



WRAP-UP

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE

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Full Access in 140 Characters

Since its inception in the Summer of 2006, Twitter has grown to become an important social media sharing site, able to disseminate information among its 300 million or more users across the world, breaking stories ranging from sports, politics and natural disasters.

Seizing upon the site's popularity in recent years, the West Virginia Legislature has taken strides to increase constituent accessibility and legislative transparency by maintaining three separate Twitter feeds, one each for the House of Delegates and the state Senate as well as one for the West Virginia Legislature as a whole.

Coupled with the audio feeds offered on the legislative website, following the Legislature's Twitter feeds, as well as those of lawmakers and statehouse reporters can give West Virginia citizens a real time, up to the minute view of what is happening in Charleston at the Capitol.

"Twitter's an effective way to quickly distribute information of what issues are being debated and discussed at the Legislature at a moments notice," said Senator Richard Browning (@SenatorBrowning) "It allows information to freely pass to our constituents further broadening the reach and transparency of the Legislature."

The Legislature's Twitter feeds (@WVHouse, @WVSenate and @WVLegislature) provide up to the minute updates of floor proceedings, action on the daily calendars and updated information regarding committee and floor meetings.



STEVE BRIGHTWELL WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE

On Tuesday, the House of Delegates honored long-time Sergeant-at-Arms Oce Smith, who has served the House for 45 years. Smith was presented with a Distinguished West Virginian award and named Sergeant-at-Arms Emeritus.

As an example, just this week the House Judiciary Committee worked well into the night discussing and debating legislation. To borrow a phrase, state residents from Matewan to Martinsburg and Wheeling to Welch, could all be tuned into what was going on in that particular committee by following along with the reporters covering it as well as the lawmakers assigned to that committee twitter feeds.

"Twitter helps us give play-by-play coverage of the Legislature in a way we haven't been able to before," Jared Hunt (@jaredwv) of the Daily Mail said. "As little as five years ago, all newspaper writers could do was give a postmortem analysis of what happened the day before, often times forcing us to sacrifice intricate details of the debate leading up to a decision. Now we can put our fol-

lowers in the committee room or chamber floor as members ask questions or say what's on their mind, giving our readers a chance to be better informed about the process and react to it in near-real time."

Many lawmakers have also made efforts to become more accessible to their constituency by becoming active users of the popular social media website. Members tweet what meetings they are attending, how they vote on a particular issue or responding to inquiries by media or citizens who follow their feeds.

Delegates Troy Andes (@TroyAndes) and Meshea Poore (@MesheaPoore) both use Twitter to connect and inform their constituents.



Completed Legislation

As of 4:00 p.m., Wednesday March 7, 2012, the 57th day of the 80th Legislature's 2nd Regular Session, 2,029 bills have been introduced in the House, 157 of which have passed the House, 180 in the Senate. Of those bills, 52 have completed legislation in both chambers and either have or await the Governor's signature. A sampling of these completed bills include:

Senate Bill 30 applies to salvage certificates for vehicles that are scrapped, compressed, dismantled or destroyed. It will bring the West Virginia Division of Motor Vehicles into compliance with the National Motor Vehicle Title Information System (NMVTIS) language. It will also provide a form to expedite the processing of salvage vehicles.

Senate Bill 165 will prohibit sexual acts between those who are incarcerated, on probation or parole with state and local jail, cor-

rectional, probation and parole employees or contractors, with or without consent. Criminal penalties have not been changed.

Senate Bill 205 updates language in West Virginia Code to reflect current standards used by the Division of Highways and identified in the Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices. The bill provides that signs and other traffic control devices be posted and include the location of the work, the speed limit and any other traffic restrictions.

Senate Bill 209 updates the meaning of "federal adjusted gross income" and certain other terms used in the West Virginia Personal Income Tax Act for the 2011 tax year to coincide with federal statutes.

Senate Bill 214 clarifies that a sunrise review is required for the establishment, revision or expansion of a professional scope of practice, removing the requirement that a change in scope of practice be substantial to activate the sunrise process.

Senate Bill 221 creates the Jason Flatt Act of 2012, which would require the Center for Professional Development to provide for the routine education of all professional educators and certain service personnel on warning signs and resources to assist in suicide prevention.

Senate Bill 343 provides for a three-month grace period for volunteer fire departments to submit data to the State Fire Marshal to be eligible to receive funding from the municipal pensions and protection fund or the fire protection fund. It requires the state fire marshal to notify each department of the due date and the grace period to ensure timely compliance. Additionally, the bill provides that when the records of a department are destroyed by means beyond the department's control, the department is exempt from filing information for three months after destruction of the records.

Senate Bill 365 increases the number of members on the Public Employees Insurance Agency Finance Board from 9 to 11 by adding one representative of a political subdivision and one additional representative of the public having experience in the financing, development or management of employee benefit programs.

Senate Bill 379 authorizes the West Virginia Board of Examiners for Registered Professional Nurses to designate nurse health programs for licensees and applicants for treatment and recovery for alcohol abuse, chemical dependency or major mental illness. The bill specifies those applicants not being subject to disciplinary action if the person complies with the goals and restrictions of the program and enrolls on a voluntary basis.

Senate Bill 382 generally relates to sex offender registration. The bill requires sex offenders to register with the State Police in the county of his or her residence and inform the police of any changes to their registration information. The sex offenders no longer have to register in every county they visit, work or attend school as the registry is now computerized.

Senate Bill 385 expands and updates the definitions of "computer" in the Computer Crimes and Abuse Act and in the statute, which prohibits providing obscene matter to minors.

