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2015 APR -1 P 1:53

OFFICE WEST VIRGINIA
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WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE
FIRST REGULAR SESSION, 2015



ENROLLED

COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE
FOR

House Bill No. 2536

(By Delegate(s) Westfall, Walters,
B. White, Ashley, Frich and Kurcaba)



Passed March 12, 2015

In effect ninety days from passage.

HB 2536

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H. B. 2536

(BY DELEGATE(S) WESTFALL, WALTERS,
B. WHITE, ASHLEY, FRICH AND KURCABA)

[Passed March 12, 2015;
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AN ACT to amend the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, by adding thereto a new section, designated §33-12-32b, relating to travel insurance limited lines producers; defining terms; authorizing the Commissioner of Insurance to issue travel insurance entity producer license; establishing fees, fines, and penalties; requiring licensee to maintain register of travel retailers offering insurance on its behalf and designate a responsible individual producer; authorizing travel retailer to offer travel insurance and receive compensation under certain conditions;

requiring training of travel retailer employees offering travel insurance; exempting travel insurance entity producers and travel retailers and employees from examination and continuing education requirements; requiring travel retailer employees offering travel insurance to provide certain information; providing for enforcement; and permitting the Commissioner of Insurance to propose rules for legislative approval.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:

That the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, be amended by adding thereto a new section, designated §33-12-32b, to read as follows:

ARTICLE 12. INSURANCE PRODUCERS AND SOLICITORS.

§33-12-32b. Travel Insurance Entity Producer Limited License Act.

1 (a) *Definitions.* – For purposes of this section:

2 (1) A “group policy” means a policy issued to:

3 (A) A railroad company, steamship company, carrier by air,
4 public bus carrier or other common carrier of passengers, which
5 is considered the policyholder, where the policy insures its
6 passengers; or

7 (B) Any other group if the commissioner has determined by
8 rule that the members are engaged in a common enterprise or
9 have an economic or social affinity or relationship, and that
10 issuance of the policy would not be contrary to the best interests
11 of the public.

12 (2) “Offer and disseminate” means providing general
13 information, including descriptions of coverage and price,
14 processing applications, collecting premiums and performing

15 other activities permitted in this state without a license issued by
16 the commissioner.

17 (3) “Travel insurance” means:

18 (A) An individual or group policy of insurance that provides
19 coverage for personal risks incident to planned travel, including,
20 but not limited to:

21 (i) Interruption or cancellation of a trip or event;

22 (ii) Loss of baggage or personal effects;

23 (iii) Damages to accommodations or rental vehicles; or

24 (iv) Sickness, accident, disability or death occurring during
25 travel.

26 (B) “Travel insurance” does not include major medical plans
27 that provide comprehensive medical protection for travelers with
28 trips lasting six months or longer, including, but not limited to,
29 those working overseas as expatriates or military personnel
30 deployed overseas.

31 (4) “Travel insurance entity producer” means an entity
32 which is licensed under this section, is appointed by an insurer,
33 and has the duties set forth in subsection (d) of this section.

34 (5) “Travel retailer” means an entity that makes, arranges or
35 offers travel services, which may offer and disseminate travel
36 insurance on behalf of and under the direction of a travel
37 insurance entity producer.

38 (b) *License requirements.* – Notwithstanding any other
39 provision of law:

40 (1) The commissioner may issue a travel insurance entity
41 producer license, which authorizes the sale, solicitation or

42 negotiation of travel insurance issued by a licensed insurer, to a
43 person meeting the requirements of this section.

44 (2) An entity seeking a license under this section shall apply
45 on a form and in a manner prescribed by the commissioner.

46 (3) The annual fee for a travel insurance entity producer
47 license is \$200.

48 (c) *Conditions for travel retailers.* – A travel retailer may
49 offer and disseminate travel insurance policies under a license
50 issued to a travel insurance entity producer only if all of the
51 following conditions are met:

52 (1) The travel retailer agrees that it is bound by all applicable
53 provisions of this section and that no employee or authorized
54 representative, who is not licensed as an individual insurance
55 producer, may:

56 (A) Evaluate or interpret the technical terms, benefits, and
57 conditions of the offered travel insurance coverage;

58 (B) Evaluate or provide advice concerning a prospective
59 purchaser's existing insurance coverage; or

60 (C) Hold himself or herself out as a licensed insurer,
61 licensed producer, or insurance expert.

