

1 **ENROLLED**

2 COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE

3 FOR

4 **Senate Bill No. 469**

5 (SENATORS MILLER, YOST, WELLS, CARMICHAEL, SNYDER, NOHE, WILLIAMS, JENKINS,
6 D. HALL, EDGELL, STOLLINGS, LAIRD AND SYPOLT, *original sponsors*)

7 _____
8 [Passed March 8, 2014; in effect ninety days from passage.]
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13 AN ACT to amend the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, by
14 adding thereto a new section, designated §19-1-11, relating to
15 the Veterans and Warriors to Agriculture Program; granting the
16 Department of Agriculture the authority to integrate veterans
17 into the field of agriculture; creating the Veterans and
18 Warriors to Agriculture special revenue account and fund;
19 exempting the Department of Agriculture from certain
20 purchasing requirements; requiring state departments to work
21 together; and permitting rulemaking.

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

23 That the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, be amended
24 by adding thereto a new section, designated §19-1-11, to read as

1 follows:

2 **ARTICLE 1. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE.**

3 **§19-1-11. Veterans and Warriors to Agriculture Program and fund.**

4 (a) *Legislative findings.* --

5 West Virginians have a longstanding tradition of service in
6 the armed forces of the United States. Many veterans suffer from
7 physical and emotional afflictions and are often unable to find
8 gainful employment upon returning from combat. Exploring
9 opportunities to engage West Virginia's veterans in agriculture is
10 beneficial to the health and welfare of veterans, as well as to the
11 future of West Virginia's agricultural economy.

12 (b) *Veterans and Warriors to Agriculture Program.* --

13 The Department of Agriculture shall develop a Veterans and
14 Warriors to Agriculture Program to integrate veterans into the
15 field of agriculture, and support veterans currently working in
16 agriculture. These programs may include, but are not limited to,
17 using post-mine land for agricultural development, promoting high
18 tunnel crops and production, expanding the apiary industry,
19 developing cottage industries, exploring niche crops, raising more
20 livestock, increasing the aquaculture industry and helping veterans
21 promote their agricultural products through farmers markets and
22 cooperatives. The department, Department of Veterans' Assistance
23 and the state's Adjutant General shall work together to recruit and
24 train eligible veterans, and develop and support the program.

1 (c) *Veterans and Warriors to Agriculture Fund.* -- There is
2 hereby created in the State Treasury a special revenue account,
3 designated the Veterans and Warriors to Agriculture Fund. The fund
4 shall consist of income from leasing the department's property for
5 the program, surplus funds which may be transferred from the fund
6 created by section six-a, article twelve-a of this chapter, gifts,
7 grants and donations, and legislative appropriations which may be
8 made to support the program. Expenditures from the fund shall be
9 used exclusively, in accordance with appropriations by the
10 Legislature, to pay costs, fees and expenses necessary to
11 administer the Veterans and Warriors to Agriculture Program:
12 *Provided,* That for fiscal year ending June 30, 2015, expenditures
13 are authorized from collections rather than pursuant to an
14 appropriation by the Legislature.

15 (d) Notwithstanding any provision in this code to the
16 contrary, should the Department of Agriculture deem it necessary to
17 provide land for activities within this program, it is exempt from
18 the purchasing requirements as they relate to the competitive
19 leasing of state property.

20 (e) The commissioner may propose emergency or legislative
21 rules for approval in accordance with the provisions of article
22 three, chapter twenty-nine-a of this code to effectuate the
23 provisions of this section.

