

## Member Services

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**Subject:** U.S. Senator Joe Manchin Newsletter - March 9, 2021

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**#MASKUPWV**

## BROADBAND

[Take a Speed Test Here.](#)

The sad fact is that many places in West Virginia simply do not have access to reliable broadband and the lack of access affects West Virginians every day. Back in 2015, the FCC released a coverage map that stated 99.9% of Americans had wireless coverage. I knew then what I know now: That is just plain wrong.

[Click here to follow Senator Manchin's efforts on broadband.](#)

**From the Hill to**



**Information is updated daily**  
on: [manchin.senate.gov/coronavirus](https://manchin.senate.gov/coronavirus)

## TESTING & VACCINE INFO

Some testing sites require a physician's order before testing. To report your

# the Mountains

## [MANCHIN PRAISES USA'S INVESTMENTS TO IMPROVE NATIONAL FOREST AND GRASSLAND INFRASTRUCTURE](#)

*Investments made possible by Senator Manchin's historic Great American Outdoors Act*

Washington, DC – Today, U.S. Senator Joe Manchin (D-WV) announced the U.S. Department of Agriculture will invest \$285 million to help the Forest Service address critical deferred maintenance and improve transportation and recreation infrastructure on national forests and grasslands. This funding was secured when Senator Manchin's historic Great American Outdoors Act was enacted last year, providing \$9.5 billion over five years to address the deferred maintenance backlog on our country's public lands.

"Addressing the daunting deferred maintenance needs of our national parks, forests, and other Federal lands is long overdue and this investment by the USDA ensures our public land management agencies can continue their legacy of conservation and growing opportunities for outdoor recreation. I thank Secretary Vilsack for his strong commitment to implementing my bipartisan Great American Outdoors Act and I look forward to continuing to work closely together to ensure West Virginians are given new economic opportunities and our public lands are protected for generations to come," said Senator Manchin.

## [MANCHIN, CAPITO ANNOUNCE \\$15.9 MILLION FOR HEALTH CENTERS ACROSS WEST VIRGINIA](#)

Charleston, WV – U.S. Senators Joe Manchin (D-WV) and Shelley Moore Capito (R-WV), members of

[symptoms](#) and be directed to one of the available testing sites, contact your primary care doctor or a designated hotline for your area. If you have gone through these steps and are still having problems getting a test, please email me at [common\\_sense@manchin.senate.gov](mailto:common_sense@manchin.senate.gov) and a member of my staff will reach out to you to see if we can assist. [For a listing of one-day, weekly, and drive-through pharmacy testing, visit the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources website: <https://dhhr.wv.gov/COVID-19/pages/testing.aspx>](#)

**To learn more about COVID-19 vaccine clinics and availability, visit the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources website: <https://dhhr.wv.gov/COVID-19/Pages/Vaccine.aspx>**

**OR call the COVID-19 VACCINE INFO LINE: 1-833-734-0965**

**Hours of Operation for the Vaccine Info Line: Monday-Friday 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., Saturday 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., closed on Sunday**

[Click here for CDC recommendations on activities people who are fully vaccinated against COVID-19 can safely resume.](#)

[Click here for WV DHHR's latest updates to reported COVID-19 cases](#)

## RESOURCES

Our office is working diligently to bring you the most up-to-date information as it becomes available. Click the links below for more information. All information regarding resources and more can be found on Senator Manchin's website.

### [Unemployment & Direct Payments](#)

#### [Veterans Assistance](#)

#### [Basic Needs](#)

#### [Business Assistance](#)

#### [Volunteer](#)

#### [Feeling Ill?](#)

#### [WV 211:](#)

United Way of West Virginia provides an important service to West Virginians by helping users navigate the vast number of resources available to aid with healthcare issues, food shortages, mental health questions and more. This program is more important now than ever as we battle the COVID-19 pandemic and I commend United Way for continuing to serve their fellow West Virginians through this time.

United Way's new 2-1-1 will make information on a wide variety of local support services more accessible across our entire state," said United Way of Central WV

the Senate Appropriations Committee, today announced \$15,945,646 for health centers across West Virginia. This funding is made available through the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).

"Health centers play a central role in providing affordable healthcare for West Virginians, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. As more and more West Virginians receive the COVID-19 vaccine, health centers will be crucial in administrating and distributing doses to every West Virginian that wants one. I am pleased that HHS is investing in West Virginia health centers and I will continue to use my role on the Senate Appropriations Committee to provide funding and resources to support our essential healthcare providers," Senator Manchin said.

