

What Happened at the West Virginia Legislature?

2019 Spring Continuing Education Conference for Social Workers
May 2, 2019

presented by

Sean O'Leary, Senior Policy Analyst

wvpolicy.org

@WVCBP @OLEarySW



A quiet year for the state budget

New spending initiatives, while avoiding spending cuts for now

General Revenue Budgeted Expenditures, FY 2019-2020

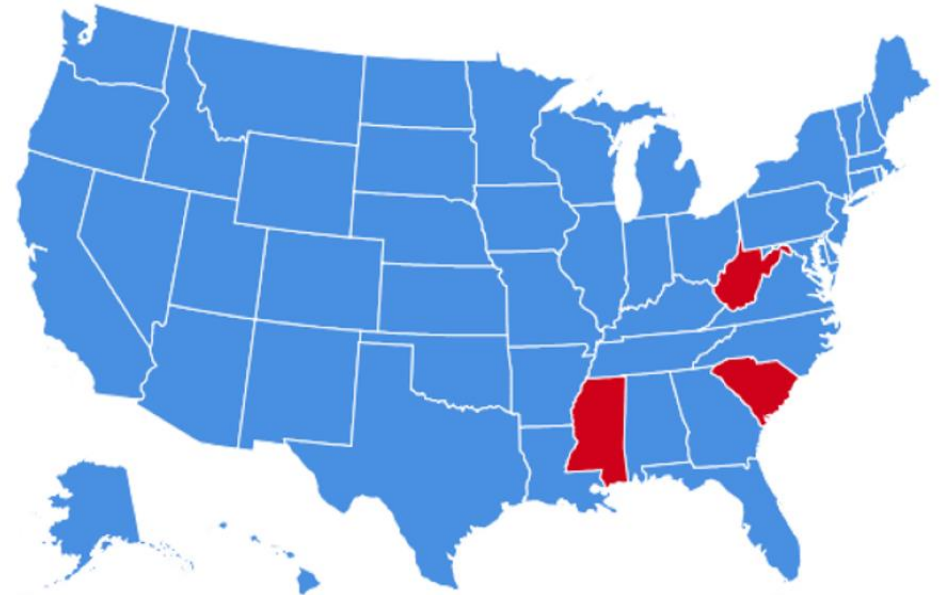
	FY 2019	FY 2020	Difference
Judicial and Legislative	\$162,756,364	\$148,919,038	-\$13,837,326
Administration and Executive	\$126,973,713	\$148,487,480	\$21,513,767
Commerce	\$71,829,540	\$78,973,930	\$7,144,390
Education	\$1,990,865,507	\$2,026,670,881	\$35,805,374
Education and the Arts	\$14,938,653	\$10,746,862	-\$4,191,791
Environmental Protection	\$6,491,906	\$6,688,015	\$196,109
Health and Human Resources	\$1,145,928,859	\$1,265,432,460	\$119,503,601
Military Affairs and Public Safety	\$379,337,237	\$431,025,792	\$51,688,555
Revenue	\$34,920,272	\$31,254,787	-\$3,665,485
Transportation	\$5,642,128	\$5,159,000	-\$483,128
Veterans' Assistance	\$10,554,688	\$12,011,949	\$1,457,261
Senior Services	\$29,950,955	\$29,950,955	\$0
Community and Technical Colleges	\$65,554,475	\$82,923,657	\$17,369,182
Higher Education	\$334,310,847	\$357,000,217	\$22,689,370
Total General Revenue	\$4,381,808,884	\$4,635,887,842	\$254,078,958

The Good...

Reducing Food Insecurity

- HB 2459 ended the lifetime ban on people convicted of drug-related felonies from receiving SNAP benefits.
- 2,100 people, many of which are in recovery from drug addiction, will now be able to receive SNAP benefits.
- WV was one of only 3 states with this ban.
- Ending the ban will reduce hunger, racial disparities, and remove a barrier to employment.

