing and registration departments of the state free of charge until  
35   December 31 of the year in which the locality or territory is admitted to the state of West Virginia.

36           (4) Members of professional occupations subject to re-licensing and continuing education  
37   and other regulatory requirements shall have a grandfather provision for the period of time  
38   remaining in their current licensing timeframe in the state they seceded from.

39           (5) A six-month extension may be offered for this requirement to ease potential  
40   administrative congestion. Upon the end of any grandfathered licensing periods and/or  
41   extensions, members of professional occupations shall abide by the licensing and regulatory  
42   provisions of the state of West Virginia.

- 43            (c) The Legislature shall adopt other provisions to ensure the joining of new localities or  
44 territories into the state as quickly and efficiently as possible.

NOTE: The purpose of this bill is to allow admission as part of West Virginia, localities or territories that are contiguous to the borders of West Virginia.

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