### **MANCHIN, CAPITO ANNOUNCE FUNDING FOR WVU TO ENHANCE ONLINE STEM LEARNING**

Washington, DC – U.S. Senators Joe Manchin (D-WV) and Shelley Moore Capito (R-WV), members of the Senate Appropriations Committee, today announced \$307,040 for the West Virginia University Research Corporation (WVURC) through the National Science Foundation (NSF). This funding will support a research project that seeks to identify and implement effective, evidenced-based online tutoring practices for undergraduate STEM learning as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

"During the COVID-19 pandemic, many schools and universities have transitioned to virtual classrooms, drastically changing how our students learn. West Virginia University's research will address the challenges of online tutoring for college mathematics and will aim to identify best practices to help other universities better educate their students," Senator Manchin

President, Margaret O'Neal. "Whether it's information for locating a health clinic, finding child care programs, or getting housing assistance, 2-1-1 is an easy-to-remember, go-to resource for individuals and families.

**To utilize these resources West Virginians can:**

**Call 2-1-1**

**Text your zip code to 898-211**

**Visit <http://www.wv211.org/contact>**

**Call toll-free 1-833-848-9905**

**All information is available and updated daily on [manchin.senate.gov/coronavirus](http://manchin.senate.gov/coronavirus).**

### **IRS:**

#### **Helping Individuals with the 2021 Tax Filing Season and the 2020 Recovery Rebate Credit**

**Free DIY tax preparation:** The [IRS Free File](#) program offers 70% of all taxpayers the choice of nine brand-name tax preparation software packages to use at no cost. Those who earned less than \$72,000 in 2020 can choose which package is best for them. Some even offer free state tax return preparation. Those who earned more than \$72,000 in 2020 and are comfortable preparing their own taxes can use Free File Fillable Forms. Free File info available in 8 languages.

**Free local tax preparation:** This year, some [VITA/TCE](#) sites are not operating at full capacity and others are not opening. Check the [VITA/TCE locator tool](#) to search for nearby available sites.

## **WORKING FOR YOU**

### **MANCHIN VOTES FOR COVID-19 RELIEF PACKAGE**

*COVID-19 relief package includes billions to help West Virginia kill COVID-19 and rebuild*

Washington, DC – This afternoon, Senator Joe Manchin (D-WV) voted to pass the COVID-19 relief package to help America end the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Nearly a year ago, the first West Virginian was diagnosed with COVID-19. We have spent the last year mourning over 500,000 Americans and over 2,300 West Virginians who lost their lives due to this horrific virus. Our healthcare providers and frontline workers have worked tirelessly to care for their fellow West Virginians, our students and teachers have adjusted to new ways of learning, and our small businesses and restaurants closed their doors to protect their communities from COVID-19. This was a challenging year that tested every American, but we are finally seeing a light at the end of the tunnel.

"Today the Senate passed a COVID-19 relief package that will help kill the COVID-19 pandemic and set us on the right track to economic recovery. This bill provides \$14.2 billion for COVID-19 vaccines, \$49 billion for testing and tracing. \$8.5 billion for rural health providers, and \$7.6 billion for community health centers, ensuring the vaccine continues to be our top priority and healthcare workers receive the support they

said. "The National Science Foundation continues to be a great partner for West Virginia and our universities and I look forward to seeing the benefits of this research for students in West Virginia and across the nation."

## **Energy Committee News**

[Chairman Manchin and Ranking Member Barrasso Update Committee Schedule](#)

Washington, DC – The Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources today announced an updated schedule for this week. The full committee will hold one business meeting and one hearing, as described below. More information can be found at the links below or by visiting the committee's website.

**Thursday, March 11, 2021, at 10:00 a.m. EST** – Business meeting to consider the nomination of Mr. David M. Turk to be the Deputy Secretary of the U.S. Department of Energy. Members of the committee can only vote in person or by proxy.

**Thursday, March 11, 2021, at 10:00 a.m. EST (Immediately following the business meeting)** – Full committee hearing to examine the reliability, resiliency, and affordability of electric service in the United States amid the changing energy mix and extreme weather events.

