

OCTOBER 1, 2026

REPRESENTATIVE JOSHUA WATKINS

Addressing Homelessness on College Campuses



Establish the problem

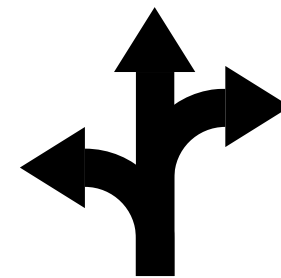
Why is homelessness on college campuses an issue that deserves the attention of the Kentucky General Assembly?



Housing Instability can disrupt college enrollment and completion



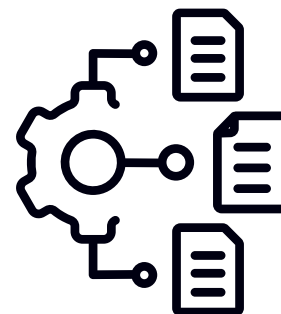
Existing supports don't always align with student needs



Students must navigate multiple system to access assistance



Students are not always identified or connected to help



Kentucky lacks a complete picture on the data regarding these students

Solution to the problem

How can we as the General Assembly help support students struggling with homelessness on our college campuses?

House Bill 782 from 2026 RS

- Dedicated point of contact:
 - Every institution designates a staff liaison to help students navigate financial aid, housing, and support services.
- More stable housing:
 - Housing priority for eligible students.
 - No housing fees during academic breaks.
 - On-campus housing available to eligible part-time students.

Solution to the problem continued

How can we as the General Assembly help support students struggling with homelessness on our college campuses?

House Bill 782 from 2026 RS

- Better connection to resources:
 - Liaisons connect students with financial aid, housing assistance, and community programs.
 - Institutions provide information and train staff to identify students who need support.
- Better accountability:
 - Institutions track enrollment, retention, graduation, and services received.
 - CPE provides training and reports statewide outcomes to the legislature.

Why this legislation matters

- Having a clear campus contact will help students navigate financial aid, housing, and support services.
- Facilitate opportunities to address housing instability, and increase access to campus housing for students enrolled part-time.

Why this legislation matters

- Helps understand if students can qualify as an independent student under federal aid rules
- Standardizes support across institutions by requiring each Kentucky postsecondary institution to follow statewide implementation policies.
- Consolidates outcome data on enrollment, retention, graduation, and services for these students
- 25 other states have passed similar legislation including: Arkansas, Texas, Tennessee, Alabama, Florida, and Louisiana

Questions?