62 (2) The travel retailer makes available to prospective
63 purchasers brochures or other written materials that:

64 (A) State the identity and contact information of the insurer
65 and the travel insurance entity producer;

66 (B) Describe the material terms, or contain the actual
67 material terms, of the travel insurance coverage;

68 (C) Describe the process for filing a claim under the travel
69 insurance policy;

70 (D) Describe the review and cancellation processes for the
71 travel insurance policy;

72 (E) Explain that the purchase of travel insurance is not
73 required in order to purchase any other product or service from
74 the travel retailer; and

75 (F) Explain that a travel retailer not licensed by the
76 commissioner may provide general information about the travel
77 insurance offered, including a description of the coverage and
78 price, but is not qualified or authorized to answer technical
79 questions about the travel insurance or to evaluate the adequacy
80 of a prospective purchaser's existing insurance coverage.

81 (3) The travel retailer ensures that each employee and
82 authorized representative of the travel retailer whose duties
83 include offering and disseminating travel insurance successfully
84 completed the training required by this section.

85 (d) *Conditions for travel insurance entity producers.* – A
86 travel insurance entity producer may offer and disseminate travel
87 insurance policies through a travel retailer only if all of the
88 following conditions are met:

89 (1) On a form prescribed by the commissioner, the travel
90 insurance entity producer establishes, maintains and updates
91 annually a register of all travel retailers that offer travel
92 insurance on behalf of the travel insurance entity producer:

93 (A) The register shall include the name, address, and contact
94 information of each travel retailer and of the person who directs
95 or controls the travel retailer's operations, and the travel
96 retailer's federal tax identification number;

97 (B) The travel insurance entity producer shall certify that the
98 register complies with 18 U.S.C. §1033; and

99 (C) The travel insurance entity producer shall submit the
100 register to the commissioner within thirty days upon request.

101 (2) The travel insurance entity producer designates one of its
102 employees who is a licensed individual producer as the
103 responsible producer for the travel insurance entity producer's
104 compliance with this section and any rules promulgated under
105 this section.

106 (3) The designated responsible producer, and the president,
107 secretary, treasurer and any other person who directs or controls
108 the travel insurance entity producer's insurance operations,
109 comply with the fingerprinting requirements applicable to
110 insurance producers in the resident state of the travel insurance
111 entity producer.

112 (4) The travel insurance entity producer pays all applicable
113 insurance producer licensing fees set forth in this chapter or rules
114 promulgated under this chapter.

115 (5) The travel insurance entity producer requires each
116 employee and authorized representative of the travel retailer
117 whose duties include offering and disseminating travel insurance
118 to receive a program of instruction or training, which the
119 commissioner may review and approve or disapprove. The
120 training program shall, at a minimum, contain instructions on the
121 types of insurance offered, ethical sales practices and required
122 disclosures to prospective customers.

123 (e) A licensee under this section, and those registered under
124 its license pursuant to subdivision one, subsection (d) of this
125 section, are exempt from examination under section five of this
126 article and from continuing education requirements under section
127 eight of this article.

128 (f) A licensee under this section is subject to the provisions
129 of section six-b of this article as if it were an insurance agency.

130 (g) *License renewal.* – The commissioner shall annually
131 renew, on the expiration date as provided in this subsection, the
132 license of a licensee who qualifies and applies for renewal on a
133 form prescribed by the commissioner and pays the fee set forth
134 in subdivision three, subsection (b) of this section: *Provided,*
135 That the commissioner may fix the dates of expiration of travel
136 insurance entity producer licenses as he or she considers
137 advisable for efficient distribution of the workload of his or her
138 office:

139 (1) If the fixed expiration date would upon first occurrence
140 shorten the period for which a license fee has been paid, no
141 refund of unearned fee shall be made;

142 (2) If the fixed expiration date would upon first occurrence
143 lengthen the period for which a license fee has been paid, the
144 commissioner shall charge no additional fee for the lengthened
145 period;

146 (3) If a date is not fixed by the commissioner, each license
147 shall, unless continued as provided in this subsection, expire at
148 midnight on June 30 following issuance; and

149 (4) A licensee that fails to timely renew its license may
150 reinstate its license, retroactive to the expiration date, upon
151 submission of the renewal application within twelve months
152 after the expiration date and payment of a penalty in the amount
153 of \$50.

