

A Presidents Day note to News and Sentinel readers

PARKERSBURG — The Parkersburg News and Sentinel will not publish a print edition on Monday, Presidents Day, nor any of the other federal holidays: New Year’s Day, Martin Luther King Jr. Day, Memorial Day, Juneteenth, Independence Day, Labor Day, Columbus Day, Veterans Day, Thanksgiving and Christmas Day.

Our newsroom will remain staffed on both the day before and the actual holiday.



Event and breaking news coverage, local sports coverage and obituaries will still be handled and appear on our website on those holiday mornings, and in print on the day after the holidays.

Readers who have not linked their newspaper subscription to the website and e-edition can do so by clicking the Today’s Newspaper link at the top of newsandsentinel.com. From there you will be guided through the validation process.

The Parkersburg News and Sentinel

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WEST VIRGINIA GOVERNMENT



West Virginia Board of Education President Paul Hardesty, center, has been raising issues with the state school aid formula for the last year, including at the board’s monthly meetings in October, November and December.

The Sound of Silence Gov. Morrissey, state education officials clash over budget needs

By STEVEN ALLEN ADAMS Staff Reporter

CHARLESTON — Gov. Patrick Morrissey and officials with the West Virginia Department of Education and state Board of Education are clashing over requests for additional spending for the next fiscal year and whether state revenue officials were informed of those needs.

During a press conference earlier this week, Morrissey criticized the board and Department of Education for not making their financial needs known when it comes to addressing the growing costs of special education.

“Did we ever get any heads up from the school board that there was this massive need of hundreds of millions of dollars? The answer was no,” Morrissey said. “When we don’t get a heads up over these kinds of problems, it starts to raise questions. And we’d like to be brought in sooner.”

State Board of Educa-



State Superintendent of Schools Michele Blatt, right, told members of the House Finance Committee in January that there were items included in the Department of Education’s fiscal year 2027 general revenue budget recommendation from the Governor’s Office that she was not made aware of.

tion President Paul Hardesty declined to comment regarding Morrissey’s criticisms. But sources in the department point to evidence showing a governor that has walled himself off from state education officials, while the Governor’s Office said education has been foremost on Morrissey’s mind.

■ **Cancelled meetings**

According to emails provided by the Department of Education through a Freedom of Information Act request,

Photo Courtesy/WV Legislative Photography

Photo Courtesy/WV Department of Education

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W.Va. Senate passes bill further criminalizing abortion pills

Bill banning use of media monitoring services by state agencies also advances

By STEVEN ALLEN ADAMS Staff Reporter

CHARLESTON — The West Virginia Senate passed a number of bills Friday, including legislation to further punish unsanctioned distributions of abortion pills in the state and one aimed at preventing state agencies from using a media monitoring service being targeted by the Trump administration.

Senate Bill 173, prohibiting abortifacients, passed the Senate Friday morning in a 31-1 vote with two absent or not voting. The bill now heads to the House of Delegates.

SB 173 includes new regulations and penalties regarding the distribution of medications used to induce abortions within West Virginia. According to the bill, individuals who mail, prescribe, or distribute abortion-inducing drugs would face criminal penalties, including felony imprisonment for non-medical providers.

“The majority of abortions in America today occur via the abortion pill. Not only do these pills terminate the life of the baby, but studies have shown that in up to 10% of the cases, they also have severe adverse effects on the health of the mother requiring medical attention,” said Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman Tom Willis, R-Berkeley. “This important legislation is designed to protect life in West Virginia and stop the practice of abortifacients being unlawfully sent to West Virginia residents.”

Licensed professionals found in violation of these rules could have their medical licenses revoked and may face civil litigation and fines. The bill includes exemptions protecting the pregnant woman from criminal charges while granting her and the Attorney General’s Office the right to sue violators for damages.

■ SEE SENATE, PAGE 6A



Photo Courtesy/WV Legislative Photography

W.Va. House amends bill aimed at helping small businesses

By STEVEN ALLEN ADAMS sadams@newsandsentinel.com

CHARLESTON — The West Virginia House of Delegates amended a bill Friday championed by Senate President Randy Smith, melding it with the House Republican majority’s Jobs First - Opportunity Everywhere economic development agenda.

Senate Bill 1, the Small Business Growth Act, passed the House Friday morning in an 87-3 vote with nine members absent or not vot-

“I’m all for trying to bring in the big players. ... But I feel being (a) small business owner, over the years we’ve kind of neglected the small businesses.”

Senate President Smith, R-Preston

ing. The bill heads back to the Senate to concur with the changes made to the bill by the House, setting up SB 1 to be the first bill this session sent to the desk of Gov. Patrick Morrissey.

SB 1 establishes the West Virginia First Small Business Growth Program, under which specialized growth funds collect capital from

that’s in this bill applies to companies that employ less than 250 employees, 60% of the workforce has to be West Virginia-based, or you can move 60% of your workforce into West Virginia,” explained House Judiciary Committee Chairman JB Akers, R-Kanawha.

“A lot of the economic development bills we see are geared towards attracting new businesses to the state, and we’re all for that,” Akers continued. “This bill is focused on existing West

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Photo Courtesy/WV Legislative Photography

House Finance Committee Chairman Vernon Criss, right, said Friday a bill creating the West Virginia First Small Business Growth Program would help the state compete to keep small businesses from jumping to neighboring states for better economic development incentives.

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<p>The Parkersburg News and Sentinel P.O. Box 1787 Parkersburg, WV 26102-1787 304-485-1891</p>  <p>7 48445 05020 3</p>	<p>School districts plan for snow makeup days</p> <p>Local school districts are determining what changes, if any, need to be made to their schedules after layers of ice and snow forced multiple days of cancellations in recent weeks.</p> <p>Details, Page 1B</p>	<p>North Star Child Advocacy Center outlines finances</p> <p>With awareness of the North Star Child Advocacy Center growing in recent years, Executive Director Greg Collins said he wants to make sure people understand the nonprofit's financial situation.</p> <p>Details, Page 5C</p>	<div>Thank you, Charles D. Prim of Harrisville for being a <i>News and Sentinel</i> subscriber.</div>	<div>5 SECTIONS40 PAGES VOLUME 17, ISSUE 32</div> <table><tr><td>Business</td><td>5C</td><td>Letters</td><td>5A</td></tr><tr><td>Classified</td><td>4D</td><td>Living</td><td>1E</td></tr><tr><td>Comics (Sat.)</td><td>6B</td><td>Lottery</td><td>8A</td></tr><tr><td>Deaths</td><td>2A</td><td>Puzzles</td><td>3E</td></tr><tr><td>Editorial</td><td>4A</td><td>Region</td><td>1E</td></tr><tr><td>Horoscope</td><td>3B</td><td>Sports</td><td>1C</td></tr></table>	Business	5C	Letters	5A	Classified	4D	Living	1E	Comics (Sat.)	6B	Lottery	8A	Deaths	2A	Puzzles	3E	Editorial	4A	Region	1E	Horoscope	3B	Sports	1C
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