

Republican Motion to Instruct #5

PREVENT HARM TO RURAL AMERICA

Offered by Representative Obernolte (CA) and Representative Good (VA)

Mr. Obernolte and Mr. Good move that the Committee on the Budget direct its Chairman to request on behalf of the Committee that the rule providing for consideration of the bill make in order an amendment to strike underlying policies in the legislation and formulas which would (1) further economically disadvantage rural Americans living near the poverty line; and (2) disproportionately favor large cities.

Background

- (1) Several provisions in this Act disproportionately prioritize and benefit urban areas at the expense of rural communities.
- (2) In previous coronavirus-related legislation, funding for state and local aid was based on a state's population. This Act changes that metric; aid will now be based on both population and unemployment. Determining federal aid based on each state's unemployment level will primarily benefit non-rural states.
- (3) The Act includes \$30 billion in Federal Transit Administration (FTA) grants and specifies \$26.1 billion shall be allocated to urban areas, while only \$280.9 million would be allocated to rural communities.
- (4) In total, COVID-19 relief bills—including the current reconciliation bill—will have provided mass transit with \$69 billion.
- (5) Total relief funding for highways and bridges is significantly lower than funding for mass transit; this is a major misstep and will only serve to negatively impact working-class families throughout rural parts of the country.
- (6) Provisions like this, along with others laid out in the Biden Administration's "Executive Order on Ensuring a Lawful and Accurate Enumeration and Apportionment Pursuant to the Decennial Census" will continue to funnel money to urbanized areas instead of assisting local needs throughout rural America.
- (7) Additionally, this relief bill's formula does not properly address the assistance for our nation's children living in poverty. It cannot just be the biggest, most metropolitan cities and states that receive this aid; rural states, who undeniably have a proportionately significant number of children living in poverty, should be a top priority for federal assistance.

Technical Language

The amendment should:

- (1) revise the formula associated with section 5001 (Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds) to instead focus solely on population; and
- (2) strike section 7006 (which would allocate \$30 billion to FTA grants).