States with Lifetime Ban on SNAP

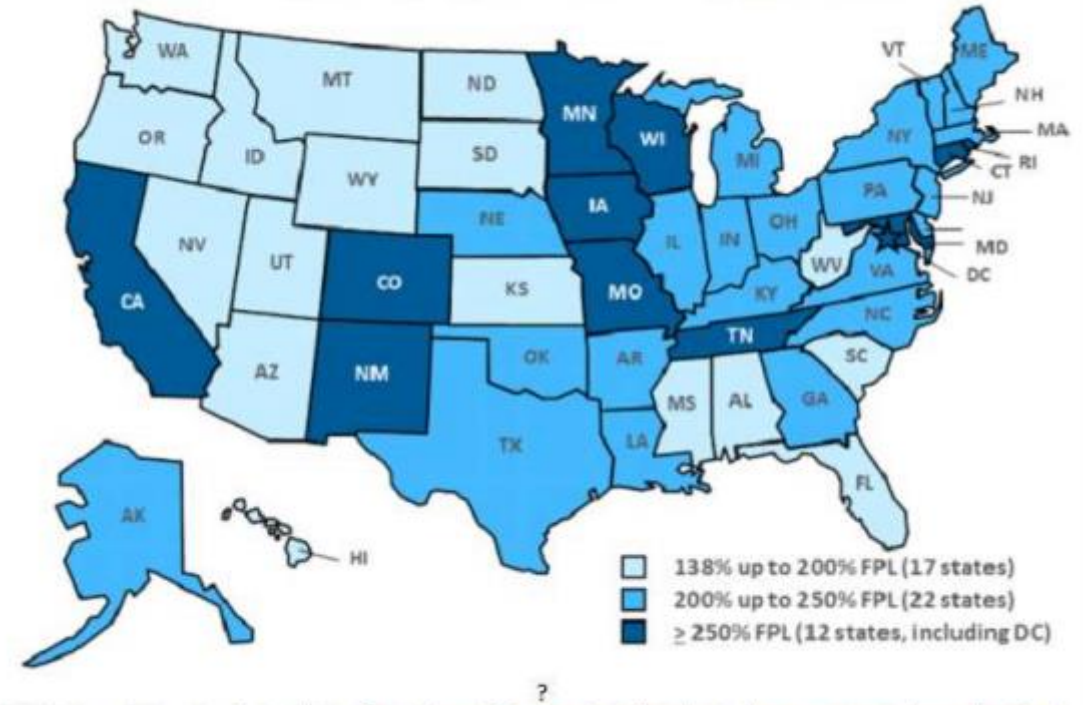


The Good...

Expanding Health Coverage to Pregnant Women

- SB 564 extended Medicaid/CHIP coverage to pregnant women up to 300% of the poverty level (about \$36,420), up from 163%
- An estimated 500 to 900 uninsured women with incomes will now be eligible for Medicaid/CHIP.
- Previously, 34 states had higher eligibility levels than WV.

State Status of Medicaid Expansion for Pregnant Women, 2018



SOURCE: Henry J Kaiser Family Foundation, <https://www.kff.org/medicaid/fact-sheet/where-are-states-today-medicaid-and-chip/>

The Good...

Removing Barriers to Employment

- SB 152 allows people with non-violent felony or misdemeanor convictions to clear (expunge) their criminal record.
- HB 2083 makes it easier for people to obtain a state ID after being released from prison.
- HB 2486 eases restrictions on dozens of professional licenses for people with criminal convictions.

The Good...

Other Good Stuff

- SB 1 provides free in-state tuition at the state's community and technical colleges to some applicants, with conditions.
- SB 4 makes the Municipal Home Rule Pilot Program permanent, will allowing municipalities to enact laws, ordinances and policies.
- SB 72, the Sexual Assault Victims' Bill of Rights (Hazel's Law), adds much-needed protections for women in the state.
- HB 2583, the Family Planning Access Act, allows people to get birth control from a pharmacist without visiting a doctor.

The Good...

Other Good Stuff

- SB 1 provides free in-state tuition at the state's community and technical colleges to some applicants, with conditions.
- SB 4 makes the Municipal Home Rule Pilot Program permanent, will allowing municipalities to enact laws, ordinances and policies.
- SB 72, the Sexual Assault Victims' Bill of Rights (Hazel's Law), adds much-needed protections for women in the state.
- HB 2583, the Family Planning Access Act, allows people to get birth control from a pharmacist without visiting a doctor.
- HB 2001, tax cut on Social Security benefits.

The Bad...

Transitioning Foster Care to a Managed Care Organization (MCO)

- HB 2020 gives WV DHHR authority to move around 7,000 foster children who receive Medicaid benefits into a private managed care plan.
- Little evaluation of how manage care for foster kids has worked in other states.
- In Texas, there have been documented problems of MCOs denying Medicaid health services to hundreds of children.
- Other provisions of HB 2020 did include some positive reforms.

The Bad...

More Tax Cuts for Coal

- HB 3142 cuts the coal severance tax rate on steam coal from 5% to 3%, at a cost of \$64 million.
- Cutting the severance tax does little to boost production or employment, at best may add 100 jobs.
- HB 3144 adds a new “super tax credit” for coal companies allowing them to deduct up to 35 percent of new investment costs from what they owe in severance taxes.
- The cost of HB 3144 is unknown, but could be substantial.

Bad Bills Defeated!

