

Gov. Joe Manchin today released the following statement after learning about the passing of U.S. Sen. Robert C. Byrd:

"Gayle and I are deeply saddened by the passing of our dear friend and great senior Sen. Robert C. Byrd.

"Like all West Virginians, the news broke our hearts. Sen. Byrd was a fearless fighter for the constitution, his beloved state and its great people.

"He made a significant mark as a member of Congress in both our state's and nation's history. His accomplishments and contributions will define history for eternity.

"Our hearts and prayers go out to his daughters, friends and loved ones, his committed staff and to the people of West Virginia; we have suffered a terrible loss."

- Gov. Joe Manchin