

WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE

2019 REGULAR SESSION

Committee Substitute

for

House Bill 2396

BY DELEGATES THOMPSON AND LOVEJOY

[Originating in the Committee on Finance, February 21, 2019.]

1 A BILL to amend the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, by adding thereto a new article,
2 designated §19-37-1, relating to requiring all state-funded institutions to purchase a
3 minimum of five percent of fresh produce, meat and poultry products from in-state
4 producers if available at equal or lower cost.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:

ARTICLE 37. WEST VIRGINIA FRESH FOOD ACT.

**§19-37-1. Legislative findings and purpose; state-funded institutions to purchase food
from in-state sources; exceptions.**

1 (a) According to the West Virginia Farm Bureau state schools alone currently purchase
2 \$100 million of food from out-of-state sources.

3 (b) Locally grown food is healthier and more beneficial to the environment than food
4 imported from other states and other countries.

5 (c) This article will:

6 (1) Stimulate the agricultural economy of the state, especially in its economically
7 depressed areas, and allow small farmers to expand operations as well as acting as an incentive
8 to new people to begin farming;

9 (2) Encourage state-funded institutions to begin growing their own produce, thus enabling
10 people to learn and practice agricultural techniques, as well as lowering operational costs of those
11 institutions; and

12 (3) Spur self-sufficiency and economic independence of those who learn and engage in
13 agricultural activities.

14 (d) Beginning July 1, 2019, all state-funded institutions, such as schools, colleges,
15 correctional facilities, governmental agencies and state parks, shall purchase a minimum of five
16 percent of its fresh produce, meat and poultry products from in-state producers: *Provided*, That
17 such produce, meat and poultry products can be grown or is available from in-state producers

- 18 and at a cost equal to or less than the cost from out-of-state producers or United States
19 Department of Agriculture reported pricing data.