

**Deadline March 24**

**SIGN ONTO HOUSE DEAR COLLEAGUE** to support funding for RHYA and EHCY, please contact Jill Hunter-Williams with Rep. Davis ([Jill.Hunter-Williams@mail.house.gov](mailto:Jill.Hunter-Williams@mail.house.gov); (202) 225-5006), Colin Swanson with Rep. Reichert ([Colin.Swanson@mail.house.gov](mailto:Colin.Swanson@mail.house.gov); (202) 225-7761), or Marisa Wittebort with Rep. Yarmuth ([Marisa.Wittebort@mail.house.gov](mailto:Marisa.Wittebort@mail.house.gov); (202) 225-5401).

**Deadline March 26**

**SIGN ONTO SEANTE DEAR COLLEAGUE** to support funding for RHYA and EHCY, please contact Matt Hayward with Senator Franken ([Matt\\_Hayward@franken.senate.gov](mailto:Matt_Hayward@franken.senate.gov); (202) 224-5641) or Katie Brown with Senator Collins ([Katie\\_Brown@collins.senate.gov](mailto:Katie_Brown@collins.senate.gov); (202) 224-2523).

**Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (P.L.110-378)**

The Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (RHYA) provides foundational support to address youth and young adult homelessness across the country. These grants, administered by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), provides resources and allowed local systems of care to be developed and shaped by the unique needs of each region, their available resources, and their local policy priorities. Remarkably similar systems of care emerged in local communities all over the U.S., including: street outreach, emergency shelter, aftercare, education and employment, health care, behavioral health, transitional housing, family intervention, and independent housing options. This continuum of care helps fully prepare youth to achieve successful outcomes: safe exit from homelessness, family reunification, establishment of permanent connection(s), employment, and sustainable independent living.

The Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (RHYA), funds **three key pillars of intervention to help homeless youth**:

- **Street Outreach**: provides education, treatment, counseling and referrals to vital services
- **Basic Center**: provides temporary shelter, counseling, family reunification services and aftercare services
- **Transitional Living**: provides longer-term housing with supportive services, **including Maternity Group Homes**

RHYA has been flat funding since FY 2011 at \$115 million. The National Network for Youth (NN4Y) urges Congress to support the continued efforts of programs which service homeless youth across the Nation by **enacting, at a minimum, the Administration's proposed FY 2016 budget of \$123 million for RHYA, a \$7 million increase above the current level. In addition, the budget proposal includes \$2 million for a national study on homeless youth.** Congress should consider the actual program needs based on the historic increases in child and youth homelessness, to support \$165 million for the RHYA program.

**The McKinney-Vento Act's Education for Homeless Children and Youth (EHCY) Program**

The McKinney-Vento Act's Education for Homeless Children and Youth (EHCY) program removes barriers to the enrollment, attendance, and opportunity for success for homeless children and youth. All school districts must designate a homeless liaison, pro-actively identify homeless children and youth, and provide transportation to stabilize the educational experiences of homeless students. Funds are used for the outreach and identification of homeless children and youth, enrollment assistance, transportation assistance, school records transfer, immunization referrals, tutoring, counseling, school supplies, professional development for educators, and referrals for community services.

Despite an 85% increase in the number of homeless children and youth identified in public schools since 2006-2007, funding has remained flat for the EHCY program. Congress appropriated \$65 million for EHCY in FY 2015. At this funding level, only 22 percent of school districts receive direct support. **At a minimum, we urge Congress to appropriate the Administration's proposed FY 2016 budget of 71.5 million, but in light of the real need, should consider appropriating \$115 million.**

## McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (P.L. 100-77)

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance, administered by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), provides funding to local, regional and state homelessness assistance programs such as the competitive Continuum of Care (CoC) and the Emergency Solutions Grant, which supports emergency shelters and Transitional Housing (TH). Transitional housing, emergency shelter, and other emergency solutions programs are integral parts to prevent trafficking among the homeless youth population because a lack of housing increases vulnerability and strengthens a young person's risk of becoming a victim of human trafficking. Currently, HUD has been deprioritizing housing and shelter programs with supportive services in exchange for prioritizing other housing interventions that are largely not youth-appropriate or accessible to homeless youth. Having a stable place to live coupled with services that reconnect youth with education while also teaching life skills is necessary for youth to be able to fully support themselves when they become adults. Programs with a youth appropriate focus are the most effective way to prevent human trafficking of youth experiencing homelessness. Without these programs and their resources available to youth, they are more likely to fall victim to trafficking.

For FY 2016, the President requested an addition \$300 million for HUD homelessness assistance programs. We recommend that \$150,000,000 be set aside for Continuums of Care (CoC) for homeless youth, inclusive of both minors and youth adults.

**MEMBERS OF THE SENATE AND HOUSE:** Include all of these appropriations requests in your personal letters to the Appropriations Committee.



**#EndYouthHomelessness**