



FY2025 Senate Report Language Supporting Children, Youth, and Families Experiencing Homelessness

On Thursday, August 1, 2024, the Senate Appropriations Committee passed its Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education FY2025 funding bill, S. 4942, by a vote of 25-3. The bill included the following report language related to child, youth, and family homelessness.

McKinney-Vento’s Education for Homeless Children and Youth (EHCY)

The Committee directs the Department to issue guidance clarifying that funds provided under title VII, subtitle B of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act may be used for the provision of extraordinary or emergency assistance needed to enable homeless children and youths to attend school and participate fully in school activities as allowed under law. This should include all of the activities and services outlined in the Department’s September 12, 2023, Dear Colleague Letter to the Chief State School Officers on the American Rescue Plan—Homeless Children and Youth Funds, including paying for short-term, temporary emergency housing (such as a hotel or motel room) on a case-by-case basis if reasonable and necessary to facilitate school attendance, and as a last resort when other funding sources are not readily available.

Title I, Part A - Reservation for Students Experiencing Homelessness

Required Reservation for Students Experiencing Homelessness.— The Committee reiterates its strong support for and interest in effective implementation of ESEA’s requirement for LEAs to reserve sufficient title I–A funds to provide comparable services to students experiencing homelessness, including by providing educationally related support services to children in shelters and other locations where children may live. The Committee appreciates the initial steps the Department has taken to increase collaboration between State and local title I–A directors and Education for Homeless Children and Youth State and local coordinators on determining, reserving, and using sufficient amounts from the title I–A program and increasing public transparency of such amounts. Such services include those not ordinarily provided with

title I–A funds to other students served by title I–A programs such as all or part of the homeless liaison’s salary, education-related fees, and other necessary items or services.

However, there is concern that LEAs can avoid reserving funds by stating no students experiencing homelessness are enrolled. The Committee directs the Department to clarify that title I–A funds must be reserved to enable LEAs to identify and support students experiencing homelessness. The Committee looks forward to seeing the changes that result from these and other efforts and directs the Department to report in its fiscal year 2026 CJ the specific State policy changes resulting from these efforts. In addition, the Department should widely disseminate specific State policy changes resulting from monitoring findings and recommendations that produce more collaborative and transparent approaches to the determination of set-aside amounts under such section providing necessary resources to fulfill needs assessments conducted for students experiencing homelessness to meet State challenging academic standards and effectively take advantage of educational opportunities.

In addition, as was noted in the explanatory statement accompanying the fiscal year 2023 appropriations act, more must be done to improve transparency on amounts reserved by LEAs under section 1113(c)(3)(A). The Committee understands the Department is planning to analyze the variation of per-homeless-pupil amounts across LEAs within a State and take other steps to improve the quality of reported data. However, this must be accompanied with actions to provide transparency on amounts reserved and spent with funds available under such section, including effective technical assistance and support being provided to title I SEA and LEA leaders and McKinney-Vento staff on the wide variety of services supported by these funds, implementation of an adequate needs assessment, and determination of a sufficient reservation under such section. The Committee requests a briefing on actions taken and planned on these issues not later than 45 days after enactment of this act.

FAFSA Unaccompanied Homeless Youth Language

Unaccompanied Homeless Youth and Other Students Without Parent or Family Support.—The Committee is concerned that youth who do not have parental support are experiencing significant challenges completing the FAFSA and financial aid process. Students experiencing, or at risk of, homelessness and who do not have documentation have been incorrectly categorized as provisionally independent and have been arbitrarily limited in how they can document their experience with homelessness. In addition, the FAFSA form unnecessarily limits the provisional independence options for other students. The Committee directs the Department to correct these errors for the 2025–2026 cycle and to issue updated guidance within 60 days that clarifies and streamlines the ability of unaccompanied homeless youth and other students

ACF: Improving Two-Generation Services for Children, Youth, and Families Experiencing Homelessness

Child, Youth, and Family Homelessness.—The Committee is concerned about the impact of homelessness on the wellbeing and development of children, youth, and families, including the instability and overcrowding that accompany child, youth, and family homelessness. In light of this, the Committee urges ACF to assess the current state of child, youth, and family homelessness, including the strengths, barriers, and opportunities across ACF and HHS to provide two-generation services to end the cycle of homelessness. In particular, the Committee urges ACF to develop a plan to lead and coordinate efforts to provide holistic services to homeless children, youth, and families to break the cycle of homelessness, including by identifying existing resources and gaps. The Committee looks forward to the report outlining progress on these efforts required in Senate Report 118–84.

ACF: Preventing Youth Homelessness

Preventing Youth Homelessness.—The Committee includes \$4,000,000 to continue the preventing youth homelessness demonstration program to identify and implement strategies and services for youth between ages 12 and 26 in order to prevent homelessness, including strategies designed to serve youth and young adult populations with a high likelihood of imminently experiencing homelessness, housing instability, or other forms of victimization such as human trafficking to include individuals transitioning out of foster care, the juvenile justice system, or a residential behavioral health system.

The Committee directs that a portion of funds be made available to State agencies, tribes, counties, cities, other units of local government, or community-based organizations for planning and implementation demonstration grants to provide primary prevention for youth and young adults at risk of homelessness. Grantees shall show collaboration with youth with lived expertise in project design and implementation and funds may be used to support the establishment and operation of local youth advisory boards. The remaining funds shall be used to support the demonstrations through evaluation, training, and technical assistance and also to support the aligned work of the National Prevention Learning Collaborative. The Committee notes that this demonstration program is in addition to other, ongoing Family and Youth Services Bureau initiatives.

DOL: Improving Access to Job Corp

Job Corps: Homeless Youth.—The Committee continues to strongly encourage the Department to streamline application requirements for homeless youth in Job Corps.