
Defense Report

AUSA



Impact Aid — Must Legislation for the 100th Congress

There is currently pending in the U.S. Senate a piece of legislation that would insure continued financial assistance to those school districts across the country that are heavily impacted by the presence of large numbers of school children from military families and others who reside on federal property.

Federal installations produce both economic benefits and economic liabilities for civilian communities located nearby. While the economic benefits from the federal payroll and contracts awarded for goods and services are recognized and appreciated, there is an inadequate local tax base resulting from federal ownership of property, exclusive jurisdiction and other federal exemptions. Since 1950, this tax deficit has been somewhat offset by Impact Aid, which assists local school districts to meet the costs of public education provided military children.

All in the transient military community have witnessed first hand the key role Impact Aid plays in obtaining comparable education for military children. Senior commanders in all the military services repeatedly emphasize to Congress and to local school officials alike that there is nothing more important to the continued high morale and welfare of our nation's volunteer military personnel than knowing that their children will be given the full measure of public educational opportunities, no matter where they are assigned to serve.

Approving legislation to continue Impact Aid, while essential, meets but half the requirement. Congress must also appropriate sufficient funds to meet the costs of public school education for military children. In the recent past Congress has failed to provide adequate funds. The result: One school district in New Jersey recently attempted to bar children from a nearby Army fort when school began. Other districts sought relief in the courts. The problem is real and military personnel must not be made to suffer because of inaction by Congress.

Impact Aid is must legislation for Congress to authorize and to fund adequately. Impact Aid for the school districts which educate the children of our nation's military personnel is sorely needed and relates directly to the continued health, vigor and readiness of our Armed Forces.