

The Senate of West Virginia
Charleston



MIKE STUART
STATE SENATOR
7TH SENATORIAL DISTRICT

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October 8, 2025

BY FIRST CLASS MAIL AND ELECTRONIC MAIL

The Honorable Randy Smith, Lieutenant Governor
Office of the Senate President
Room 229M, Building 1
State Capitol Complex
Charleston, West Virginia 25305

Re: Confirmation by the United States Senate to a Senior Post in the Trump Administration and the position of General Counsel of the United States Department of Health and Human Services; Resignation as Judiciary Chair and Member of the West Virginia State Senate

Lieutenant Governor and Senate President Smith,

Earlier this year, I was honored to be nominated by President Donald J. Trump to serve in a senior post within his Administration and to be the General Counsel for the United States Department of Health and Human Services ("HHS"). After a lengthy process (emphasis on "lengthy"), on October 7, 2025, the United States Senate confirmed my nomination and, earlier today, President Trump signed my commission as General Counsel to HHS today. As a result, I hereby submit my resignation as a member of the West Virginia State Senate, which such resignation shall be effective at 12:01 a.m. on the 9th day of October, 2025.

As I leave the State Senate, I am excited by my new role and the impact I can have as the General Counsel of HHS. There is virtually no aspect of American life or any American family not impacted on a daily basis by HHS. The mission of HHS is to enhance the health and well-being of all Americans by providing effective human services and advancing scientific research. As General Counsel of the Department, I'll be the third ranking member of HHS with more than 60,000 employees, nearly 600 lawyers, and nearly one-third of the federal budget. The agencies comprised within HHS include some of the most important in the federal government including the Food and Drug Administration, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the National Institutes of Health, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, the Administration for Children and Families, the Advanced Research Projects Agency for Health, the Agency for Health Care Research and Quality, the Administration for Strategic Preparedness and Response, the Office

of Refugee Resettlement, the Indian Health Service, and many other critical agencies. I'll be deeply engaged with critical programs including Medicare, Medicaid, the Rural Health Transformation Program, vaccines and immunization policies, negotiation of pharmaceutical prices, child welfare programs, policies and practices affecting minor children and unaccompanied minors at the border, public health policies, and literally hundreds of other critical priorities.

I am proud of my record in the State Senate and even more proud of the great people I represent. I sponsored big legislation over my term in the State Senate. Some legislation passed. Others did not despite many of those proposals being popularly embraced by the people of West Virginia. I fought to reduce regulatory burdens by sponsoring legislation to move our vehicle inspection stickers from a one to a two year period; for aggressive efforts to combat the normalization of illegal drugs, the opiate scourge, and a vape shop explosion that exploits confusion in federal and state drug policies and harms our children; for greater protections for first responders and law enforcement who serve so heroically in the line of duty; to protect victims of crime while toughening laws against the perpetrators of crime; for common sense, business building civil justice reforms; for a better economy and business climate in which West Virginia families and companies may thrive; for essential child welfare reforms; for student athlete safety including greater transparency by the WVSSAC and universal first-in-the-nation adoption of soft shell helmet covers for youth football and other safety measures in all youth sports to protect our children; for greater government transparency and lobbying reforms; for PSC reforms and transparency efforts in the interests of West Virginia rate payers; and for protecting and advancing West Virginia's vast energy resources. I urge you and the Senate to continue to consider these important initiatives.

The era of "soft on crime" needs to be a vestige of the past that is laid waste on the trash heap of history. It is time for West Virginia to reintroduce capital punishment as a response to the most heinous of crimes centered on the principles of retribution, deterrence, and incapacitation. Anyone murdering a first responder or law enforcement officer in the line of duty should face the most serious punishments. There are other despicable and unconscionable crimes for which the punishment should be equitable to the severity of the offense. The people support it. You need to pass it.

West Virginia's greatest growth industry shouldn't be vape shops. The people of our good state deserve a vibrant growing economy but they don't deserve the fastest growth to be vape shops on every corner of every community in our state. Beyond the public nuisance of flashing neon lights in residential areas, these shops exploit our children and their safety through the sale of unregulated, unapproved, often dangerous, and illegal intoxicating Chinese products. It is a crisis in our schools. It is a crisis among our children. It is a crisis for our culture.

Our child welfare system remains a devastating failure. Its failure is a reflection on all of us. Incremental piecemeal solutions are merely an albatross of leadership neglect. Our child welfare system must strive to preserve family unity whenever possible, pursue separation of children and parents only when clearly necessary, and reunify families as quickly as possible.

Some argue "the real fix" would come at too high a cost. I say the cost of failing to fix the system is a cost we truly can't afford. That cost would be insurmountable. We have talked and debated our child welfare system for too long. Talk is cheap. Talk won't help one child or a single family. We need action. Fixing our broken child welfare system must be the highest priority.

As I depart the State Senate, I caution you and my fellow State Senators against the undue and often corruptive influence of the "lobbyist driven complex," an alliance of special interests, hired brokers and power elites that exhibit far too much influence under the "Golden Dome," often distorting the legislative process, and threatening the ability of the Legislature to forge a bold new more prosperous future for all West Virginians. It does matter who is paying and who is getting paid to pass good and bad legislation. Lobbyist reforms and measures to strengthen government transparency are essential to honest government, for building true economic prosperity for the people of West Virginia, and for the growth of West Virginia's economic promise.

It has been my honor to fight for the good people of my Senate District. West Virginia's Seventh District encompasses Boone, Lincoln, Logan and southern Kanawha Counties. I represent a district comprised of people that helped build West Virginia but one that in the past few decades has faced significant challenges. I love these people. To me, they are family. Even in my new role, I will continue to fight for their better, brighter future.

We live in highly polarized times. Our differences and disagreements are not only by partisan divide but, increasingly, within political parties. We cannot allow petty intra-party differences or petty pursuits of personal ambition to diminish opportunities for progress. Division is the surest foundation for ultimate defeat. Good ideas are not defined by strictly defined segments within political parties nor are they merely the domain of those who talk the loudest. Good ideas are blind to origination. Good ideas often demand strong leadership and the sacrifice of allegiance. Good ideas are those defined purely as those in the best interests of the people of West Virginia.

I want to thank you for your confidence in allowing me to serve as the Senate Judiciary Chair. I also want to thank all my fellow and former members of the State Senate for their support during this confirmation process and for their friendship during my term of Senate service, the many committed volunteers that worked so hard to help in my historic landslide victory and election to the Senate, and all of our State Senate staff including Senate Clerk Lee Cassis and those in the Senate Judiciary Committee who work so hard and are so dedicated to the service of the Senate and the people of West Virginia. I want to give a special acknowledgement to Dustin Moore who has been a loyal, committed friend and valued advisor. Finally, none of this would have been possible without the tremendous support of my family including my wife, Katrina, and my amazing daughters, Bella and Audrey. To each of you, thank you from the very depths of my heart.

As I turn my full attention and entire focus to my new role as a senior member of the Trump Administration and my work in the nation's capital, I shall live temporarily in Washington, D.C. but my heart shall always remain in West Virginia. West Virginia is home and it shall always remain so.

Finally, I ask that you and members of the State Senate please keep me in your prayers as I work to faithfully represent the good citizens of West Virginia and the American people in service to the nation.

God Bless you and may God Bless the great people of my beloved State of West Virginia.

My very best,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Michael B. Stuart". The signature is stylized with a large, looped initial "M" and a cursive "B" and "S".

Michael B. Stuart
State Senator (7th District)