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NAFIS Supports Passage of Every Student Succeeds Act

(WASHINGTON, DC) -- Today, the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives released the conference report for the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) to reauthorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. The National Association of Federally Impacted Schools (NAFIS) applauds this tremendous bipartisan, bicameral effort – that includes Title VII, Impact Aid – to replace the nation’s outdated Federal K-12 education law.

NAFIS strongly supports the Impact Aid policy changes included in ESSA. The NAFIS membership, legislators, and their staff should be commended for their tireless efforts to bring these important changes to fruition that will strengthen the Impact Aid program for all federally impacted school districts. ESSA includes a set of critical policy improvements for Title VII, Impact Aid:

- Makes permanent technical and formula changes to Federal Properties that have already reduced subjectivity in the program and increased the timeliness of payments.
- Eliminates the Federal Properties “lockout” provision that currently prevents eligible federally impacted school districts from accessing Impact Aid funding.
- Adjusts the Basic Support formula to ensure equal proration when appropriations are sufficient to fund the proration formula (Learning Opportunity Threshold).
- Includes a hold harmless, to provide budget certainty to school districts facing a funding cliff or significant changes to their federally-connected student enrollment.

NAFIS is encouraged ESSA increases, in aggregate, the authorization level for Impact Aid, however, we are very concerned it is stagnant for the first three years of the four-year authorization. Impact Aid is unlike any other education program. As a reimbursement for the loss of local tax revenue that is a direct result of Federal activities, this program supplants rather than supplements local dollars. NAFIS encourages Congress to uphold its obligation to federally impacted school districts by increasing funding for Impact Aid through the appropriations process.

Congress must pass ESSA before the end of the year to ensure the Impact Aid policy changes can go into effect as soon as possible. Both policy and funding support are critical for the successful implementation of the Impact Aid program and to maintain the Federal Government's obligation to federally impacted school districts and the students they serve.

NAFIS is a non-profit, non-partisan organization of school districts from throughout the United States. Founded more than 40 years ago, the association works to ensure the needs of the federally connected child are met through adequate federal funds. NAFIS is organized primarily to educate Congress on the importance of Impact Aid and to make sure that school districts affected by a Federal presence receive the basic resources necessary to provide an education program for their students.