

Instructions for nominees: The Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation asks you to provide typed answers to each of the following questions. It is requested that the nominee type the question in full before each response. Do not leave any questions blank. Type "None" or "Not Applicable" if a question does not apply to the nominee. Return printed answers to Committee. Begin each section (i.e., "A", "B", etc.) on a new sheet of paper.

## **A. BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION AND QUALIFICATIONS**

1. Name (Include any former names or nicknames used):

Joel Matthew Szabat

2. Position to which nominated:

Assistant Secretary for Aviation & International Affairs, US Department of Transportation

3. Date of Nomination:

August 1, 2018

4. Address (List current place of residence and office addresses):

  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE W88-324 Washington DC 20590 (work)

5. Date and Place of Birth:

25 January, 1959 Fort Worth, TX

6. Provide the name, position, and place of employment for your spouse (if married) and the names and ages of your children (including stepchildren and children by a previous marriage).

Spouse: Chiling Tong, Chief Executive Officer and President of the National Asian/Pacific Islander Chamber of Commerce and Entrepreneurship (National ACE).

1300 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Suite 700

Washington, DC 20004

No Children

7. List all college and graduate degrees. Provide year and school attended.

Georgetown University, 1981 BA Economics & Public Administration

Harvard University, 1988 MBA

8. List all post-undergraduate employment, and highlight all management-level jobs held and any non-managerial jobs that relate to the position for which you are nominated.

**Captain, US Army, 1981-86**

Management Consultant, Strategic Planning Associates, 1988-90

**Executive Officer, US EPA, 1990-93**

Principal Consultant (Transportation), California State Assembly, 1993-2001

Principal, White Dragon Group (self-employed) 2001-02

**Deputy Assistant Secretary for Transportation Policy, USDOT, 2002-03**

**Deputy Assistant Secretary for Management & Budget, USDOT, 2003-05**

**Transportation Counselor, US Embassy, Baghdad, Iraq, 2005**

Senior Counselor to the Secretary, USDOT, 2005-06

**Chief of Staff, Small Business Administration, 2006-08**

**Deputy Assistant Secretary for Transportation Policy, USDOT, 2008-11**

**Executive Director, Maritime Administration, USDOT, 2011-18**

**Deputy Assistant Secretary for Aviation & International Affairs, USDOT, January, 2018-Present**

9. Attach a copy of your resume.

See Attached

10. List any advisory, consultative, honorary, or other part-time service or positions with Federal, State, or local governments, other than those listed above, within the last ten years.

None

11. List all positions held as an officer, director, trustee, partner, proprietor, agent, representative, or consultant of any corporation, company, firm, partnership, or other business, enterprise, educational, or other institution within the last ten years.

Unpaid advisor to the International Leadership Foundation (ILF), an Educational non-profit my wife and I founded in 2000.

12. Please list each membership you have had during the past ten years or currently hold with any civic, social, charitable, educational, political, professional, fraternal, benevolent or religious organization, private club, or other membership organization. Include dates of membership and any positions you have held with any organization. Please note whether any such club or organization restricts membership on the basis of sex, race, color, religion, national origin, age, or handicap.

Unpaid advisor to the International Leadership Foundation (ILF), an Educational non-profit my wife and I founded in 2000.

13. Have you ever been a candidate for and/or held a public office (elected, non-elected, or appointed)? If so, indicate whether any campaign has any outstanding debt, the amount, and whether you are personally liable for that debt.

Unsuccessful candidate for the Sacramento, CA Municipal Utility District (SMUD) in 1998. No debts.

14. Itemize all political contributions to any individual, campaign organization, political party, political action committee, or similar entity of \$500 or more for the past ten years. Also list all offices you have held with, and services rendered to, a state or national political party or election committee during the same period.

None

15. List all scholarships, fellowships, honorary degrees, honorary society memberships, military medals, and any other special recognition for outstanding service or achievements.

Army Commendation Medal

Army Meritorious Service Medal

Presidential Rank Award (Meritorious Service)

USDOT War on Terror Medal

USDOT Inspirational Leader

Ellis Island Foundation Medal of Honor

Distinguished Visitor, Eisenhower School for National Security and Resource Strategy, National Defense University

16. Please list each book, article, column, or publication you have authored, individually or with others. Also list any speeches that you have given on topics relevant to the position for which you have been nominated. Do not attach copies of these publications unless otherwise instructed.

No books, articles, columns, or publications. Since joining Aviation & International Affairs, I have visited with and spoken to Essential Air Service communities, and spoken on panels of the US Chamber of Commerce and at the Federal Aviation Administration.

