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EQUAL HOUSING OPPORTUNITY

MANCHIN INCLUDES $3.7 BILLION TO FIGHT THE OPIOID EPIDEMIC AND $1.6 BILLION FOR COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTERS IN SPENDING BILLS

Washington, D.C. – U.S. Senator Joe Manchin (D-WV), member of the Senate Appropriations Committee, made sure that Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies and Department of Defense spending bills included funding to fight the opioid epidemic, community health centers, mine safety and miners' health. These bills were passed out of the Appropriations Committee today.

"As a member of the Senate Appropriations Committee, I was proud to secure $3.7 billion to fight the opioid epidemic, $1.6 billion to support our community health centers and $373 million for mine safety," Senator Manchin said. "Our miners have sacrificed everything to power this nation, and that's why protecting their health and safety has always been one of my top priorities. That's why I included language to ensure that the Department of Labor cannot make any changes to the Black Lung Disability Trust Fund and the Special Benefits for Disabled Coal Miners Program that would harm miners and that the Department must provide details to Congress regarding the effects of any changes.

"All West Virginians deserve to drink clean water and breathe clean air and when our water is contaminated, we also deserve the funding and support needed to fix it. That's why I included $600 million so that Army and Air Force Environmental Restoration Funds can address contamination caused by PFAS in West Virginia. While these bills move to the Senate floor and are vote on by the full Senate, I will fight to make sure this funding that West Virginia needs stays in these bills."

Here is a full list of West Virginia priorities Senator Manchin secured in the spending bills that passed today:

LHHS

Opioids: $3.7 billion in funding to combat the opioid epidemic, as well as language directing GAO to review inpatient and outpatient treatment capacity and other barriers to treatment, as well as language requiring the Secretary of Health & Human Services to report on existing regulations limiting opioid prescriptions. Senator Manchin also secured additional language in directing the Secretary of Health and Human Services to identify existing sources of funding for the construction of new substance use disorder treatment facilities, as well as recommendation on how to promote the construction of new facilities to address the lack of opioid treatment facilities across the county.

Handle with Care: This bill includes funding for trauma informed care for kids impacted by substance abuse, which allows funds to benefit programs like Handle with Care in West Virginia.

Mine Safety: $373.816 million for the Mine Safety & Health Administration (MSHA), as well as $17.184 million for the Federal Mine Safety and Health Review Commission, including report language directing FMSHRC to prioritize efforts to reduce excessive time that substantive cases on appeal are awaiting a decision.

Special Benefits for Disabled Coal Miners: Senator Manchin was able to secure language requiring the Office of Works' Compensation Programs (OWCP) to explain why they are using unobligated balances instead of appropriations to pay beneficiaries within the Special Benefits for Disabled Coal Miners program and how this could impact the program if there are spikes in costs or claims in the future.

Black Lung Disability Trust Fund: Senator Manchin's amendment to the bill directs the Department of Labor to explain recent decreases in payments toward bond interest and corresponding decreases in appropriations for the Black Lung Disability Trust Fund, and the potential impact of these changes on the Fund in the future.

Community Health Centers: Secured $1.6 billion with $200 million for grants to expand services for treatment, prevention, and awareness of opioid abuse.

National Institutes of Health: Another $2 billion increase was secured for NIH bringing their total to $39 billion including $500 million for research related to opioid addiction, development of opioid alternative, pain management, and addiction treatment.

TRIO and GEAR UP: Secured level funding for both programs to help prepare students for graduation and success in higher education. Senator Manchin also pushed for and secured language requiring the Department of Education to provide detailed budget allocations on how TRIO money will be spent moving forward.

Rural Advocate: The bill directs the Department's policies, programs, and activities, including policies related to the opioid epidemic to ensure that rural concerns and challenges are adequately represented.

Career and Technical Education Funding: continues robust funding of $1.192 billion for career and technical education

Pell Grants: Funds Pell Grants at $22.5 billion and includes an increase of $100 or 1.6% on the total maximum discretionary award bringing the total up from $6,095 to $6,195.

Veterans: $300 million for veterans' employment and training within the Department of Labor

Defense

Supporting our Service Men and Women: The bill provides a 2.6 percent pay raise for our service men and women, the largest pay raise for our servicemembers in nearly 10 years.

Addressing Water Contamination: This legislation includes $600 million for Army and Air Force environmental restoration funds to address the contamination caused by PFCs in local water supplies.

Increasing our Manufacturing Capacity: The bill includes $54 million for Defense Industrial Base Analysis and Sustainment Support, including an additional $10 million to expand manufacturing capability of cold-rolled aluminum. West Virginia is a major producer of cold-rolled aluminum, which is critical for key U.S. weapons programs such as armored and tactical wheeled vehicles, amphibious assault vehicles, and shipbuilding.

Cybersecurity: $14 billion for the Army and Air National Guard and support for their operations in cyberspace.