**Senator Manchin Works for Randolph County**

**Investing in Randolph County**

Through his work on the Senate Appropriations Committee, Senator Manchin has helped direct nearly $72 million in federal investment in Randolph County so far in 2018.

**Providing Meaningful Job Opportunities**

By choosing to focus on our needs here at home – on roads, bridges, airports, pipelines and broadband in every state – we will not only create jobs, but we will strengthen the very economic foundation of this nation that our people and our businesses rely on to thrive. Over the past several years through his work on the Commerce, Justice, & Science Appropriations Subcommittee, which oversees the budget of the Economic Development Administration (EDA) within the Department of Commerce, Senator Manchin has helped direct over $5,005,000 to the region. This funding has included:

* $4,412,500 to the Randolph County Development Authority over the past several years to promote and expand the hardwood industry in the region. This includes $1.8 million in funding from the EDA and the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) in 2015 for a local wood products manufacturer to double its current production rate due to a new national contract, $90,000 from the ARC in 2016 to build on this progress by partnering with the Harwood Alliance Zone to create a strategic plan to strengthen the economy in the nine-county region, and $2.5 million from the EDA in 2017 to further expand the manufacturing facility and promote initiatives that expand the competitiveness of industry in the region.
* $452,500 through EDA to Woodlands Development Corporation in Elkins to support technical assistance to small and medium sized businesses and entrepreneurs in the Monongahela National Forest region in Randolph County. This project is aimed at diversifying the regional economy and supporting private capital investment through support and training for small, mid-size, and start-up businesses, including the completion of a market demand analysis to improve recreational access and opportunities.
* $140,000 to the Region 7 Planning & Development Council, which includes Randolph County, to support job growth and economic development across the region.

Senator Manchin has also helped direct funding for rural businesses through the Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) rural development programs. In October 2018, Senator Manchin announced that Woodlands Community Lenders in Elkins would receive $54,920 to support its Rural Microentrepreneurship Assistance Loan program, which provides technical support, training and administrative assistance to rural microentrepreneurs and microenterprises located in Randolph, Tucker and Barbour Counties. In August 2017, he announced that Big Timber Brewing in Elkins would receive $14,535 through USDA’s Rural Energy for America Program (REAP) to install more efficient windows and a chiller at the brewery. REAP provides guaranteed loan financing and grant funding to agriculture producers and rural small businesses.

**Investing in the Future through Education**

While it is important to support the current workforce, Senator Manchin believes in investing in the next generation of West Virginians. That is why Senator Manchin participates in a weekly Skype session with a different West Virginia high school and answers students’ questions. He has done this multiple times in the past few years with rural students in Randolph County. In April 2016, he spoke with students at Harman School, answering questions on number of local and national policy issues, including the future of coal, the development of Corridor H, medical marijuana reform, and SBA funds for facility renovations at the school. Later that month, he spoke to students at Pickens School, answering questions on aid to senior citizens, job opportunities, healthcare for veterans, the national debt, and taxes. In March 2015, Senator Manchin spoke with students at Tygarts Valley High School about environmental protection and water safety, female representation in the federal government, minimum wage, affordable energy, and state education.

Our veterans have fulfilled a commitment to protect our nation and we have a responsibility to make sure that those who are willing to work hard receive a good education and have the necessary resources and training to achieve their educational goals and careers as civilians. In September 2017, Senator Manchin helped direct $375,319 for Davis & Elkins College through the Department of Education’s Veterans Upward Bound Program, allowing veteran students at D&E to maintain access to tutoring and financial aid assistance and make better informed decisions about applying for, attending, and graduating from college.

**Transportation & Infrastructure**

19% of West Virginia’s 38,770 miles of public roads are considered to be in poor condition, while 17.3% of West Virginia’s 1,247 bridges are considered structurally deficient. Senator Manchin believes that we must do everything we can to open up West Virginia, which is why he has tirelessly advocated for the completion of Corridor H since his time as Governor. This year, through his work on the Transportation, Housing & Urban Development Appropriations Subcommittee, he was able to include language that encourages the Federal Highway Administration to prioritize roads of critical commercial importance in the Appalachian Development Highway System, which includes Corridor H, and ensures that rural areas are given appropriate consideration for grants and other assistance by the Dept. of Transportation. Senator Manchin has also spoken with Transportation Chao several times – including a hearing in April 2018 – about the importance of Corridor H and funding for ongoing portions of the highway through DOT BUILD Grants and other programs.

In July 2016, Senator Manchin announced $144,000 through the Department of Transportation’s Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) for the Elkins-Randolph County Jennings Randolph Field Airport to help fund an environmental assessment to evaluate any potential environmental impacts related to removing obstructions that penetrate the Runway 5/23 approach surfaces.

Water and waste disposal are critical to maintaining quality of life, good-paying jobs, and economic development in West Virginia’s communities, and yet they can be some of the most difficult and expensive infrastructure to maintain, particularly for small towns. This is why Senator Manchin has consistently supported investments in water infrastructure. In November 2015, he announced that Elkins would receive $6,073,000 in loans through the Department of Agriculture’s Water and Waste Disposal Loan and Grant Program for water system improvements.

**Responding to Natural Disasters**

Our dedicated firefighters and ‎first responders voluntarily put their lives on line each and every day to keep the people of West Virginia safe. Senator Manchin, who once worked with the volunteer rescue squad in Marion County, knows this firsthand. This is why, through his work on the Homeland Security Appropriations Subcommittee, he has supported assistance to first responders to give them the resources and equipment they need to properly respond to emergencies. In May 2016, Senator Manchin announced that the Elkins Volunteer Fire Department would receive $200,000 in FEMA Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) awards to help fund operations and safety improvements at the station. The year before in July 2015, he announced that Whitmer Volunteer Fire Department would receive $22,429 in AFG funding to improve training, operations, and fire safety.

Severe weather can take a toll on communities in many ways beyond health and safety, washing away homes, deteriorating homes, and impacting economic activity. After flooding devastated areas of the state, including Randolph County, in 2016, Senator Manchin helped direct federal funding for recovery efforts. This included $7.5 million through the Department of Labor to Workforce West Virginia to help support around 500 workers assisting with the recovery; $28.2 million for flood relief efforts to repair highways across the state, including $12 million for Forest Service repairs to roads in Randolph and other counties; and $4.8 million in funding from the Department of Transportation to repair federal roads in Randolph, Pocahontas, and Greenbrier Counties.

**Ensuring Affordable Housing & Health Care for Everyone**

Senator Manchin understands the importance of supporting one another in times of need, whether it is seniors, children, and veterans, and he believes that it’s important to do everything possible to ensure West Virginians have the necessary resources to get back on their feet and provide for their families. This starts with decent, affordable housing, which is why the Senator has helped direct more than $479,001 for affordable housing in Randolph County over the past several years, including funding to help people develop the skills they need to return to the workforce, support child care, and receive counseling.

It is critical that we make quality preventative and primary health care services available to all West Virginians, particularly those living in rural and underserved areas. As a member of the Labor, Health, & Human Services Appropriations Subcommittee, Senator Manchin has helped direct significant funding for rural healthcare providers, including $475,251 to Valley Health Care in Mill Creek over the past few years to increase access to health care services such as medical, oral, behavioral, pharmacy, vision care and substance abuse care and treatment.