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**H. B. 2049**

(By Delegates Shott, Cooper ,Gearheart and Ambler)

[Introduced January 14, 2015; referred to the  
Committee on Veterans' Affairs then Finance.]

**FISCAL  
NOTE**

10 A BILL to amend and reenact §17-16A-29 of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, relating  
11 to the West Virginia Parkways, Economic Development and Tourism Authority and  
12 requiring the Parkways Authority to provide free daily toll passes for veterans traveling to  
13 the Veterans Administration Hospital for treatment.

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

15 That §17-16A-29 of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, be amended and  
16 reenacted to read as follows:

17 **ARTICLE 16A. WEST VIRGINIA PARKWAYS, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND**  
18 **TOURISM AUTHORITY.**

19 **§17-16A-29. Discount program for purchasers of West Virginia EZ Pass transponders.**

20 (a) The Parkways Authority is hereby authorized to create a discount program for purchasers  
21 of West Virginia EZ Pass transponders: *Provided*, That prior to the fixation of any initial rates, tolls  
22 or charges or any increase in any rates, tolls or charges along any portion of the parkway project, the

1 Parkways Authority shall create a discount program for purchasers of West Virginia EZ Pass  
2 transponders. Any discount program created pursuant to this section shall provide discounts for each  
3 class of motor vehicles.

4 (b) The Authority shall provide public notice and hold public hearings on any proposed  
5 discount program as required in section thirteen-a of this article prior to implementation of such  
6 program.

7 (c) Annually, the Parkways Authority shall hold at least one public informational session in  
8 each of the following counties: Kanawha, Fayette, Raleigh and Mercer counties. The Authority is  
9 to distribute educational materials and other information concerning the discount program for  
10 purchasers of West Virginia EZ Pass transponders described in this section.

11 (d) Upon the effective date of the amendments to this section enacted during the regular  
12 session of the Legislature in the year 2010, the Authority shall make available West Virginia EZ Pass  
13 transponders to the public without the payment of any monetary security deposit. The Authority  
14 shall credit any individual that has paid a security deposit for a West Virginia EZ Pass transponder  
15 prior to July 1, 2010, on the individual's next billing statement.

16 (e) For purposes of this section, a "West Virginia EZ Pass transponder" means a device sold  
17 by the Parkways Authority which allows the purchaser to attach the device to his or her motor  
18 vehicle and travel through a Parkways toll facility and be billed for such travel by the Authority.

19 (f) The Parkways Authority shall provide to the Beckley VA Medical Center a sufficient  
20 number of free daily toll passes to permit a veteran who is scheduled for medical care at the center  
21 during the following six months to travel over the parkway project to and from the center without  
22 paying any tolls. The Authority shall cooperate with the Beckley VA Center to create and implement

- 1 a program that will provide to the center, in advance, a sufficient supply of daily toll free passes and
- 2 restrict the use of the passes to only those days on which a veteran needs to travel to and from the
- 3 center for medical care. For the purposes of this subsection, the word “Veteran” has the same
- 4 meaning as in section seven, article one, chapter nine-a of this code.

NOTE: The purpose of this bill is to require the Parkways Authority to provide the Beckley VA Medical Center a sufficient number of free daily toll passes to permit Veterans who travel to that center for medical care to travel the West Virginia Turnpike without paying tolls.

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