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H. B. 2719

(By Delegates Skinner, Campbell, Reynolds, Overington
and Fluharty)

[Introduced February 12, 2015; referred to the
Committee on the Judiciary.]

**FISCAL
NOTE**

A BILL to amend and reenact §61-8-19a of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, relating
to increasing the criminal penalties for participating in an animal fighting venture.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:

That §61-8-19a of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, be amended and reenacted
to read as follows:

ARTICLE 8. CRIMES AGAINST CHASTITY, MORALITY AND DECENCY.

§61-8-19a. Animal fighting ventures prohibited.

(a) It is unlawful for any person to engage in, be employed at, or sell an admission to any
animal fighting venture.

(b) Any person who violates the provisions of this section is guilty of a ~~misdemeanor~~ felony
and, upon conviction thereof, shall be fined not less than ~~\$100~~ \$1,000 and not more than ~~\$1,000~~
\$25,000, or ~~confined in the county jail~~ imprisoned in a state correctional facility not ~~exceeding less~~
than one year, nor more than ten years or both so fined and ~~confined~~ imprisoned and may be divested
of ownership and control of such animals, and be liable for all costs for their care and maintenance:

1 *Provided*, That if the animal is a wild animal, game animal or fur-bearing animal, as defined in
2 section two, article one, chapter twenty of this code, or wildlife not indigenous to West Virginia, or
3 of a canine, feline, porcine, bovine, or equine species whether wild or domesticated, the person who
4 violates the provisions of this section is guilty of a felony and, upon conviction thereof, shall be fined
5 not less than ~~\$1,000~~ \$25,000 and not more than ~~\$5,000~~ \$50,000, and imprisoned in a state
6 correctional facility for not less than ~~one~~ five nor more than ~~five~~ fifteen years, or both fined and
7 imprisoned.

NOTE: The purpose of this bill is to increase the penalties for participating in an animal fighting venture.

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