154 (h) *Appointment.* – A travel insurance entity producer may
155 not act as an agent of an insurer unless the insurer appoints the
156 travel insurance entity producer as its agent, as follows:

157 (1) The insurer shall file, in a format approved by the
158 commissioner, a notice of appointment within fifteen days from
159 the date the agency contract is executed and shall pay a
160 nonrefundable appointment processing fee in the amount of \$25:
161 *Provided*, That an insurer may elect to appoint a travel insurance
162 entity producer to all or some insurers within the insurer's
163 holding company system or group by filing a single notice of
164 appointment;

165 (2) Upon receipt of a notice of appointment, the
166 commissioner shall verify within a reasonable time, not to
167 exceed thirty days, that the travel insurance entity producer is
168 eligible for appointment: *Provided*, That the commissioner shall
169 notify the insurer within five days of a determination that the
170 travel insurance entity producer is ineligible for appointment;
171 and

172 (3) The insurer shall remit, no later than midnight on May 31
173 annually and in a manner prescribed by the commissioner, a
174 renewal appointment fee for each appointed travel insurance
175 entity producer in the amount of \$25; and

176 (4) The insurer shall maintain a current list of travel
177 insurance entity producers appointed to accept applications on
178 behalf of the insurer, and shall make the list available to the
179 commissioner upon reasonable request for purposes of
180 conducting investigations and enforcing the provisions of this
181 chapter.

182 (i) *Effect of registration.* – Notwithstanding any other
183 provision of law, if a travel retailer's insurance-related activities,
184 and those of its employees and authorized representatives, are
185 limited to offering and disseminating travel insurance on behalf
186 of and under the direction of a licensed travel insurance entity
187 producer, the travel retailer may perform those activities and
188 receive related compensation, upon registration by the travel

189 insurance entity producer pursuant to subdivision one,
190 subsection (d) of this section.

191 (j) *Liability.* – As the insurer’s appointed agent, the travel
192 insurance entity producer is liable for the acts or omissions of
193 the travel retailer in offering and disseminating travel insurance
194 under the travel insurance entity producer’s license and shall use
195 reasonable means to ensure compliance by the travel retailer
196 with this section.

197 (k) *Enforcement.* – In enforcing the provisions of this
198 section, the commissioner may use any enforcement mechanisms
199 in this chapter.

200 (1) If the commissioner determines that a travel retailer or its
201 employee has violated this section, the commissioner may after
202 notice and hearing:

203 (A) Impose fines not to exceed \$500 per violation or \$5,000
204 in the aggregate for the conduct; and

205 (B) Impose other or additional penalties that the
206 commissioner considers necessary and reasonable to carry out
207 the purpose of this section, including but not limited to:

208 (i) Suspending or revoking the privilege of offering and
209 disseminating travel insurance pursuant to this section by
210 specific business retailers or at specific business retail locations
211 where violations have occurred;

212 (ii) Suspending or revoking the privilege of individual
213 employees of a travel retailer to act under this section; and

214 (iii) Placing the travel retailer or its employees on probation
215 under terms and conditions prescribed by the commissioner.

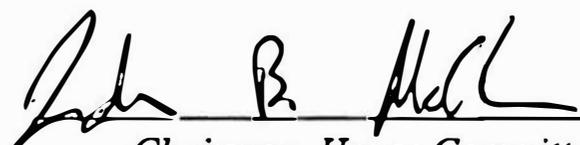
216 (2) If the commissioner determines that a travel insurance
217 entity producer has failed to perform its duties under this section

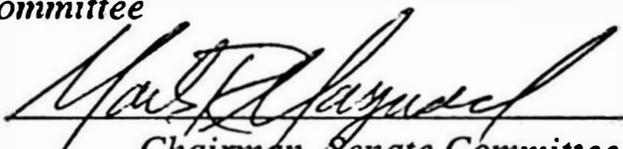
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218 or has otherwise violated this section, the travel insurance entity
219 producer is subject to the provisions of section twenty-four of
220 this article.

221 (l) The commissioner may propose rules for legislative
222 approval in accordance with the provisions of article three,
223 chapter twenty-nine-a of this code to implement this section.

That Joint Committee on Enrolled Bills hereby certifies that the foregoing bill is correctly enrolled.

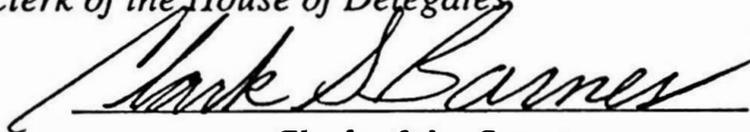

Chairman, House Committee

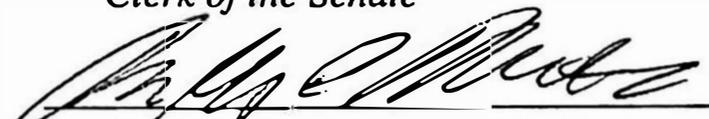

Chairman, Senate Committee

Originating in the House.

In effect ninety days from passage.


Clerk of the House of Delegates


Clerk of the Senate


Speaker of the House of Delegates


President of the Senate

The within is approved this the 1st
day of April, 2015.


Governor

PRESENTED TO THE GOVERNOR

MAR 18 2015

Time 5:30 pm