17. Please identify each instance in which you have testified orally or in writing before Congress in a governmental or non-governmental capacity and specify the date and subject matter of each testimony.

(House) Committee on Small Business, March 12, 2009, Ensuring Stimulus Contracts for Small and Veteran-Owned Businesses

(House) Committee on Transportation & Infrastructure, March 26, 2009, DOT's Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Program

(House) Transportation & Infrastructure Committee, Subcommittee on Coast Guard & Marine Transportation, April 4, 2017, Authorization of Coast Guard & Maritime Transportation Programs

(Senate) Committee on Appropriations, Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing & Urban Development and Related Agencies, April 5, 2017, Preventing Sexual Assault & Sexual Harassment at the US Merchant Marine Academy

(Senate) Commerce Committee, Subcommittee on Science, Commerce & Transportation, May 9, 2017, Maritime Transportation

18. Given the current mission, major programs, and major operational objectives of the department/agency to which you have been nominated, what in your background or employment experience do you believe affirmatively qualifies you for appointment to the position for which you have been nominated, and why do you wish to serve in that position?

I have been performing the duties of the position to which I have been nominated since January, 2018. Because of my work history, I had prior experience in two-thirds of the functions of my position when I joined the Office.

First, this position coordinates international activities across DOT and, in conjunction with the State Department, negotiates air access agreements with other countries. As the Transportation Counselor in Iraq, I had invaluable lessons in dealing with other nations and the State Department, including coordinating with Japan and other international donors to the US-led effort in Iraq. I stood up USDOT's participation in the Strategic Economic Dialogue with China, and have negotiated for USDOT with foreign counterparts in China and Nigeria. I represented the Department at international forums in Germany and in the Philippines. In the Maritime Administration, I discussed items of mutual concern with officials in South Korea, Canada and Panama. I also worked with "the Cotton Club" – attaches with maritime and trade portfolios from NATO and other US allies. At US EPA, I led a US trade mission to several Southeast Asian countries. I was also stationed in Germany for three years in the US Army until the end of 1984.

Secondly, this position administers Essential Air Service and Small Community Air Service Development Program grants. In my two separate stints as Deputy Assistant Secretary for Transportation Policy, I managed budget and staffing of the entire Office of the Under Secretary, including these programs. I initiated and managed the first three years of DOT's TIGER grant program; oversaw the program offices with responsibility for grants and loan guarantees in the Maritime Administration; and as the Chief of Staff of the Small Business Administration, worked closely with the loan guarantee and government contracting program offices and spearheaded the initiation of a new loan guarantee program for veterans and their families.

Thirdly, this office handles economic aviation regulatory matters within USDOT, including analyzing proposed mergers and joint ventures. Although I do not have direct experience in this specialized field, I am equipped through my academic background (economics, MBA) to understand the issues and question the analysis and conclusions of each case.

I have the good fortune to be an American, and I appreciate that public service is one way to earn a living while giving back to the country. This particular job is important. I believe I can do it well, and I have the background to do it better than most.

19. What do you believe are your responsibilities, if confirmed, to ensure that the department/agency has proper management and accounting controls, and what experience do you have in managing a large organization?

I am already responsible for ensuring that the Office of Aviation & International Affairs has proper management controls. If confirmed, I would continue that responsibility, and continue to work closely with both the Chief Financial Officer of the Office of the Secretary and the management and procurement staff in the Office of the Under Secretary, who provide financial controls expertise for this office.

During the transition between Presidents Bush and Obama, I was the senior official managing the entire Office of the Under Secretary, including the Office of Aviation & International Affairs. During the transition between Presidents Obama and Trump, I was the senior official managing the Maritime Administration.

As Executive Director of the Maritime Administration, all the program and support offices reported to me, totaling over 700 federal employees. As Chief of Staff of the Small Business Administration, I directly supervised numerous staff offices, including the CFO, procurement, human resources, administration, civil rights, and government affairs.

In the Army, I was a Tank Platoon leader, and then the Executive Officer and Acting Troop Commander of a Cavalry Troop of 200 officers and soldiers.

20. What do you believe to be the top three challenges facing the department/agency, and why?

Safety is Secretary Chao's top priority. The primary reason the Office of Aviation & International Affairs does economic regulatory reviews of air carriers is to ensure that the financial condition of airlines does not impair their ability to fully meet safety requirements and responsibilities. This is an ever-evolving challenge as new carriers and new business models continually reshape the industry.

