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Contact: Anne O'Brien, Director of Communications, National Association of Federally Impacted Schools
202-624-3611
anne@nafisd.org

NAFIS Supports Legislation to Invest in School Infrastructure

H.R. 6830 would provide \$1 billion to address the facilities needs of federally impacted school districts

Washington, DC – September 19, 2018 – The National Association of Federally Impacted Schools (NAFIS) strongly supports new legislation that invests in the facilities of federally impacted school districts. H.R. 6830, the Impact Aid Infrastructure Act, was introduced earlier this week by Representative Tom O'Halleran (D-AZ). It would provide a one-time infusion of \$1 billion into the Impact Aid Construction program to address the significant backlog of infrastructure projects in these districts.

Federally impacted school districts are located on or near nontaxable Federal property, including military installations; Indian Trust, Treaty and Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act lands; Federal low-income housing facilities; and national parks, national laboratories and other Federal buildings and property. Because of the presence of the Federal government, these districts may have minimal assessed land value or few local taxpayers. Therefore, they have minimal capacity to raise funds for school construction in the way that most public school districts do – through bonds – and many lack the local resources needed to address urgent facilities needs.

A recent [NAFIS survey](#) identified more than \$4.2 billion in pressing construction projects in 218 federally impacted school districts nationwide, including emergency repairs for health and safety – such roof and foundation maintenance, asbestos abatement, mold remediation and fixing fire code violations – and modernization and expansion needs. A large majority cited lack of funds as a reason to defer these projects.

“The Federal government has a clear obligation to ensure that federally impacted school districts and the students they educate are not disadvantaged by its presence,” said NAFIS Executive Director Hilary Goldmann. “There has been Impact Aid construction funding since the program’s inception in 1950, but it is – and for decades has been – woefully inadequate. This legislation is an important and necessary step in the right direction.”

In addition to established precedent for Federal investment in federally impacted school facilities, the expertise to review, distribute and monitor the proposed funding already exists within the Impact Aid Program Office at the U.S. Department of Education.

For additional information on the facilities needs of federally impacted school districts, read [*Foundations for Learning: The Facilities Needs of Federally Impacted Schools*](#) (2017).

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The National Association of Federally Impacted Schools (NAFIS) represents the 1,200-plus federally impacted public school districts that together educate more than 10 million students across the nation. Federally impacted school districts are those located on or near nontaxable Federal property—including military installations; Indian Trust, Treaty and Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act lands; Federal low-income housing facilities; and national parks, national laboratories and other Federal buildings and property. These school districts, which are demographically and geographically diverse, receive Impact

Aid, a Federal education program that reimburses school districts for the lost local revenue and additional costs associated with the presence of Federal property. To learn more, visit www.nafisdc.org.