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Representative Tom Cole Honored for Support of Impact Aid

Washington, DC – October 3, 2023 – The National Association of Federally Impacted Schools (NAFIS) has recognized Representative Tom Cole (R-OK) with the NAFIS Golden Champion Award. This award, which was presented during the NAFIS 50th anniversary celebration at the 2023 NAFIS Fall Conference, acknowledges the leadership that recipients have shown in strengthening and protecting the Impact Aid Program over the course of decades.

Impact Aid reimburses school districts for the loss of revenue caused by the presence of 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. It helps ensure students who attend schools on or near Federal property have access to a quality education.

For many years, Rep. Cole served on the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, including as Chair and Ranking Member. In those positions, he consistently prioritized the Impact Aid Program and secured needed funding for it. He is also an original co-sponsor of the Advancing Toward Impact Aid Full Funding Act in the 118th Congress. Rep. Cole is a long-standing member of the House Impact Aid Coalition. He has long spoken to the importance of Impact Aid to the military students in his congressional district and is one of the foremost experts in the House on issues related to Native Americans, serving as the Republican Co-Chair of the Congressional Native American Caucus since 2009.

“Congressman Cole has played an integral role in ensuring that federally impacted school districts in Oklahoma and across the nation have the resources they need to offer a high-quality education,” said NAFIS Executive Director Nicole Russell. “Impact Aid pays for teacher salaries, mental health supports, student transportation, technology and other educational resources and supports based on local needs. Thanks to Congressman Cole’s dedication to the program, school districts impacted by federal property throughout the nation can give students access to opportunities they need to meet their full potential.”

“I am deeply honored and grateful to receive the Golden Champion Award from NAFIS for my long-term commitment to championing Impact Aid,” said Rep. Cole. “Impact Aid is critical to many schools across the Fourth District on military or Indian lands that would not otherwise receive state funding. This is an issue I am proud to champion, and I thank the work of this association in ensuring these schools and the children who attend them are set up for success.”

The entire Impact Aid community joins together in thanking Representative Cole for his longstanding advocacy for and support of Impact Aid.

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The National Association of Federally Impacted Schools (NAFIS) represents more than 1,100 federally impacted public school districts that together educate approximately 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 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.