WEST VIRGINIA CODE: §5b-11-1

§5B-11-1. Legislative findings.

The Legislature finds that the Advanced Energy and Economic Corridor, once known as Tug-Ohio-Levisa-Sandy Improvement Association (TOLSIA) and the King Coal Highway, which runs through the counties of McDowell, Mercer, Mingo, Wayne, and Wyoming has undergone significant challenges owing to widespread changes in the national and global economies; and every effort should be made to assist the transformation of these regional economies by providing guidance to local governments, businesses, and industries to maximize economic development and diversification of those economies. As part of the National Highway System's I-73/74 corridor from northern Michigan to eastern South Carolina, the Advanced Energy and Economic Corridor, will not only foster greater transportation efficiencies, but will also provide vital connectivity to bourgeoning markets, resulting in both job creation and economic expansion in southern West Virginia.

The economic development agencies along this corridor are aligning efforts to embrace the expansion of the energy and economic development policies adopted by the West Virginia Legislature as a tool for economic development and are focused on efforts to transform and revitalize the region by fostering partnerships and initiatives which are complementary and supportive of existing successful industries in West Virginia.

The Legislature, by enactment of this article, intends to facilitate implementation of critical and time-sensitive opportunities for economic development along the Advanced Energy and Economic Corridor by establishing an authority, known as the West Virginia Advanced Energy and Economic Corridor Authority (authority), to facilitate assistance to these local entities comprised of the economic development agencies of McDowell, Mercer, Mingo, and Wayne counties.

WV Legislature