WEST VIRGINIA CODE: §29-21-1

§29-21-1. Legislative findings; purpose.

The Legislature finds and declares that in certain proceedings the state is required to provide high quality legal assistance to indigent persons who would be otherwise unable to afford adequate legal counsel; that providing legal representation to those who face an economic barrier to adequate legal counsel will serve the ends of justice in accordance with rights and privileges guaranteed to all citizens by the Constitution of the United States of America and the Constitution of the State of West Virginia; that the availability of quality legal assistance reaffirms the faith of our citizens in our government of laws; that the present system which utilizes appointed counsel is not operating satisfactorily in some areas of this state and the Legislature is presently unable to determine what system or systems will provide the most efficient means for providing legal representation; that there is a need to explore alternative methods of delivering legal assistance, including the use of salaried public defenders complemented by private panel attorneys; that innovative programs and pilot projects as well as a continuation of the present appointed counsel system are necessary in separate areas of the state to provide information and experience upon which to base future legislative action.

WV Legislature