I would note that the average school in the United States costs nearly $6 million to build. This bill's funding for school construction of $7 million would only allow us to build the equivalent of one school each year.

Mr. Chairman, there is need for more than one school a year in my district alone. Section 8007 must be increased substantially if we are to effectively educate our children on Federal lands in a safe and healthy environment. Indeed, when Congress reauthorized the Impact Aid law in 1994 and created section 8007, it envisioned this part of the Impact Aid Program to be funded at a minimum of $25 million each year.

Section 8007 has only been appropriated to $5 million in each of the last few years, and the money has yet to be distributed to any school districts. Not only that, but a study by the National Association of Federally Impacted Schools, or NAFIS, recently concluded that $25 million is the amount needed to help address the construction needs of federally impacted school districts. So full funding of section 8007 would compensate for the inability of heavily impacted districts to raise construction funds on their own.

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Now, Mr. Chairman, let us compare the situation of these federally impacted schoolchildren with the bureaucracy of the NLRB from which we propose to offset the funding increase for school construction.

As I said before, Mr. Chairman, on the Navajo reservation in my district, school buildings are literally falling down around students. I am sure that many of my colleagues from other federally impacted districts could make similar claims.

The NLRB, on the other hand, occupies a posh building in one of the most prestigious parts of Washington, DC, at a cost of $21 million a year. Children on the reservation are often underfed and malnourished.

The CHAIRMAN. The time of the gentleman from Arizona [Mr. HAYWORTH] has expired.

(By unanimous consent, Mr. HAYWORTH was allowed to proceed for 2 additional minutes.)

Mr. HAYWORTH. Mr. Chairman, children on the reservation are often underfed and malnourished and lack the proper books and supplies. But at the NLRB, all five Board members have their own showers, kitchens, libraries, and are provided with clean linen weekly.

And get this, Mr. Chairman, while the schools on our military bases and reservations struggle to attract and retain qualified teachers, each Board member of the NLRB has 18 to 22 lawyers on his staff, while the NLRB general counsel employs 628 lawyers at an average salary of more than $76,000 a year.

Mr. Chairman, in almost every survey I have seen, the American people list education as their top priority. We have a chance to do something to improve education today in a very helpful way by increasing funding for the construction of schools on some of our Federal lands to serve some of the poorest children in America.

By contrast, Mr. Chairman, I have not seen one survey citing clean linen for high-priced lawyers as a pressing national problem. In short, Mr. Chairman, is there anyone in this Chamber who really believes that the NLRB needs the $18 million more than the children on our reservations and military bases? Because, Mr. Chairman, that is the simple choice before us today.

I do not want to make it sound as if this Congress has not tried to tighten the reins on the NLRB. On the contrary, I am pleased that the Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education has frozen funding for the NLRB over the past few years. Nevertheless, the NLRB can and should get by on less. This proposal is not a drastic cut. It is merely a way for us to set our priorities for our scarce Federal dollars in a more human way.

Mr. Chairman, we are confronted with a stark but simple choice: lawyers or children, bureaucrats or schools. Mr. Chairman, again I would say this amendment is a straightforward choice: Lawyers or children, bureaucracy or schools. I implore the Members to support this amendment.

The CHAIRMAN. The Committee will rise informally.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. RIGGS) assumed the chair.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A message in writing from the President of the United States was communicated to the House by Mr. Sherman Williams, one of his secretaries.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Committee will resume its sitting.

DEPARTMENTS OF LABOR, HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, AND EDUCATION, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 1998

The Committee resumed its sitting.

Mr. PORTER. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

Mr. Chairman, my good friend and colleague from Arizona [Mr. HAYWORTH] said that he has the most heavily impacted congressional district in America. I have, perhaps, one of the most heavily impacted school districts in America with the largest naval training facility in the world at Great Lakes as part of my district. Impact Aid is very important to this Member personally, as well as very important to a number of Members in the House of Representatives and to most of our States.

Mr. Chairman, we have done everything we possibly can to raise funding in this area. In 1996, we provided $693 million, and in 1998, we provide $796 million, a $100 million increase. We have increased section (f). We have increased construction. The President suggested $4 million for this account; we are raising it to $7 million, almost double what the President has suggested. We have raised funding for Federal property. It is a high priority with me, and I know that the gentleman from Arizona realizes this.

Mr. Chairman, the amendment would quintuple the appropriation for construction in a single year and would represent more than a sixfold increase over the President's request. That level of funding certainly has not been justified or even suggested in any of the budget hearings we held this year.

Regarding the offset, the committee bill already reduces NLRB by $11.8 million below the President's request. It provides level funding compared to fiscal year 1997. I have to say that the NLRB was funded at $170.3 million in fiscal 1996. It would be funded in fiscal 1998 at $174.6 million, a very, very small increase over the last 3 years.

In total, the NLRB is funded at $1.4 million below the amount provided by the last Democratic Congress in fiscal year 1995. And when one considers that the NLRB budget is almost entirely salaries and expenses, this 1 percent reduction since 1995 is actually closer to a 10-percent real cut, because the Agency has had to absorb mandatory pay and benefit increases in each of the last 3 years.

Mr. Chairman, I would say to the gentleman from Arizona that I am no fan of this administration's NLRB. I think in many instances Chairman Gould has politicized the institution beyond anybody's imagination, and I feel that that is a serious problem for our country. But I would also say to the gentleman that the NLRB is part of a system that we have devised to resolve disputes in our economic system between management and labor in a lawful way without violence; hopefully, without interruptions of work. Its day-to-day work in resolving cases that are filed before it is very important. When we cut too heavily into an agency's resources, all we do is create a backlog of cases that makes it much more difficult for these disputes to be resolved in a reasonable way. I do not think that simply cutting its budget is a productive approach at all, even given our frustration over the political nature that I believe Chairman Gould has given to this Agency, and I think very unfortunately.

So on balance, I think we have done very well by Impact Aid and very well by Impact Aid construction. I think the cut in NLRB, while in certain ways I would agree with the gentleman from Arizona, would be unwise in this circumstance.

We have level-funded it. It amounts to a cut. I think the committee has done a very good job in creating a balance between these two accounts, and I