AMENDMENT TO RULES COMMITTEE PRINT 114-32

OFFERED BY MR. DESANTIS OF FLORIDA

At the end of subtitle D of title I of division A, add the following new section:

SEC. 1431. SENSE OF CONGRESS ON INSOLVENCY OF THE HIGHWAY TRUST FUND AND RETURNING POWER TO STATES.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds the following:

(1) The Highway Trust Fund is nearing insolvency.

(2) It is critical for Congress to phase down the Federal gas and diesel taxes and empower the States to tax and regulate their highway and infrastructure projects.

(3) The Federal role and funding of surface transportation should be refocused solely on Federal activities and empower States with control and responsibility over their transportation funding and spending decisions.

(4) The objective of the Federal highway program has been to facilitate the construction of a
modern freeway system that promotes efficient inter-
state commerce by connecting all States.

(5) The Interstate System connecting all States
is near completion.

(6) Each State has the responsibility of pro-
viding an efficient transportation network for the
residents of the State.

(7) Each State has means to build and operate
a network of transportation systems, including high-
ways, that best serves the needs of the State.

(8) Each State is best capable of determining
the needs of the State and acting on those needs.

(9) The Federal role in highway transportation
has, over time, usurped the role of the States by tax-
ing motor fuels used in the States and then distrib-
uting the proceeds to the States based on the per-
ceptions of the Federal Government on what is best
for the States.

(10) The Federal Government has used the
Federal motor fuel tax revenues to force all States
to take actions that are not necessarily appropriate
for individual States.

(11) The Federal distribution, review, and en-
forcement process wastes billions of dollars on un-
productive activities.
(12) The Federal mandates that apply uniformly to all 50 States, regardless of the different circumstances of the States, cause the States to waste billions of hard-earned tax dollars of projects, programs, and activities that the States would not otherwise undertake.

(13) Congress has expressed a strong interest in reducing the role of the Federal Government by allowing each State to manage its own affairs.

(b) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) the Secretary should provide a new policy blueprint to govern the Federal role in transportation once existing and prior financial obligations are met;

(2) this policy should return to the individual States maximum discretionary authority and fiscal responsibility for all elements of the national surface transportation systems that are not within the direct purview of the Federal Government;

(3) this policy will preserve the Federal responsibility for the Dwight D. Eisenhower National System of Interstate and Defense Highways and will preserve responsibility of the Department of Transportation for design construction and preservation of
transportation facilities on Federal public land, preserving responsibility of the Department of Transportation for national programs of transportation research and development and transportation safety; and

(4) this policy will preserve responsibility of the Department of Transportation to eliminate, to the maximum extent practicable, Federal obstacles to the ability of each State to apply innovative solutions to the financing, design, construction, operation, and preservation of Federal and State transportation facilities with respect to transportation activities carried out by States, local governments, and the private sector.