Gone, but not forgotten

- HB 3136 Medicaid Work Reporting Requirements, would have caused between 46,000 and 122,000 adults to lose Medicaid health coverage
- HB 3137 phasing out the income tax, would have mainly benefited high-income people, while eventually leading to large, compounding revenue losses.
- SJR 11 business “inventory” tax repeal, would have cost schools, counties, and municipalities between \$130 million and \$209 million in lost property tax revenue annually.
- SB 376 preempting local control, would have “preempted” city governments from raising living standards for working people taking away their authority to enact wage increases, paid sick days, and other labor standards.

The Big One

SB 451 Omnibus Education Reform Bill

- Established charter schools and Education Savings Accounts, along with teacher pay raise.
- Led to a 2 day strike.
- Likely coming back in some form during May Special Session.

What Are Education Savings Accounts?

ESA's vs Traditional Vouchers

Vouchers

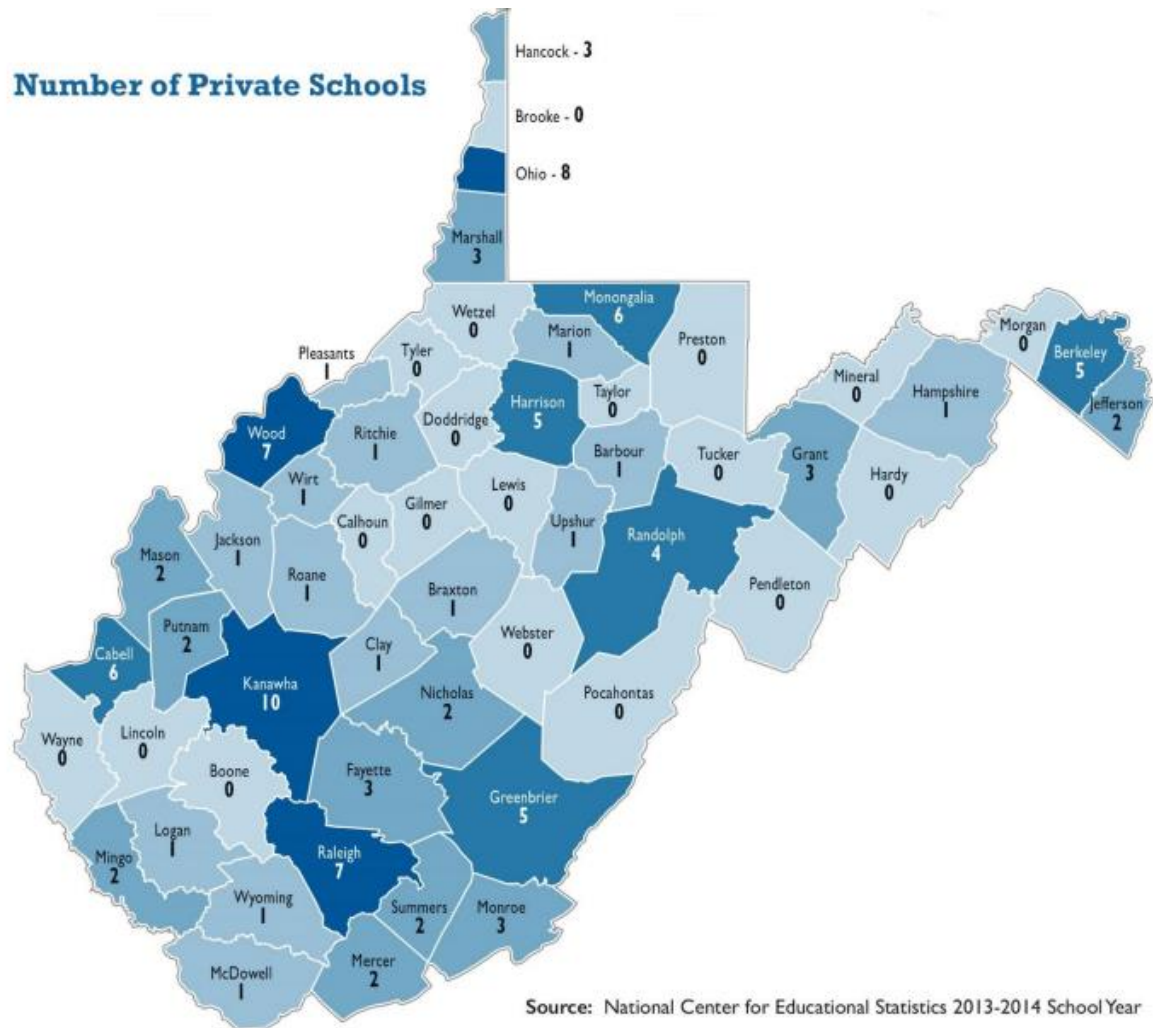
- Families given tuition certificates to be used at participating private schools.
- Amount can vary, typically does not cover full tuition.
- Vouchers are redeemed through state funding transferred directly from the state to the private schools.

