



## AT SHEAKLEY CENTER, BROWN PUSHES FOR LEGISLATION TO ENSURE STUDENTS AREN'T FORCED TO CHOOSE BETWEEN HOUSING AND EDUCATION

***Brown joined Sen. Portman to Introduce Bipartisan Legislation to Update Current Rules that Prevent Students Who Are Homeless, or Who Experienced Homelessness, from Securing Affordable Housing While Pursuing Education***

CINCINNATI, OH – Today, U.S. Sen. Sherrod Brown (D-OH) visited the Lighthouse Sheakley Center for Youth in Cincinnati to push Congress to pass his bill with Sen. Rob Portman (R-OH), the *Housing for Homeless Students Act*. The Senators' bill would update current law to ensure students, including veterans, who have experienced homelessness or are currently homeless, can access affordable housing while pursuing their education.

The legislation would also benefit youth who age out of foster care who experience higher rates of homelessness and unemployment. Right now, individuals pursuing full-time education are not eligible for the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) program and can lose access to scholarships and grants if they switch to part-time education in order to retain access to affordable housing.

"Students and veterans who have experienced homelessness shouldn't be forced to choose between pursuing an education and access to affordable housing," said Brown. "I'm proud to work with Sens. Portman and King on the *Housing for Homeless Students Act* to provide clarity to current law and ensure the housing tax credit works for students investing in their futures."

Brown was joined today by Lighthouse Youth & Family Services President & CEO Paul Haffner and Eboni Ballard, a young person who experienced homelessness and would benefit from the *Housing for Homeless Students Act*. The Lighthouse Sheakley Center works with young adults in southwest Ohio experiencing homelessness to provide shelter and resources to set them up for future success and supports Brown and Portman's bipartisan bill.

"Young people experiencing homelessness shouldn't have to choose between a safe place to sleep and staying in school. Housing is the platform from which youth can continue to grow and thrive in our communities and education is a path to a successful future. Our young people deserve both," Bonita Campbell, Vice President, Homeless Youth Services, Lighthouse Youth & Family Services

The LIHTC Program provides tax incentives to developers to build or rehabilitate affordable housing units. Currently, the program does not allow tenants enrolled in the program to be full-time students. If students pursue a part-time education, they risk losing out on scholarships and grants available to full-time students only. The original intent of the rule was to prevent LIHTC funding from being used to construct student housing for students who have temporarily low-incomes at the expense of low-

income families with long-term needs. However, current law provides no exception for homeless or formerly-homeless students.

The Senators' bill would update current law to create an exemption for students if they've experienced homelessness within the last seven years. The bill will also include homeless or formerly homeless veterans pursuing full-time education.

Brown also helped introduce legislation in May, the *Fostering Success in Higher Education Act*, which would provide importance support to help foster and homeless youth attend college and set these students up for success. The bill would invest funding in state programs to assist foster and homeless youth in college enrollment and establish grant programs to help these young people pay for college and access important health and mental services and ease the transition into college.