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## United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-4804

COMMITTEES

APPROPRIATIONS

ARMED SERVICES

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VETERANS' AFFAIRS

September 6, 2019

The Honorable Betsy DeVos  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue SW  
Washington, DC 20202

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.

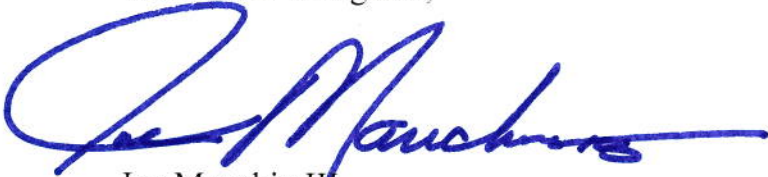
The United States Department of Education currently provides resources for LEAs to address homelessness through the McKinney-Vento program and through a Title-I, Part A set aside. Unfortunately, not enough of these resources are making it to the schools and the children that need them most. Of the 55 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.

With warmest regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Joe Manchin III". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and "M".

Joe Manchin III  
United States Senator