WEST VIRGINIA CODE: §48-27-101

PART 1. GENERAL PROVISIONS.

§48-27-101. Findings and purposes.

(a) The Legislature of this state finds that:

(1) Every person has a right to be safe and secure in his or her home and family and to be free from domestic violence.

(2) Children are often physically assaulted or witness violence against one of their parents or other family or household members, violence which too often ultimately results in death. These children may suffer deep and lasting emotional harm from victimization and from exposure to domestic violence;

(3) Domestic violence is a major health and law-enforcement problem in this state with enormous costs to the state in both dollars and human lives. It affects people of all racial and ethnic backgrounds and all socioeconomic classes; and

(4) Domestic violence can be deterred, prevented or reduced by legal intervention that treats this problem with the seriousness that it deserves.

(b) This article shall be liberally construed and applied to promote the following purposes:

(1) To assure victims of domestic violence the maximum protection from abuse that the law can provide;

(2) To create a speedy remedy to discourage violence against family or household members with whom the perpetrator of domestic violence has continuing contact;

(3) To expand the ability of law-enforcement officers to assist victims, to enforce the domestic violence law more effectively, and to prevent further abuse;

(4) To facilitate equal enforcement of criminal law by deterring and punishing violence against family and household members as diligently as violence committed against strangers;

(5) To recognize that domestic violence constitutes serious criminal behavior with potentially tragic results and that it will no longer be excused or tolerated; and

(6) To recognize that the existence of a former or on-going familial or other relationship should not serve to excuse, explain or mitigate acts of domestic violence which are otherwise punishable as crimes under the laws of this state.

WV Legislature