# WEST VIRGINIA CODE: §46a-6J-1

**§46A-6J-1. Emergencies and natural disasters - Taking unfair advantage of consumers.**

The Legislature finds that during emergencies and major disasters, including, but not limited to, tornadoes, earthquakes, fires, floods, storms or civil disturbances or where a large-scale threat exists, some merchants have taken unfair advantage of consumers by greatly increasing prices for essential consumer goods or services. While the pricing of consumer goods and services is generally best left to the marketplace under ordinary conditions, when a declared state of emergency or state of preparedness results in abnormal disruptions of the market, the public interest requires that excessive and unjustified increases in the prices of essential consumer goods and services be prohibited. It is the intent of the Legislature in enacting this article to protect citizens from excessive and unjustified increases in the prices charged during or shortly after a declared state of emergency or state of preparedness for goods and services that are vital and necessary for the health, safety and welfare of consumers. Further, it is the intent of the Legislature that this article be liberally construed so that its beneficial purposes may be served.

WV Legislature