AMENDMENT TO RULES COMMITTEE PRINT 116–54

OFFERED BY MS. JACKSON LEE OF TEXAS

Page 499, after line 22, insert the following:

SEC. _____. SENSE OF THE CONGRESS.

(a) It is the Sense of Congress that the planned improvements along the I-45 corridor shall include provision of housing and relocation assistance to the impacted area; remediation of impacts to environmental, economic, and places of historic significance.

(b) Whereas, highway infrastructure improvements in the State of Texas have relied too often on pushing major highway construction projects to widen freeways and roads instead of prudent and sustained investments in state of the art mass transit systems to meet the transportation needs of urban residents.

(c) Whereas, concentrations of poverty exists in areas in and around the network of freeways that dominate the city of Houston; Whereas, there is a history of state highway and transportation planners conducting construction projects for road and highways that importunately destroyed the homes of low income and minority residents in Houston.
(d) Whereas, when TxDOT remade the I-10 and U.S. 1959 interchange in 1959, the changes made took more than
500 homes along Buffalo Bayou in Fifth Ward; Whereas,
the completion of the I-45 interchange with Loop 610 cut
historic Independence Heights practically in half in the
late 1950s; Whereas, although it is 60 years later the
same callus approach to urban infrastructure planning is
still used and the resulting harms ignore disproportionate
born by the city’s low-income black community.

(e) Therefore, be it resolved that the Congress in pro-
viding for the construction of critical infrastructure it does
not provide funding for the purpose of disproportionately
impacting vulnerable populations. Planners engaged in in-
frastucture improvement should take care in the planning
or conducting of major projects involving widening or add-
ing expanded surface transportation space.

(f) It is strongly encouraged that planners consider
the merits and cost effectiveness of mass transit systems
in urban centers to address traffic and congestion prob-
lems, and they are encouraged to provide for remediation
of harms done to vulnerable persons, environmental, eco-
omic, cultural, and historic places near or in the con-
struction zones, which should include housing for dis-
placed persons prior to the project proceeding. In consid-
ering these factors projects should engage communities
and stakeholders in how to avoid, mediate or provide relief
to those impacted by harms caused by the project.