

WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE

2024 REGULAR SESSION

Introduced

House Bill 4435

FISCAL
NOTE

By Delegate Marple

[Introduced January 10, 2024; Referred
to the Committee on Technology and Infrastructure
then Finance]

1 A BILL to amend the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, by adding thereto a new section,
 2 designated §17-4-56, relating to installing emergency alert stations at rest areas and
 3 welcome centers in this state; providing for legislative findings; providing for the Division of
 4 Highways to install "blue light" towers; and providing for an effective date.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:

ARTICLE 4. STATE ROAD SYSTEM.

§17-4-56. Emergency "blue light" stations at rest areas and welcome centers.

1 (a) Legislative findings. – Emergency alert stations presently exist at many colleges and
 2 universities across the state, otherwise known as "blue light" towers. These emergency alert
 3 stations are typically equipped with a help button, which allows an individual in distress to call for
 4 help to campus police or local dispatch. These towers are typically equipped with a camera or
 5 video on the top. The Legislature finds that the installation of these emergency alert stations at rest
 6 areas and welcome centers in this state would be beneficial for all individuals who use these
 7 facilities. By installing emergency alert stations at such locations, county or city police could
 8 respond in the event of an emergency, and local dispatch could immediately communicate with
 9 persons who call for help. Further, the installation of these stations could prevent and interrupt
 10 human trafficking and/or the abduction of children as well as quick response to domestic violence
 11 incidents.

12 (b) Enactment. – The Division of Highways shall install emergency "blue light" towers,
 13 otherwise known as emergency alert stations, at all rest areas and welcome centers in this state.
 14 The Division shall ensure that these emergency alert stations have the capacity to reach local
 15 dispatch when an individual calls for help. These emergency alert stations shall come equipped
 16 with camera and video capability. The Division shall fund the installation of these structures.

17 (c) Effective date. – This section shall become effective July 1, 2024.

NOTE: The purpose of this bill is to install emergency alert stations at rest areas and

welcome centers in this state. The bill provides for legislative findings. The bill provides for the Division of Highways to install "blue light" towers. Finally, the bill provides for an effective date.

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