



# West Virginia House of Delegates

## Standing Committee on the Judiciary

Minutes for March 09, 2026, 9:00 AM

Pursuant to the call of the Chair, the Standing Committee on the Judiciary met on March 09, 2026, at 9:00 AM, in the House Judiciary Committee Room 410-M with Delegate Akers in the Chair.

Members present: Delegates Fluharty, Hansen, Butler, Cannon, Ferrell, Flanigan, Funkhouser, Heckert, Hillenbrand, Holstein, Hornby, Jennings, Kimble, Mallow, Marple, Martin, Masters, Maynor, Phillips, Ridenour, Roop, Shamblin, Ward, B., and Chairman Akers.

Members absent: None.

A silent roll call being taken, the presence of a quorum was established.

On motion of Vice-Chairman Maynor, the minutes of the previous meeting were approved.

**Committee Substitute for Senate Bill 54, Establishing criminal penalties for abuse or neglect of incapacitated adults**

Chairman Akers recognized counsel for purposes of explaining the bill. Chairman Akers called for amendments to the bill. On motion of Vice-Chairman Maynor, an amendment to the bill was offered.

Chairman Akers recognized counsel for purposes of explaining the proposed amendment. Chairman Akers called for questions for counsel. Chairman Akers called for amendments to the proposed amendment.

There being no amendments offered, Chairman Akers called for discussion on the proposed amendment. Chairman Akers put the question before the committee on adoption of the motion. The motion was adopted and Chairman Akers declared the amendment was approved. Chairman Akers recognized Vice-Chairman Maynor for purposes of making a motion.

Vice-Chairman Maynor moved to report Committee Substitute for Senate Bill 54 to the floor, with amendment, with the recommendation that it do pass, as amended. Chairman Akers called for discussion on the motion. Chairman Akers put the question before the committee on adoption of the motion. The motion was adopted and Chairman Akers ordered the bill to be reported as moved.

**Committee Substitute for Senate Bill 59, Relating to voter eligibility and residency requirements**

Chairman Akers recognized Senator Rucker as the lead sponsor for purposes of explaining the bill. Chairman Akers called for questions for Senator Rucker. Questions from the committee members followed. Chairman Akers advanced the bill to markup and discussion.

**Committee Substitute for Senate Bill 506, Permitting certain use of county-owned wireless tower**

Chairman Akers recognized counsel for purposes of explaining the bill. Chairman Akers called for amendments to the bill. On motion of Vice-Chairman Maynor, an amendment to the bill was offered.

Chairman Akers recognized counsel for purposes of explaining the proposed amendment. Chairman Akers called for questions for counsel. Chairman Akers called for amendments to the proposed amendment.

There being no amendments offered, Chairman Akers called for discussion on the proposed amendment. Chairman Akers put the question before the committee on adoption of the motion. The motion was adopted and Chairman Akers declared the amendment was approved. Chairman Akers recognized Vice-Chairman Maynor for purposes of making a motion.

Vice-Chairman Maynor moved to report Committee Substitute for Senate Bill 506 to the floor, with amendment, with the recommendation that it do pass, as amended. Chairman Akers called for discussion on the motion. Chairman Akers put the question before the committee on adoption of the motion. The motion was adopted and Chairman Akers ordered the bill to be reported as moved.

**Senate Bill 900**, Including certain correctional facilities as "targeted facility"

Chairman Akers recognized counsel for purposes of explaining the bill. Chairman Akers called for amendments to the bill. On motion of Vice-Chairman Maynor, an amendment to the bill was offered.

Chairman Akers recognized counsel for purposes of explaining the proposed amendment. Chairman Akers called for questions for counsel. Chairman Akers called for amendments to the proposed amendment.

There being no amendments offered, Chairman Akers called for discussion on the proposed amendment. Chairman Akers put the question before the committee on adoption of the motion. The motion was adopted and Chairman Akers declared the amendment was approved. Chairman Akers recognized Vice-Chairman Maynor for purposes of making a motion.

Vice-Chairman Maynor moved to report Senate Bill 900 to the floor, with amendment, with the recommendation that it do pass, as amended. Chairman Akers called for discussion on the motion. Chairman Akers put the question before the committee on adoption of the motion. The motion was adopted and Chairman Akers ordered the bill to be reported as moved.

**Committee Substitute for Senate Bill 1008**, Relating to statute of limitations for asbestos and silica litigation

Chairman Akers recognized counsel for purposes of explaining the bill. Chairman Akers called for amendments to the bill. On motion of Vice-Chairman Maynor, an amendment to the bill was offered.

Chairman Akers recognized counsel for purposes of explaining the proposed amendment. Chairman Akers called for questions for counsel. Chairman Akers called for amendments to the proposed amendment.

