



West Virginia Senate

Committee on Judiciary

Minutes for February 09, 2026, 3:00 PM

Pursuant to the call of the Chair, the Senate Committee on Judiciary met on February 09, 2026, 3:00 PM in Room 208-W.

Members present: Senators Willis, Bartlett, Azinger, Chapman, Charnock, Deeds, Fuller, Hart, Maynard, Rucker, Tarr, Taylor, Weld, Garcia

Members absent: Senators Helton, Martin, Rose

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

On motion of Senator Bartlett, the minutes of the previous meeting were approved.

S. B. 575 - Clarifying county attorney obligations for refusal review hearings.

Candace Kraus, Counsel, explained the bill, the purpose of the proposed committee substitute, and responded to questions.

With leave of the committee, Adam Holley, General Counsel, Division of Motor Vehicles, was administered the oath prescribed by Senate Rule 28a by Chairman Willis, addressed the committee, and responded to questions. (See attached oath.)

With leave of the committee, Harley Wagner, Defense Attorney, was administered the oath prescribed by Senate Rule 28a by Chairman Willis, addressed the committee, and responded to questions. (See attached oath.)

With leave of the committee, Joseph Kinser, Berkeley County Prosecuting Attorney, addressed the committee, and responded to questions.

The question being on agreeing to the committee substitute, the same was put, and the committee substitute was agreed to.

On motion of Senator Bartlett, the committee reported the committee substitute to the full Senate with the recommendation that it do pass, but first be referred to the Committee on Finance.

S. B. 531 - Establishing First Amendment Preservation Act.

Aaron Cobb, Extern Law Clerk, explained the bill, the purpose of the proposed committee substitute, and responded to questions.

With leave of the committee, Michael Martin, Director of Government Affairs, Newsmax, was administered the oath prescribed by Senate Rule 28a by Chairman Willis, addressed the committee, and responded to questions. (See attached oath.)

The question being on agreeing to the committee substitute, the same was put, and the committee substitute was agreed to.

On motion of Senator Bartlett, the committee reported the committee substitute to the full Senate with the recommendation that it do pass.

On Motion of Senator Bartlett the committee adjourned.



Thomas E. Willis II
Chair



Beverly Douglas
Clerk/Analyst

The Senate of West Virginia



Testimony taken this 9th day of February, 2026, in
the Senate Committee on the Judiciary.

"I swear to tell the truth, nothing but the truth, under penalty of
false swearing, so help me God."

Adam Holley

Print Witness Name

Ad Holley

Sign Witness Name

Oath was administered by:

Thomas E. Willis II

Print Member Name

[Signature]

Sign Member Name



The Senate of West Virginia

Remote/Virtual Testimony

Testimony taken this 9th day of February, 2026, in
the Senate Committee on the Judiciary.

"I swear to tell the truth, nothing but the truth, under penalty of
false swearing, so help me God."

Harley Wagner

Print Witness Name

Beverly Douglas

Testimony Attested to

By Committee Clerk

Oath was administered by:

Thomas E. Willis II

Print Member Name

Sign Member Name



The Senate of West Virginia

Remote/Virtual Testimony

Testimony taken this 9th day of February, 2026, in
the Senate Committee on the Judiciary.

“I swear to tell the truth, nothing but the truth, under penalty of
false swearing, so help me God.”

Michael Martin

Print Witness Name

Beverly Douglas

Testimony Attested to

By Committee Clerk

Oath was administered by:

Thomas E. Willis II

Print Member Name

Sign Member Name