Senate Bill 429 redefines Class A vehicles by increasing the maximum weight from 8,000 pounds to 10,000 pounds to include some vehicles currently defined as "Class B." Additionally, it redefines farm vehicles as "Class X."

Senate Bill 434 would require that only the last four digits of the social security number be provided when a judgment creditor files

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Completed Legislation

a suggestion against a judgment debtor as a means of protection for the judgment debtor and to aid proper identification. The bill also adds the requirement, when possible, to include the judgment debtor's date of birth.

Senate Bill 536 specifies that the State Auditor must use the State Treasurer's contracts and system for receiving payments by credit card for all charges collected by the Auditor.

Senate Bill 564 terminates the fund travel management special fund, into which aviation fees and monthly vehicle fees are deposited. The bill also creates two separate special revenue accounts to be known as the "Fleet Management Office Fund" and the "Aviation Fund." The money from the terminated fund will be transferred to the appropriate new fund.

House Bill 2521 will remove the requirement that domestic violence orders are to be served by certified mail. This will expedite service and eliminate delays in conducting final hearings.

House Bill 3128 will allow a person who has been acquitted or charges dismissed, to file a civil petition to expunge all records relating to the arrest, charges or other matters arising out of the arrest or charge.

House Bill 4037 will consider military training, experience and education towards qualification for professional or occupational licensure. The bill will also automatically extend and renew professional licenses of persons on active military duty.

House Bill 4086 will allow certain real or personal property to be assessed at salvage value for the 25 year period following when it was placed in service.

House Bill 4087 will extend the moratorium on the regular severance tax on the privilege of severing timber until the additional

Workers' Compensation Debt Reduction Act tax on the privilege of serving timber expires.

House Bill 4097 will authorize the Board of Barbers and Cosmetologists' to create a hair stylist license.

House Bill 4122 will establish agreements between teacher education programs and county boards to use intensively supervised "teacher-in-residence" programs in substitute of student teaching programs. This would allow college students pursuing education degrees greater flexibility when fulfilling the state student teaching requirements.

House Bill 4125 will allow for each school to begin sending an annual notice to parents and guardians of students at schools alerting them of school's crisis response plan and of their ability to review a redacted copy at the offices of the county board.

House Bill 4220 will authorize the Division of Natural Resources to promulgate a legislative rule relating to Prohibitions when hunting and trapping.

House Bill 4238 will further protect a program participant's location information by establishing procedures for the inclusion of Address Confidentiality Program participants on the special absentee voting list and the method of application and ballot provision for the program participants

House Bill 4299 will permit a county board of education to use bus operations regularly employed by the county board of a different county to operate buses leased by the county if buses from the owning county are unavailable.

House Bill 4330 will provide that driver's licenses may contain information designating the licensee as a person who is an honorably discharged veteran of any branch of the Armed Forces of the United States.

House Bill 4320 will provide alternatives to instituting a civil action in the circuit courts of the state by authorizing the Secretary of the Department of Environmental Protection to propose legislative rules to settle violations of the hazardous waste management act.

House Bill 4351 will allow miners to submit

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West Virginia Legislature's Web site

The online **West Virginia Code** has been enhanced to show bills that have become law (under the chapter of the code affected) but have yet to be incorporated in the online version. <http://www.legis.state.wv.us/WVCODE/Code.cfm>

Bill Tracking has been improved to allow users the ability to prioritize bills and add personal notes. Users can also now sort and view their bills by multiple criteria. http://www.legis.state.wv.us/billstatus_personalized/persbills_login.cfm

The legislative blog **Today in the Legislature** is a daily synopsis of legislative floor activities, complete with photos and daily committee meeting schedules. http://www.legis.state.wv.us/daily_sum/today.cfm

Visit the **Legislature's Homepage**: <http://www.legis.state.wv.us>

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“Being able to use Twitter in my service to the 31st district allows me to inform and educate on matters of the district, and be accessible,” said Delegate Poore. “It is something that is real time and allows those that follow me to really be a part of the process.”

Delegate Andes concurred.

“Posting roll call votes on Twitter gives my constituents a way to see how I’m voting in real-time. This year, I’ve expanded my efforts by tweeting the roll call vote of each member upon passage of a bill,” said Delegate Andes. “Social media lets me connect with constituents and immediately address their concerns, answer questions about pending legislation, and improve transparency in the legislative process all at no cost to the state’s taxpayers. The legislative pro-

cess only works when citizens are actively involved and Twitter empowers anyone to become involved from anywhere.”

Twitter also allows a user to group Twitter accounts into lists, making following the action at the Capitol even easier. You could group together all statehouse reporters, West Virginia lawmakers and West Virginia Legislature accounts into one list making accessing legislative action even easier and more manageable to follow.

For a more complete accounting of the Legislature, please use all available outlets to your advantage. This includes the Twitter feeds mentioned as well as the streaming audio of committee and floor meetings and the West Virginia Legislature’s Facebook page.

anonymous tips about safety issues, require that ventilation plans be submitted, and allow families to be part of the interview process should another mining disaster occur among other things.

House Bill 4493 establishes three new veteran holidays: March 30 will be known as Vietnam Veteran Recognition Day; August 7 will be known as Purple Heart Recognition Day; and July 27 will be known as Korean War Veteran Recognition Day.

House Bill 4583 will move the deadline associated with the termination, resignation and transfer of school personnel and rehiring of probationary employees from February 1 to March 1. The bill requires a twenty-day notice before employed teachers can leave one position for another within the system.