



## **WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE**

### **SELECT COMMITTEE ON PEIA, SENIORS AND LONG-TERM CARE**

**2021 Interim Session**

#### **Senate Members**

**Senator Michael Azinger, Chair**  
**Senator Donna J. Boley**  
**Senator Charles H. Clements**  
**Senator Bill Hamilton**  
**Senator Eric Nelson**  
**Senator Michael Romano**  
**Senator Michael Woelfel**

#### **House Members**

**Delegate Matthew Rohrbach, Chair**  
**Delegate Brent Boggs**  
**Delegate John Doyle**  
**Delegate Shannon Kimes**  
**Delegate Larry Pack**  
**Delegate Ken Reed**  
**Delegate Heather Tully**

### **Final Report of the Select Committee on PEIA, Seniors and Long-Term Care**

The Select Committee on PEIA, Seniors and Long-Term Care was appointed by the Joint Committee on Government and Finance following the 2021 Regular Session of the Legislature. The Committee was not assigned any specific topics or resolutions for study.

The Committee elected to continue its review of the Public Employees Insurance Agency (PEIA) during the first meeting held June 8, 2021. At that meeting, Chairman of the Board for the West Virginia Hospital Association and the President and CEO of WVU Health Systems, Albert Wright, discussed SB398 from the last legislative session that placed a moratorium on PEIA non-state entrants into the program. Bob Milvet, CEO of Grant Memorial Hospital and Board member of the West Virginia Hospital Association testified on PEIA Hospital Inpatient Rates and the impact on rural hospitals. He discussed payments from employers, Medicare, and PEIA and how those payments differentiate. The Hospital

Association stated that they would like to negotiate with PEIA for non-state agencies as well as bring PEIA payments up to Medicare payment levels for West Virginia providers.

The second interim meeting was held on September 13, 2021. At that meeting, Ted Cheatham, Director of PEIA, addressed the Committee discussing the questions raised from the previous meeting concerning PEIA Inpatient Rates. He gave a budgetary overview of PEIA and an explanation of those insured by category as well as how PEIA determines payment amounts. Mr. Cheatham answered questions regarding the future of PEIA with respect to privatization, financial concerns, and funds needed to offset potential premium increases in 2023. Finally, Kathie Wiseman, Account Manager for UMR, discussed billing and reporting questions from the Committee.

The third interim meeting was held October 12, 2021. Bill Carpenter, President of the Directors of Senior and Community Services discussed the challenges faced by senior providers throughout the pandemic. He discussed in-home services and meal rates for seniors. Mr. Carpenter addressed potential problems with Senior Services including employee salaries, investments in Senior Programs, vaccine mandates and the effect on employment, as well as the state funding structure. Robert Roswell, Commissioner of West Virginia Senior Services gave an update on the Bureau. He discussed reopening senior centers on the county level, the status of increased meals and increased seniors participating in the program. Mr. Roswell stated that there are now service trucks for seniors in 47 counties. Finally, he discussed a 5-year State Plan on Aging.


The fourth interim meeting was held November 15, 2021. Representatives from AARP, including Jane Marks, Gaylene Miller, and Angela Vance, all testified about recommendations for improving and expanding access to Medicaid long-term support. They discussed investment opportunities for home and community services as well as direct care workforce improvements. Ms. Marks, State President of AARP, presented a WV scorecard for Senior Services, ranking low. She discussed the state's reliance on nursing homes and the exponential cost it bears compared to in-home services, ranking in the top ten most expensive states. Ms. Vance, Associate State Director of AARP, presented recommendations to the

committee to aid in expanding support, including direct care workforce investments, incentives to attract employment, an evaluation of American Rescue Plan funding in coordination with DHHR, as well as investments in home and community-based services. Ms. Miller, State Director of AARP, gave an overview of initiatives discussed throughout the meeting and stressed the recommendation of an intensive study to evaluate strategies to overcome these problems.

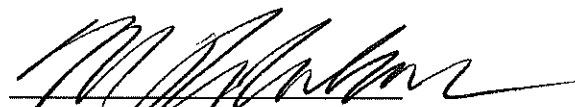
The fifth and final interim committee of 2021 was held on December 6<sup>th</sup>. Danielle Funk, Program Manager for the West Virginia Center for End-of-Life Care, discussed advanced care planning, medical orders, and the West Virginia e-Directive Registry. She discussed the importance of taking advantage of these services so that seniors have access to resources and education for their medical care. Lastly, Dr. Amy Wirts, Chair of the State Advisory Coalition on Palliative Care, gave a presentation on Palliative Care in West Virginia. She stated that West Virginia earned a "C" for its access to palliative care and suggested increasing awareness and improving access to ensure that West Virginia residents living with a serious illness are living their best everyday life. A draft bill aimed at palliative care was distributed to the Committee.

The meeting on January 9, 2022, was cancelled due to conflicts with the special session.

Respectfully submitted,



Senator Michael Azinger, Co-Chair



Delegate Matthew Rohrbach, Co-Chair