

## WEST VIRGINIA CODE: §5B-1B-2

### §5B-1B-2. Legislative findings.

(a) The Legislature finds that the southern coalfields of West Virginia, long one of the most productive coal producing areas of the world, having provided untold millions of dollars to the state economy, and having been the financial backbone of the state's economy for over a century, is now in the midst of a long decline in coal production and population, and because of rugged terrain and remoteness from surrounding regions, suffers from high unemployment and deteriorating infrastructure and economic base, and requires innovative and alternative approaches to revitalization; and therefore demands the Legislature look at innovative ideas and alternatives for new industries and businesses that provide sustainable long term development for southern West Virginia.

(b) The natural beauty of the mountainous regions, now popular with outdoor enthusiasts for its Hatfield McCoy Trail System, would be an ideal location for a large recreational lake or lakes, constructed with hundreds of miles of lake front property, tens of thousands of acres of lake surface, near a four lane highway and situated near large tracts of developable property, with carefully considered design and development, could create a new and exciting recreational area of the state, and provide a myriad of opportunities for further development and with creative initiative could revitalize this area of our state. Such a proposal is worthy of careful study and marshalling the forces of our state and federal governments to thoroughly evaluate and consider this development, maximizing the design and use of a lake or lake system to provide a variety of benefits, potentially including hydro-electric generation, resort developments, housing, and economic opportunities that would create diversity and renewal to this long neglected and deserving area of our state.