

SEN. MANCHIN IS URGING SECRETARY DEVOS TO ADDRESS INCREASE IN CHILD HOMELESSNESS

Posted on September 11, 2019 by Tyler Barker



WEST VIRGINIA (WOAY) - U.S. Senator Joe Manchin (D-WV) sent a letter to the Department of Education (DOE) Secretary DeVos urging her to address the increase in child homelessness in West Virginia. In the letter, Senator Manchin outlined concerning statistics regarding child homelessness increases in West Virginia in the past year and asked her to come to West Virginia to see firsthand how it's impacting West Virginia children.

The letter said in part: "I am reaching out to you today to raise awareness about some very disturbing news concerning the increase in the number of homeless children and youth in West Virginia. The West Virginia Department of Education reported more than 10,000 children and youth have been identified as homeless for the 2018-2019 school year. We must come together and find solutions to help our local education agencies (LEAs) address this issue."

The letter continued: "The United States Department of Education currently provides resources for LEAs to address homelessness through the McKinney-Vento program and through a Title-I, Part A set aside. Unfortunately, not enough of these resources are making it to the schools and the children that need them most. Of the 55 counties in West Virginia, only 8 counties applied for and received portions of the McKinney-Vento funding. While all counties utilize the Title I set-aside, the amount varies from \$500 to \$50,000. These folks are already stretched thin on the front lines and need additional help from you and your team to solve this problem."



Read the full letter below

Dear Secretary DeVos:

I am reaching out to you today to raise awareness about some very disturbing news concerning the increase in the number of homeless children and youth in West Virginia. The West Virginia Department of Education reported more than 10,000 children and youth have been identified as homeless for the 2018-2019 school year. We must come together and find solutions to help our local education agencies (LEAs) address this issue.

The United States Department of Education currently provides resources for LEAs to address homelessness through the McKinney-Vento program and through a Title-I, Part A set aside. Unfortunately, not enough of these resources are making it to the schools and the children that need them most. Of the 55 counties in West Virginia, only 8 counties applied for and received portions of the McKinney-Vento funding. While all counties utilize the Title I set-aside, the amount varies from \$500 to \$50,000. These folks are already stretched thin on the front lines and need additional help from you and your team to solve this problem. What is the Department of Education able to do to help maximize greater participation and awareness of these resources available for states through McKinney-Vento funding?

As we prepare for the mark-up of the FY20 Department of Education budget in the Senate Appropriations Committee, it's also important to hear from you on whether or not you have the resources you need to support the local officials on the front lines in states like West Virginia? Congress provided \$2.64 million in FY19 for McKinney-Vento programs. How much do you need for FY20?

Finally, I would like to personally invite you to come to West Virginia and see firsthand the impact this is having on our children and our school systems. Our local officials on the ground are working tirelessly to ensure every student is on the same playing field, but that is challenged even further by the increase of children experiencing homelessness. I believe it would be extraordinarily beneficial for you to meet directly with the folks on the ground working with these children every day.

I look forward to working with you and the Department of Education on innovative solutions to address the dramatic increase of our children and youth experiencing homelessness.