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## **NAFIS Supports School Infrastructure Investments in House *Build Back Better Act***

*Bill includes historic investment in Impact Aid construction, with expanded eligibility so more school districts benefit*

**Washington, DC – September 13, 2021** – The National Association of Federally Impacted Schools (NAFIS) commends members of the House Committee on Education and Labor for the significant allocations for school infrastructure in the *Build Back Better Act*. The large investments in school infrastructure – as well as dedicated infrastructure funding for federally impacted school districts – shows a priority for making school buildings safe and a commitment to the education of our nation's students. The inclusion of \$410,900,000 for the Impact Aid construction program in addition to \$82 billion for broader K-12 school infrastructure is needed and appreciated. We also appreciate the expansion of eligibility for this program for both Indian lands and military school districts' access to formula funding; this allows more districts to benefit from these critical funds.

Federally impacted school districts face the unique challenge of limited local tax revenue (and in turn, limited or non-existent bonding capacity) due to the presence of nontaxable Federal property, such as Indian Trust, Treaty and Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act lands and military installations. Many of these school districts are educating students in facilities with health and safety code violations, or that are more than 100 years old.

"School districts that receive funding under the Impact Aid construction program educate some of our nation's most vulnerable children," says NAFIS Executive Director Hilary Goldmann. "These students need access to safe, modern school buildings. This robust funding will help federally impacted school districts address health and safety concerns and provide quality learning environments that our students deserve. NAFIS calls on the Senate to follow the House lead with this unprecedented \$410 million investment in Impact Aid construction."

In a 2017 survey of 218 federally impacted districts, NAFIS identified \$13 billion in unmet construction need, including \$4.2 billion in pressing need. Specific projects would address overcrowding, leaky roofs, cracked foundations, expired boilers, technology upgrades and more. The funding provided under the *Build Back Better Act* would be a critical step for these school districts and would provide a pathway to safer and more supportive school buildings for our students.

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The National Association of Federally Impacted Schools (NAFIS) represents the 1,100-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 <https://www.nafisd.org/>.