ESA's

- Public funds given directly to families of the student.
- Funds can be used for any education service or supplies, including private school tuition.
- Student must opt out of public school.
- Only 5 states have ESA's

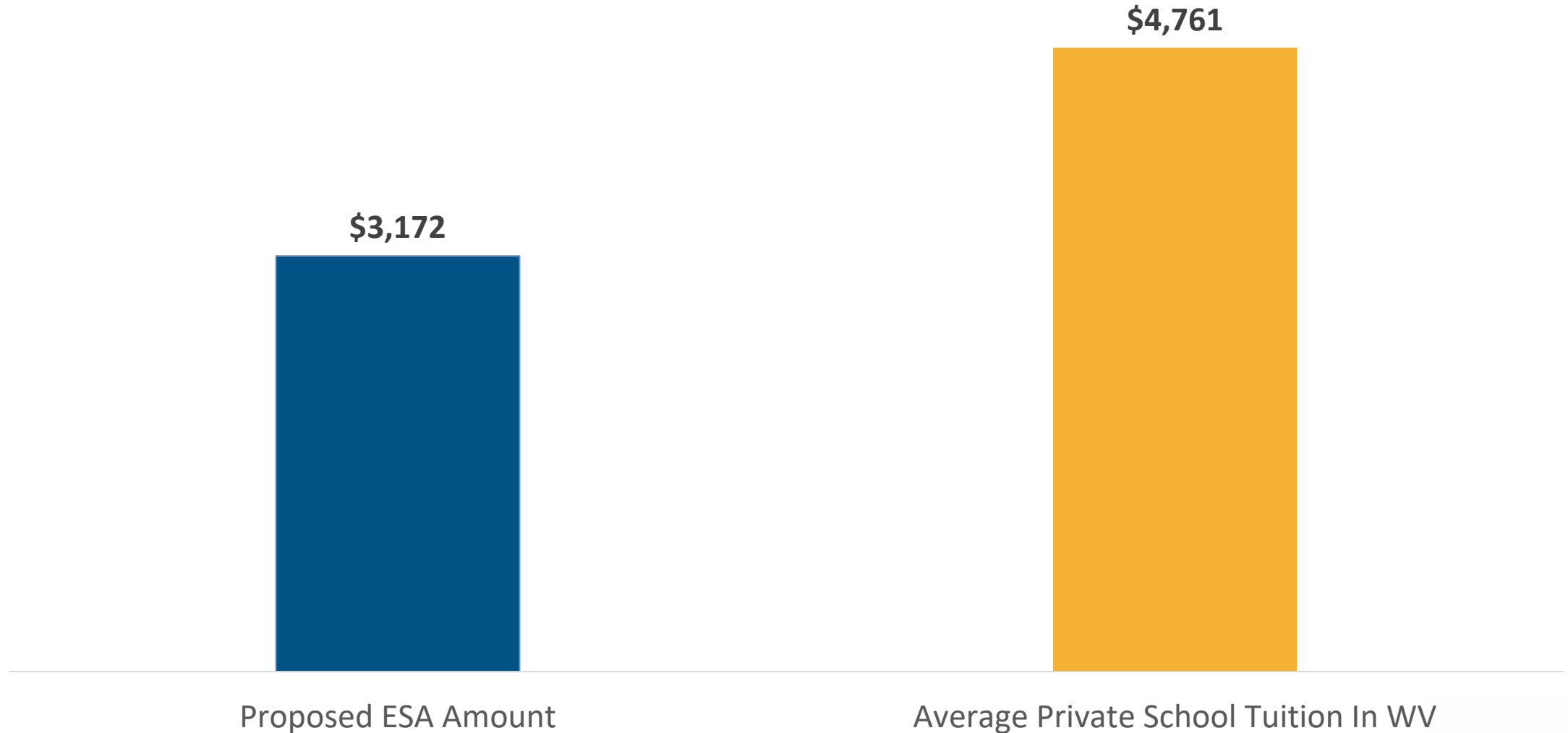
Students in Rural Counties Lack Access

19 counties have no private schools, 14 have just 1



Low Income Students Lack Access

ESA's fall short of covering private school tuition



ESA's Can Grow Costly

Minimum cost of an ESA program in WV for newly enrolled kindergarteners, with no cap

Year	Private School Enrollment with ESA	Estimated Cost
2020	1,557	\$4,937,852
2021	2,958	\$9,382,871
2022	4,219	\$13,383,388
2023	5,354	\$16,983,853
2024	6,376	\$20,224,272
2025	7,295	\$23,140,649
2026	8,123	\$25,765,388
2027	8,867	\$28,127,653
2028	9,538	\$30,253,692
2029	10,141	\$32,167,127
2030	10,684	\$33,889,218
2031	11,172	\$35,439,100
2032	11,612	\$36,833,994

**Cumulative Cost:
\$320 million**