

Senator Inouye  
Opening Statement

Nomination Hearing for:

Linda Morgan  
Chairman of the Surface Transportation Board

Michael J. Frazier  
Assistant Secretary for Governmental Affairs  
U.S. Department of Transportation

Stephen D. Van Beek  
Associate Deputy Secretary and Director of Intermodalism  
U.S. Department of Transportation

September 28, 1999

Madam Chairwoman. First of all, I'd like to thank you for your leadership in convening this hearing to consider these nominations.

The three nominees we are considering today will play a vital role in shaping our nation's transportation policy. Intermodalism and transportation issues are critical to the continued economic growth that our country is experiencing. The professionals before us are veterans of both the Hill and the Administration -- they are clearly well qualified for the positions they have been nominated for. I look forward to hearing from them.

Linda Morgan has already served as the Chairman of the ICC and following the sunset of that agency, as Chairman of the Surface Transportation Board (STB). I have known and respected Linda Morgan for many years and I believe that she has served with great enthusiasm and commitment during her first term as Chairman of the STB.

The magnitude of the job we require the STB to do is staggering and under the leadership of Chairman Linda Morgan the STB has had some notable successes. I commend her for efforts in leading the STB from its creation as an agency. It was no easy task to pare down an agency, and create a new one in its place. She also has helped to eliminate the rail crisis in the Western

United States, and has spear headed the initiative to review the regulatory structure as it pertains to railroad service and railroad rate cases.

I do not to claim that nothing more needs to be done, rather, I want my colleagues and to know that I appreciate how far Chairman Morgan has come in helping the Board fulfill its mission.

Mister Frazier in his capacity as Assistant Secretary of Governmental Affairs will be charged with working with all of us and our staff on a regular basis -- surely that will be a challenge. I have no doubts that he can handle such a role given his experiences in the past. I look forward to hearing of your plans and goals as we consider your appointment to this position.

The Associate Deputy Secretary and Director of Intermodalism is a position which I have a great deal of interest in, Mister Van Beek. As you know, my state relies heavily on multiple modes of transportation for not only commerce, but to ensure its existence. I am particularly interested in your ideas about enhancing federal intermodal transportation policy.

To all of the nominees here today, thank you for your attendance and I look forward to working with you in the future.