There being no amendments offered, Chairman Akers called for discussion on the proposed amendment. Chairman Akers put the question before the committee on adoption of the motion. The motion was adopted and Chairman Akers declared the amendment was approved. Chairman Akers recognized Vice-Chairman Maynor for purposes of making a motion.

Vice-Chairman Maynor moved to report Committee Substitute for Senate Bill 1008 to the floor, with amendment, with the recommendation that it do pass, as amended. Chairman Akers called for discussion on the motion. Chairman Akers put the question before the committee on adoption of the motion. The motion was adopted and Chairman Akers ordered the bill to be reported as moved.

**Committee Substitute for Senate Bill 928**, Relating to manufacture, sale, and distribution of low-proof spirit alcohol products

Chairman Akers recognized counsel for purposes of explaining the bill. Chairman Akers called for questions for counsel. Questions from the committee members followed. Without objection and having been placed under oath by Chairman Akers the following individuals provided remarks to the committee: Mr. RF Stein, City Ice and Fuel; Mr. Michael Smith, Beverage Market; Mr. Thomas Mutter, retail store owner; Mr. Bill McKinght, BFS Foods, Inc.; and Mr. Anthony Majestro, West Virginia Retailers Association. Without objection and having been placed under oath by Chairman Akers the following individuals provided remarks to and answered questions from the committee: Ms. Bridget Lambert, President, West Virginia Retailers Association; and Mr. Phillip Reale, West Virginia Beer Wholesalers Association. Chairman Akers advanced the bill to markup and passage.

**Committee Substitute for Senate Bill 937**, Establishing community-based child welfare system program

Chairman Akers recognized counsel for purposes of explaining the bill. Chairman Akers called for questions for counsel. Questions from the committee members followed. On motion of Vice-Chairman Maynor, the committee recessed.

\* \* \*

Chairman Akers called the committee to reconvene.

Without objection and having been placed under oath by Chairman Akers the following individuals provided remarks to the committee: Ms. Taunja Hutchison, Director, Children First; Ms. Mia Johnson, Chief Executive Officer, Burlington United Methodist Family Services; Ms. Betty Rivard; Mr. Mark Drennan, West Virginia Behavioral Healthcare Providers Association; and Mr. Jeremiah Samples, West Virginia Lobbyist Group. Chairman Akers advanced the bill to markup and passage.

**Senate Bill 59**, Relating to voter eligibility and residency requirements

Chairman Akers recognized counsel for purposes of explaining the bill. Chairman Akers called for questions for counsel. Questions from the committee members followed. Chairman Akers advanced the bill to markup and passage.

**Committee Substitute for Senate Bill 200**, Increasing criminal penalties and fines for assault on certain public service workers, law-enforcement officers, and police animals

Chairman Akers recognized counsel for purposes of explaining the bill. Chairman Akers called for questions for counsel. Questions from the committee members followed. Chairman Akers advanced the bill to markup and passage.

**Committee Substitute for Senate Bill 723, Clarifying law-enforcement cooperation with bordering states**

Chairman Akers recognized counsel for purposes of explaining the bill. Chairman Akers called for questions for counsel. Chairman Akers advanced the bill to markup and passage.

**Committee Substitute for Senate Bill 440, Increasing penalty for transporting telecommunication devices into jails**

Chairman Akers recognized counsel for purposes of explaining the bill. Chairman Akers called for questions for counsel. Chairman Akers advanced the bill to markup and passage.

**Committee Substitute for Senate Bill 481, Relating to elections**

Chairman Akers recognized counsel for purposes of explaining the bill. Chairman Akers called for questions for counsel. Questions from the committee members followed. Without objection and having been placed under oath by Chairman Akers, Ms. Michelle Holly, County Clerk, Fayette County, answered questions from the committee. Chairman Akers advanced the bill to markup and passage.

**Committee Substitute for Senate Bill 531, Establishing First Amendment Preservation Act**

Chairman Akers recognized counsel for purposes of explaining the bill. Chairman Akers called for questions for counsel. Questions from the committee members followed. Without objection and having been placed under oath by Chairman Akers, Mr. Michael Martin, Newsmax Media, answered questions from the committee. Chairman Akers advanced the bill to markup and passage.

**Committee Substitute for Senate Bill 800, Clarifying policy of state regarding jury service**

Chairman Akers recognized counsel for purposes of explaining the bill. Chairman Akers called for questions for counsel. Chairman Akers advanced the bill to markup and passage.

On motion of Vice-Chairman Maynor, the committee adjourned.

---

Delegate JB Akers  
Committee Chair

---

Mr. Daniel Osborne  
Senior Clerk