



Patrick Morrisey
Office of the Governor

March 12, 2026

VIA HAND DELIVERY

The Honorable Randy Smith
President, West Virginia Senate
Building 1, Room M-229
1900 Kanawha Boulevard, East
Charleston, West Virginia 25305

RE: Enrolled Committee Substitute for Senate Bill 250

Dear Senate President:

The difficult decisions we made last year to start addressing the State's long-term financial liabilities positioned us to have the fiscally prudent FY 2027 budget that I am approving today. I am committed to working with the legislature over the next several years to continue these efforts to right-size our ongoing base expenditures of General Revenue and Lottery funds. We must continue to maintain a strong level of budgetary reserves, limit the growth rate of base program funding, and focus on addressing our long-term fiscal challenges. It is critical that we remain disciplined in the use of long-term budget planning, as reflected in the State's Six Year Financial Plan, as a key tool to ensure we manage West Virginia's resources prudently and effectively.

Pursuant to the provisions of section fifty-one, article VI of the Constitution of West Virginia, I hereby return Enrolled Committee Substitute for Senate Bill 250, passed March 6, 2026, approved with the following objections:

My first objection to the Bill is contained in page 4, lines 58-60, which states:

“That no more than a total of five percent of the general revenue appropriated to any one fund may be transferred to other funds within the department, or other appropriations within a fund, for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2027:”

The Honorable Randy Smith

March 12, 2026

Page 2

I am advised that this insertion of new language will be overly burdensome and restrictive for the operation of State Agencies. Restricting the dollar amount of transfers within the same funds will hamper the ability of state agencies to be responsive to the changing demands placed upon them. This intra-fund restriction is also in conflict with transfer provisions described on lines 71-77 on the same page. My proposed changes return this language to established budget practices that have been in place for many years. Therefore, I am striking “to any one fund” on lines 58 and 59 and “or other appropriations within a fund,” on lines 59 and 60.

My second objection to the Bill is contained in page 4, lines 65-71, which states:

“and no funds may be transferred to a “Personal Services and Employee Benefits” appropriation unless the source funds are also wholly from a “Personal Services and Employee Benefits” line, or unless the source funds are from another appropriation that has exclusively funded employment expenses for at least twelve consecutive months prior to the time of transfer and the position(s) supported by the transferred funds are also permanently transferred to the receiving agency or board within the department:”

This language is duplicative of the language immediately preceding it on lines 60-65. Therefore, I am striking it in its entirety.

My third objection to the Bill is contained in Item 35, page 29, line 9, which states:

“Marshall University Research Corporation..... 80701 1,000,000”

My recommendation maintains Marshall University Research Corporation at its prior-year funding level of \$500,000. Marshall’s Research Corporation is a thriving enterprise that received \$73.3 million in external awards in FY 2024 and \$67.7 million in FY 2025 across hundreds of federal, foundation, and private grants, including the National Institutes of Health (NIH), Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC), Economic Development Administration (EDA), and private donors. There is no imperative to increase the state appropriation when the Corporation’s external funding base is substantial and growing. Therefore, I am reducing the appropriation by \$500,000 to \$500,000.

My fourth objection to the Bill is contained in Item 35, page 29, line 11, which states:

“International Trade Offices..... xxxxx 1,000,000”

I remain committed to expanding West Virginia’s international trade opportunities. At the same time, we must exercise fiscal discipline on overseas spending. Therefore, I am reducing the appropriation by \$250,000 to \$750,000.

My fifth objection to the Bill is contained in Item 44, page 34, line 4, which states:

The Honorable Randy Smith
March 12, 2026
Page 3

“Tourism – Industry Development (R) 61806 2,550,127”

I spoke at the groundbreaking for Appalachian Outlaw Trails and am a strong supporter of this project and its potential to drive tourism and economic development in the Upper Kanawha Valley. This reduction reflects the project’s active pursuit of the Abandoned Mine Lands Economic Revitalization (AMLER) grant, which could provide substantially greater funding, potentially in the millions of dollars. I believe it is prudent to right-size the State’s investment while the federal grant process is underway and look forward to the project’s continued success. Therefore, I am reducing the appropriation by \$250,000 to \$2,300,127.

My sixth objection to the Bill is contained in Item 44, page 35, lines 16 through 17, which states:

“, and \$250,000 shall be used for Appalachian Outlaw Trails”

To keep in line with the reduction made to this appropriation in my fifth objection, I am also eliminating the associated directive language for fund 0246, appropriation 61806. Therefore, I am striking “, and \$250,000 shall be used for Appalachian Outlaw Trails” on lines 16 and 17.

My seventh objection to the Bill is contained in Item 110, page 75, line 5, which states:

“Court Appointed Special Advocates 33301 1,100,000”

I am very supportive of CASA’s mission to represent the best interests of abused and neglected children in court. Even with this reduction, CASA will receive \$400,000 more than its FY 2026 appropriation. CASA operates a proven model built on trained community volunteers and has a strong track record of securing competitive grants at the federal and state level. This action reflects confidence in the organization’s ability to leverage its competitive grant success while still providing a meaningful increase in state support over the prior year. Therefore, I am reducing the appropriation by \$400,000 to \$700,000.

My eighth objection to the Bill is contained in Item 337, page 170, line 177, which states:

“Rhododendron Girl’s State (Ohio) (Ohio) \$5,941”

In order to correct a drafting error, I am striking the second instance of the word “(Ohio)”.

My ninth objection to the Bill is contained in Item 337, page 170, line 184, which states:

“Shiloh Days (Tyler) (Tyler) \$2,000”

In order to correct another drafting error, I am striking the second instance of the word “(Tyler)”.

My tenth objection to the Bill is contained in Section 12, page 212, lines 1-3, which states:

The Honorable Randy Smith
March 12, 2026
Page 4

“During Fiscal Year 2027, the following funds are hereby available and are to be transferred to the Department of Health and Human Resources, Division of Human Services – Medical Services Trust Fund (fund 5185) from available balances per the following:”

In the 2023 Regular Session, the Legislature passed HB 2006, which split the Department of Health and Human Resources into three new successor departments. The Medical Services Trust Fund was continued under the new Department of Human Services. Therefore, I am striking “Health and Human Resources, Division of” on line 2 in order to reflect the reorganization that occurred nearly three years ago.

My eleventh objection to the Bill is contained in Item 438, page 212, line 1, which states:

“Directed Transfer 70000 \$ 2,000,000”

This \$2,000,000 Directed Transfer from the Auditor’s Securities Regulation Fund would imperil the Auditor’s ability to adequately run the program. Therefore, I am reducing it by \$250,000 to \$1,750,000.

My twelfth objection to the Bill is contained in Item 442, page 213, line 1, which states:

“Directed Transfer 70000 \$ 1,000,000”

The transfer of \$1,000,000 from the Elevator Safety Fund would exceed the available unencumbered balance of this fund, which includes encumbrances required by HB 3398, 2023 Regular Session. This transfer of funds would ultimately cause the elevator safety program to shut down. Therefore, I am reducing it by \$1,000,000 to \$0.

For the reasons stated herein, I have approved, subject to the above objections, Enrolled Committee Substitute for Senate Bill 250.

Sincerely,



Patrick Morrissey
Governor

cc: The Hon. Roger Hanshaw
Speaker, West Virginia House of Delegates

The Hon. Kris Warner
Secretary of State of West Virginia