

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 26, 2015

The Honorable Tom Cole
Chairman
Subcommittee on LHHSED
Committee on Appropriations
2358-B Rayburn HOB
Washington DC, 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on LHHSED
Committee on Appropriations
1016 Longworth HOB
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Cole and Ranking Member DeLauro:

We urge you to recognize the importance of the Federal Impact Aid Program as you set the Appropriation Subcommittee's funding priorities for Fiscal Year (FY) 2016. We appreciate that you recognized the importance of this program by giving it a near full restoration in the FY 2014 Omnibus. We fully recognize the fiscal restraint that will govern the Subcommittee's actions this year, but we request strong and continued funding for all line items of the Impact Aid Program to ensure all federally connected school districts can provide a quality education.

Congress created Impact Aid in 1950 in recognition that the federal government needed to accept responsibility in areas impacted by a federal presence and help meet the local responsibility of financing public education. Impact Aid provides a payment in lieu of taxes to local school districts for lost revenue that is a result of tax-exempt federal property and actions that have increased expenditures due to the enrollment of federally connected children. The program provides direct, flexible funding to over 1,300 school districts. Impact Aid funds a range of programs, including facilities renovation, programs to retain highly qualified teachers, adequate technology, and maintenance of transportation fleets. For many districts, this funding represents the very lifeblood that allows their school systems to operate.

For districts enrolling military children, the ability to address both the academic and emotional needs of these students must be maintained. Education is a quality-of-life issue for military families, and it is our firm belief that as military personnel defend our country we must not forget or ignore the children they leave behind.

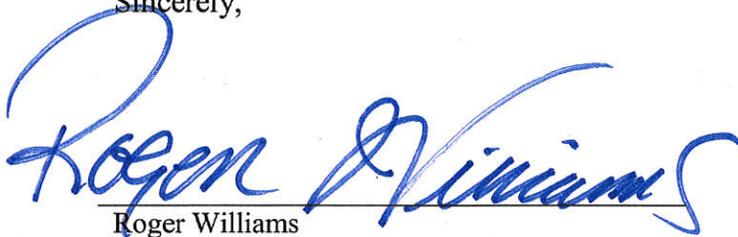
The needs of districts enrolling children who reside on Indian lands—of whom over 93 percent are Native American—also must not be overlooked. These districts strive to find creative ways to integrate curriculum and best practices to prepare students for success. Often, these school districts are located in rural areas with few taxpayers and where administrators double as bus drivers, teachers, and coaches. These dollars provide a foundational education program for all students; many schools would close their doors without the support of Impact Aid.

The administration's FY 2016 budget proposal recommends the elimination of funding for Section 8002 (Federal Properties) for the fourth year in a row. This was done despite Congress' continued support for the program. Federal Properties school districts depend on

Impact Aid due to a limited local tax base caused by the presence of certain federal land in their districts, including national parks and grasslands, national laboratories, Army Corps of Engineering projects, and property that encompasses the military academies. In some of these communities, the federal government is the largest landowner, which significantly diminishes a school district's revenue base.

We realize the Subcommittee will be working under significant budget constraints. However, we urge you to support continued funding for the entire Impact Aid Program. While the restoration in FY 2014 was welcome relief for these constituencies, the potential of long-term funding stagnation is of serious concern given the changing needs of the program and the students they serve. Impact Aid is not only the federal government's obligation, but also a tax relief program for local communities. Thank you for your thoughtful consideration of our request.

Sincerely,



Roger Williams
Member of Congress



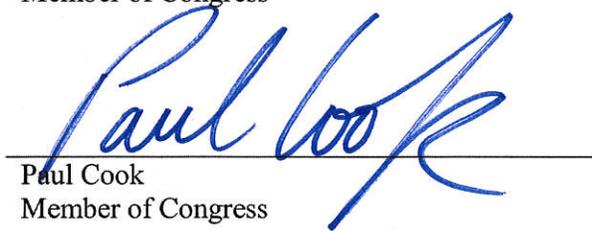
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Member of Congress



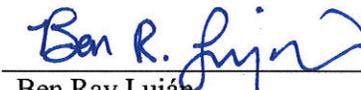
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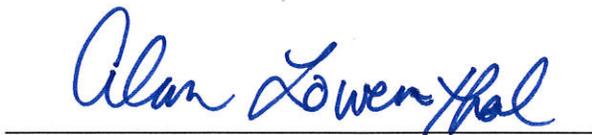
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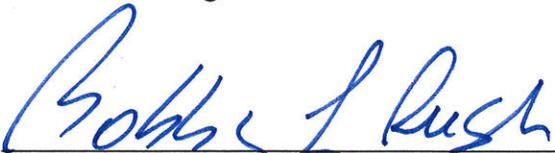
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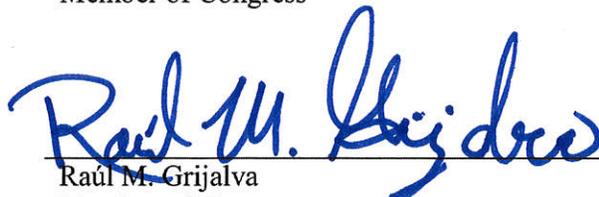
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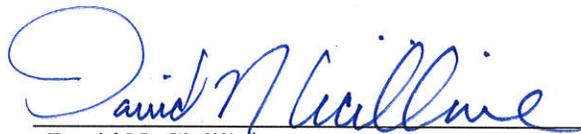
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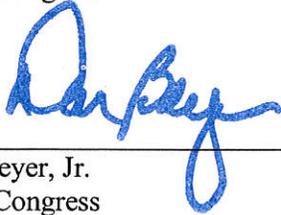
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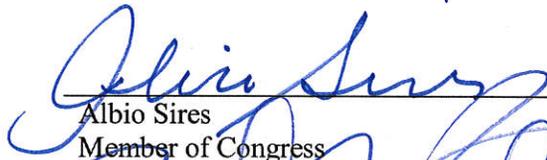
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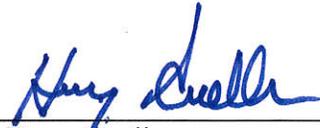
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Cathy McMorris-Rodgers

Cathy McMorris Rodgers
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Chris Gibson

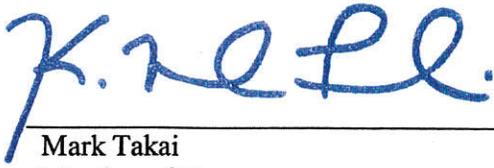
Chris Gibson
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Elise Stefanik

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Chris Smith

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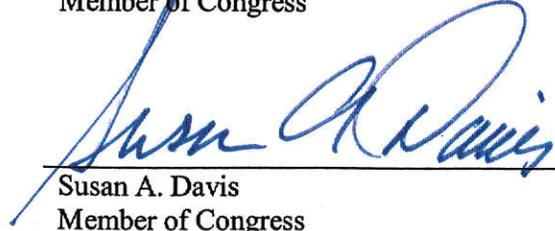
Mark Takai
Member of Congress



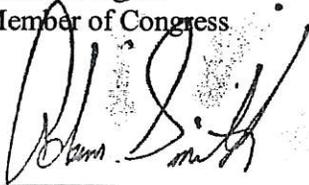
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