
OLR Bill Analysis

HB 5259

AN ACT CONCERNING THE EDUCATION OF HOMELESS CHILDREN AND YOUTH.

SUMMARY

Existing state law specifically requires boards of education to provide educational services to homeless children and youths in conformity with the federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (see BACKGROUND). This bill maintains this requirement but specifies that these services must be provided as established in federal law as of December 23, 2022.

As under existing law, the requirement applies regardless of conflicting state statutes (like those referring to current federal law).

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2026

BACKGROUND

McKinney–Vento Homeless Assistance Act

Under the federal McKinney–Vento Homeless Assistance Act (“McKinney-Vento”), states must ensure that each homeless child and homeless youth has equal access to the same free, appropriate public education, including public preschool education, as provided to other children. This includes requiring states to ensure that their school district residency laws do not create obstacles for homeless students to attend school (42 U.S.C. § 11431 et seq.). McKinney-Vento was originally enacted in 1987.

Federal law defines “homeless children and youths” as individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, and includes those sharing the housing of others due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason (42 U.S.C. § 11434a).

COMMITTEE ACTION

Housing Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 18 Nay 0 (03/05/2026)