

# **WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE**

## **2017 REGULAR SESSION**

**Introduced**

### **Senate Bill 531**

BY SENATOR SYPOLT

[Introduced March 7, 2017; Referred  
to the Committee on Agriculture and Rural  
Development]

1 A BILL to amend and reenact §19-13-4 of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, relating  
2 to the renewal date for apiary certificates of registration.

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

1 That §19-13-4 of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, be amended and  
2 reenacted to read as follows:

**ARTICLE 13. INSPECTION AND PROTECTION OF AGRICULTURE.**

**§19-13-4. Registration of bees; identification of apiaries; limitation on liability.**

1 (a) All persons keeping bees in this state shall apply for a certificate of registration for bee  
2 keeping from the commissioner, within ten days of the date that bees are acquired, by notifying  
3 the commissioner, in writing, of the number and location of colonies they own or rent, or which  
4 they keep for someone else, whether the bees are located on their own property or someone  
5 else's property. All apiary certificates of registration expire on ~~December 31~~ June 30 of each year  
6 and must be renewed annually. Apiary certificates of registration issued in 2017 will be valid  
7 through June 30, 2018.

8 (b) All persons owning or operating an apiary which is not located on their own property  
9 must post the name and address of the owner or operator in a conspicuous place in the apiary.

10 (c) A person who:

11 (1) Owns and operates an apiary;

12 (2) Is registered with the commissioner; and

13 (3) Operates the apiary in a reasonable manner and in conformance with the West Virginia  
14 Department of Agriculture's written best management practices provided by rule, is not liable for  
15 any personal injury or property damage that occurs in connection with the keeping and  
16 maintaining of bees, bee equipment, queen breeding equipment, apiaries and appliances. The  
17 limitation of liability established by this section does not apply to intentional tortious conduct or  
18 acts or omissions constituting gross negligence.

19 The limitation on liability in this subsection shall not take effect until legislative rules

20 promulgated by the Commissioner of Agriculture are authorized by the Legislature. However, the  
21 Commissioner of Agriculture ~~shall have the authority to~~ may promulgate emergency rules under  
22 this subsection.

23 (d) In order to effectuate the purposes of subsection (c), the commissioner shall propose  
24 for promulgation, legislative rules in accordance with article three, chapter twenty-nine-a of this  
25 code: *Provided*, That the initial promulgation may be by emergency rule. The rule shall include  
26 best management standards for the operation of apiaries. The limitation on liability contained in  
27 subsection (c) shall not take effect until legislative rules are promulgated in accordance with article  
28 three, chapter twenty-nine-a of this code.

NOTE: The purpose of this bill is to permit the annual renewal date for apiary certificates of registration to be June 30 beginning in 2018.

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