

WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE

2024 REGULAR SESSION

Introduced

Senate Bill 690

By Senators Rucker, Barrett, Chapman, Clements,
Deeds, Hamilton, Hunt, Karnes, Martin, Queen,
Roberts, Smith, Stuart, Taylor, and Nelson

[Introduced February 7, 2024; referred
to the Committee on Economic Development]

1 A BILL to amend the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, by adding thereto a new article,
 2 designated §29-37-1, relating to creating a commission on West Virginia Agritourism;
 3 appointment; terms; powers; and duties.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:

ARTICLE 37. WEST VIRGINIA AGRITOURISM COMMISSION.

**§29-37-1. West Virginia agritourism commission created; appointment; terms in office;
 expenses; powers and duties.**

1 (a) There is hereby created an agritourism commission which shall consist of seven
 2 members, who shall be residents and citizens of the state. The members shall be representatives
 3 from (1) Economic Development, (2) Tourism, (3) Agriculture extension service, (4) a farm
 4 distillery, (5) a vineyard, (6) a winery, all of whom shall have experience in agritourism and (7)
 5 small farms.

6 (b) The commission members shall be appointed by the Governor, by and with the advice
 7 and consent of the Senate, no later than July 1, 2025. No more than five members may belong to
 8 the same political party. The commission members shall serve a term concurrent with that of the
 9 Governor's term in office. Commission members may be reappointed to additional terms.

10 (c) The commission members shall review and investigate means of preserving our
 11 farmland and growing our agricultural tourism and agricultural economic development.

12 (d) Members shall be reimbursed for reasonable and necessary expenses incurred in
 13 fulfilling the duties and responsibilities of the commission.

14 (e) The commission:

15 (1) May meet with similar commissions or bodies of any of the several states, whose
 16 purpose in their respective states is to preserve farmland, grow agricultural tourism, and
 17 agricultural economic development;

18 (2) Shall recommend to the Legislature that appropriate legislation be enacted,
 19 establishing regulatory and legislative relief to foster the development and growth of Agritourism

20 and successful farms; and
21 (3) Shall prepare an annual report to the Legislature and Governor, by the first day of the
22 legislative session, concerning commission activities, recommendations, and other necessary
23 information.

NOTE: The purpose of this bill is to create a commission on West Virginia Agritourism to review and investigate means of preserving our farmland and growing our agricultural tourism and agricultural economic development and recommend to the Legislature that appropriate legislation be enacted, establishing regulatory and legislative relief to foster the development and growth of Agritourism and successful farms.

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