

Senator Lisa Murkowski (R-AK)
Senator Joe Manchin (D-WV)
Senator Kyrsten Sinema (D-AZ)

Quotes in Support from Key Stakeholders

The Emergency Family Stabilization Act: Serving Homeless Children, Youth and Families in Light of COVID-19

"Homelessness compromises the health, development, safety, and education of millions of children and youth, and is expected to worsen in the wake of the economic crisis. The Emergency Family Stabilization Act helps fill a gap in the federal response by providing direct support to the agencies to whom families and youth are most connected — schools and community-based organizations. These agencies are best able to act quickly and comprehensively to ensure that lasting harm does not result from the COVID-19 outbreak. We thank Senator Murkowski, Senator Manchin, and Senator Sinema for their leadership, and we urge Congress to protect the futures of our nation's children and youth by enacting this essential legislation." **said Barbara Duffield the Executive Director of SchoolHouse Connection**

"There is an urgent need for resources to be targeted to children, youth and families experiencing homelessness in America. The Emergency Family Stabilization Act provides the vital supports they need--- a need which has only been exacerbated by the coronavirus and economic crisis. We are grateful to Senator Murkowski, Senator Manchin, and Senator Sinema for their leadership, and we urge Congress to swiftly enact this essential legislation so through our children, youth and families can access the safety and services that they need." **said Darla Bardine, Executive Director of National Network for Youth**

"The COVID-19 pandemic has increased threats to American Indian and Alaska Native children, youth, and their families' well-being. Increasing numbers of tribal children, youth, and families face the risk of becoming homeless, experiencing domestic violence and/or child abuse or neglect, or becoming victims to human trafficking. We applaud Senator Murkowski for recognizing the increased threats to our communities during this pandemic and introducing the Emergency Family Stabilization Act that provides vital resources for tribal governments to address these challenges. Our tribal programs, many of which are in remote, rural locations, often don't have adequate resources to fight these threats to our communities. This legislation recognizes this by providing funding that is specifically for tribal governments." **said Sarah Kastelic, Executive Director of the National Indian Child Welfare Association**

"One of the most powerful tools available to fight human trafficking is a safe place to sleep. Today, there are fewer supports and services than ever while more children, youth and families are struggling with housing insecurity. This emergency legislation is vital to ensuring that the COVID19 pandemic does not become an epidemic of sex and labor trafficking." **said Catherine Chen, Chief Program Officer at Polaris**

"The Emergency Family Stabilization Act takes a positive step forward in reaffirming its commitment to tribal sovereignty with the important inclusion of a tribal set aside. Homelessness in AI/AN communities while prevalent is oftentimes less visible than in other communities because homelessness primarily takes the form of housing shortages, substandard housing, and over-crowded living conditions. Unfortunately, because of this invisibility, tribes often do not receive equitable federal funds to address homelessness. As an organization focused on ending gender based violence in tribal communities, NIWRC recognizes that homelessness in AI/AN communities

is one of the many impacts domestic violence has on tribal families and that victims often lack access to flexible funding to assist with acquiring safe, secure shelter for their families. We applaud Senator Murkowski and Senator Manchin for reaffirming the trust responsibility the federal government has to Indian Tribes by including the tribal set aside in the EFSA." **said the National Indigenous Women's Resource Center**

"The National Indian Health Board commends Senator Murkowski for introducing a bill that provides emergency relief to Native families and children who have become homeless because of the economic hardships of COVID-19. American Indian and Alaska Native communities have faced serious housing and homelessness crises before the COVID-19 pandemic, and these issues have only worsened because of it. Lack of stable and secure housing is a constant threat to Tribal public health and the health outcomes of our People. NIHB praises Senator Murkowski for making the connection between health and housing by outlining direct set-aside funding for Tribes and Tribal organizations to better address this serious health priority, and for directing federal agencies to waive burdensome application requirements so that Indian Country can receive relief dollars as quickly as possible." **said Stay A. Bohlen, CEO of the National Indian Health Board**

"We applaud Senators Lisa Murkowski (R-AK), Joe Manchin (D-WV), and Kyrsten Sinema (D-AZ) in advocating for support for children, youth, and families in crisis or experiencing homelessness during the COVID-19 pandemic. Amidst a deadly pandemic, urban Indian organizations are continuing to serve families and individuals experiencing homelessness. As many homeless shelters are closed, American Indians and Alaska Natives depend on the life-saving culturally-competent care and community services they are receiving from our programs right now. We are hopeful that Congress will act quickly to get the resources to the children, youth, and families who need them most." **said Francys Crevier, the Executive Director of the National Council of Urban Indian Health**