



American Association of School Administrators

April 29, 2008

Committee on Education and Labor
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Miller and members of the Committee:

On behalf of the American Association of School Administrators (AASA), representing more than 14,000 school superintendents and local educational leaders, we thank you for your consideration and urge your support of HR 3021, the 21st Century High-Performing Public School Facilities Act and the Loeb sack-Kildee Education and Labor Committee substitute.

There is a growing need around the country to deal with aging school structures and the growing demands on public school facilities. This bill and its substitute go a long way furthering the conversation around the state of public school facilities and the importance of the learning environment to improve student achievement through \$6.4 billion in grants to states and local school districts.

More specifically, we support the Loeb sack- Kildee substitute that would ensure that money is passed down to districts via a formula grant and ensure that every district received a minimum grant of \$5,000. While these grants may not be enough to fund an entire project, they provide critical seed money to get construction and renovation projects moving.

While we were pleased to see the money go out via formula, we are still concerned that the formula is based on Title I allocations. Under the current Title I formula, dollars are distributed to concentrations of poverty. This is defined by numbers or percentages, whichever is higher. Unfortunately, this often results in larger lower poverty school districts getting more Title I money per child than higher poverty smaller school districts. Many times, smaller rural schools do not get their share. While this is probably the best option currently available, we strongly urge the committee to make the necessary corrections in the Title I formula in the reauthorization of ESEA to ensure that the necessary federal investment is going to schools and districts where the percent of poverty is the greatest.

Once again, we support the committee's action on HR 3021 to provide support to school districts efforts in school construction, renovation and repair and urge your support of this bill as it is considered by the committee.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Mary Kusler'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name 'Mary' being larger and more prominent than the last name 'Kusler'.

Mary Kusler
Assistant Director, Government Relations