The business meeting and hearing will both be held in Room SD-366 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, and will be webcast live on the committee's website. In line with current restrictions from the Sergeant at Arms and social

deserve. This pandemic also impacted our students, communities, families and small businesses. West Virginia alone will receive approximately \$140 million for broadband expansion, \$152 million for emergency rental assistance, and \$1.34 billion for our schools and childcare facilities. Every city, town, village and county in the state will receive funding to rebuild our crumbling infrastructure and support essential frontline workers. A vast majority of West Virginians will also receive \$1,400 stimulus checks. We were also able to extend unemployment benefits through the end of August and protect those receiving unemployment benefits and making less than \$150,000 from being hit with an unexpected tax bill next year. This relief bill will help West Virginia rebuild after this incredibly difficult year.

"The COVID-19 pandemic has tested our entire nation and through it all, West Virginians have banded together to keep our loved ones safe. The end is within reach and this COVID-19 relief package is what West Virginia needs to put this pandemic behind us once and for all. I am proud to vote for this relief package and I look forward to seeing the President sign this bill into law."

### **SENATE PASSES MANCHIN AMENDMENT TO HELP STUDENTS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS**

[To view Senator Manchin deliver remarks on the Senate Floor click here](#)

Washington, DC – This morning, by a unanimous vote, the Senate passed a bipartisan amendment to the COVID-19 relief package introduced by U.S. Senator Joe Manchin (D-WV) to create a new, dedicated emergency funding stream through the U.S. Department of Education to help schools identify and assist students experiencing homelessness due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The amendment was cosponsored by Senators Lisa Murkowski (R-AK), Kyrsten Sinema (D-AZ), Rob Portman (R-OH), Susan Collins (R-ME) and Dan Sullivan (R-AK).

"Every child deserves to feel safe with roof over their head and a warm bed to sleep in night after night. Unfortunately for 1.5 million children and youth across America and more than 10,000 children and youth in West Virginia, that is not the case. The COVID-19 pandemic has significantly increased children and youth homelessness due to high unemployment, unstable living conditions, and job insecurity," Senator Manchin said. "It is estimated that one in four children experiencing homelessness, about 420,000 children, are potentially unidentified and not connected with a school system. Research has also found that rural areas – like my home state of West Virginia – lack vital resources for our homeless children and youth, adding to their already heavy burdens. My amendment will help schools address this unacceptable issue by dedicating emergency funding to identify and assist students experiencing homelessness during the COVID-19 pandemic. I am pleased my bipartisan amendment passed in the final COVID-19 relief package and I thank my colleagues for prioritizing our children and youth in need."

### **MANCHIN DELIVERS TARGETED TAX BREAK AND UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS**

Washington, DC – This evening, U.S. Senator Joe Manchin (D-WV) released the following statement on the agreed compromise on tax breaks and unemployment benefits in the COVID-19 relief package.

"The President has made it clear we will have enough vaccines for every American by the end of May and I am confident the economic recovery will follow. We have reached a compromise that enables the economy to rebound quickly while also protecting those receiving unemployment benefits from being hit with unexpected tax bill next year. Those making less than \$150,000 and receiving unemployment will be eligible for a \$10,200 tax break. Unemployment benefits will be extended through the end of August."

distancing guidelines, in-person visitors, including credentialed press, cannot be accommodated. Witness testimony will be available online immediately before the start of the hearing.

## HOW MAY WE HELP YOU?

[Click here to request assistance from my case team.](#)

As your U.S. Senator, I am proud to be your voice with government agencies during your time of need. My goal is to provide the best possible customer service for every West Virginian who contacts me needing assistance. While I have no direct jurisdiction in legal or administrative matters of any federal, state, or local agency, I welcome the opportunity to assist you in any way possible and to assure that full consideration is given to your case. See one of our success stories below:

John, of Parkersburg, contacted Senator Manchin because he had not received his 2019 tax return. As a result of Caseworker Sylvia Asbury's inquiry, John received his tax return.

## WV STRONG

I was always taught that if you can count your blessings, you can share your blessings. I've been seeing so many great WV Strong and Better Angels stories. During these unprecedented times, it's important to focus on all the wonderful things that are still happening every day in our beautiful state.

Share your stories of hope, joy, and volunteerism by emailing your nomination and a photo to [WVSTRONG@manchin.senate.gov](mailto:WVSTRONG@manchin.senate.gov).



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To learn more, call my office Toll Free at (855) 275-5737, [email](#) me, or find me on social media:

[Facebook](#) [YouTube](#) [Twitter](#)

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