May 21, 2008

United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator:

On behalf of the American Association of School Administrators (AASA), representing more than 14,000 school superintendents and local educational leaders, we urge you to support the passage of the 2008 Emergency Supplemental Appropriations bill, with the inclusion of the domestic spending amendment.

AASA was pleased to see the inclusion of the extension of the moratoria for the seven impacted Medicaid regulations, including school-based administrative and transportation claiming. This is the same language that the House has already endorsed when it overwhelmingly approve HR 5613 in April. The Emergency Supplemental Appropriations bill offers the quickest opportunity to get this critical language enacted, especially in light of two of the current moratoria expiring on May 25th and another critical deadline approaching June 30th. Voting for the domestic spending amendment will solidify your support for the vital role that school districts play in providing health care services to Medicaid eligible children.

We were also delighted the extension of the Secure Rural Schools and Communities Self-Determination Act was included in the Senate version of the supplemental. This critical program that impacts 4,400 school districts in 42 states originally expired in December 2006. It was extended for one year under last year’s emergency supplemental but no further concrete action has been taken, until this amendment was offered. Meanwhile school districts across the country are grappling with massive cuts due to the expiration of this program in December 2007. Without providing for this one year extension, districts will be faced with no option but staffing layoffs and elimination of critical education programs at the local level. We once again urge your support for the domestic spending amendment which includes this critical extension.

We urge you again to vote in favor of the domestic spending amendment that includes the critical extension of the Medicaid moratoria and approve the full 2008 Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Bill. If you have any other questions or comments, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

Mary Kusler
Assistant Director, Government Relations