In negotiating air access agreements with foreign countries, the challenge is to advance both of our tandem goals; promote safe and efficient air transportation while ensuring that US air carriers and the broader US aviation industry are given the opportunity to compete on a fair and level playing field.

This office is entrusted to manage the Congressionally-mandated Essential Air Service (EAS) and Small Community Air Service Development Program (SCASDP) programs. At a time of rising costs, the Office of Aviation & International Affairs will be challenged to efficiently and effectively manage the two programs, while ensuring that each community receives quality and reliable air service.

## **B. POTENTIAL CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

1. Describe all financial arrangements, deferred compensation agreements, and other continuing dealings with business associates, clients, or customers. Please include information related to retirement accounts.

I have no financial arrangements, deferred compensation agreements or other continuing dealings with business associates, clients or customers. I am eligible to draw a CalPers Pension. I have not withdrawn any funds from it to date. This is reported in Part 3 of my Public Financial Disclosure report.

2. Do you have any commitments or agreements, formal or informal, to maintain employment, affiliation, or practice with any business, association or other organization during your appointment? If so, please explain.

No

3. Indicate any investments, obligations, liabilities, or other relationships which could involve potential conflicts of interest in the position to which you have been nominated.

In connection with the nomination process, I have consulted with the Office of Government Ethics and the Department of Transportation's Designated Agency Ethics Official to identify potential conflicts of interest. Any potential conflicts of interest will be resolved in accordance with the terms of an ethics agreement that I have entered into with DOT's Designated Agency Ethics Official and that has been provided to this Committee. I am not aware of any other potential conflicts of interest.

4. Describe any business relationship, dealing, or financial transaction which you have had during the last ten years, whether for yourself, on behalf of a client, or acting as an agent, that could in any way constitute or result in a possible conflict of interest in the position to which you have been nominated.

In connection with the nomination process, I have consulted with the Office of Government Ethics and the Department of Transportation's Designated Agency Ethics Official to identify potential conflicts of interest. Any potential conflicts of interest will be resolved in accordance with the terms of an ethics agreement that I have entered into with DOT's Designated Agency Ethics Official and that has been provided to this Committee. I am not aware of any other potential conflicts of interest.

5. Describe any activity during the past ten years in which you have been engaged for the purpose of directly or indirectly influencing the passage, defeat, or modification of any legislation or affecting the administration and execution of law or public policy.

As a federal government employee since 2002, I have only ever been involved in representing the administration's position on legislative matters.

6. Explain how you will resolve any potential conflict of interest, including any that may be disclosed by your responses to the above items.

In connection with the nomination process, I have consulted with the Office of Government Ethics and the Department of Transportation's Designated Agency Ethics Official to identify potential conflicts of interest. Any potential conflicts of interest will be resolved in accordance with the terms of an ethics agreement that I have entered into with DOT's Designated

Agency Ethics Official and that has been provided to this Committee. I am not aware of any other potential conflicts of interest.

### C. LEGAL MATTERS

1. Have you ever been disciplined or cited for a breach of ethics, professional misconduct, or retaliation by, or been the subject of a complaint to, any court, administrative agency, the Office of Special Counsel, professional association, disciplinary committee, or other professional group? If yes:
  - a. Provide the name of agency, association, committee, or group;
  - b. Provide the date the citation, disciplinary action, complaint, or personnel action was issued or initiated;
  - c. Describe the citation, disciplinary action, complaint, or personnel action;
  - d. Provide the results of the citation, disciplinary action, complaint, or personnel action.

No

2. Have you ever been investigated, arrested, charged, or held by any Federal, State, or other law enforcement authority of any Federal, State, county, or municipal entity, other than for a minor traffic offense? If so, please explain.

No

3. Have you or any business or nonprofit of which you are or were an officer ever been involved as a party in an administrative agency proceeding, criminal proceeding, or civil litigation? If so, please explain.

No

4. Have you ever been convicted (including pleas of guilty or *nolo contendere*) of any criminal violation other than a minor traffic offense? If so, please explain.

No

5. Have you ever been accused, formally or informally, of sexual harassment or discrimination on the basis of sex, race, religion, or any other basis? If so, please explain.

No

6. Please advise the Committee of any additional information, favorable or unfavorable, which you feel should be disclosed in connection with your nomination.

None

#### **D. RELATIONSHIP WITH COMMITTEE**

1. Will you ensure that your department/agency complies with deadlines for information set by congressional committees?

Yes, insofar as it is in my power to do so.

2. Will you ensure that your department/agency does whatever it can to protect congressional witnesses and whistle blowers from reprisal for their testimony and disclosures?

Yes

3. Will you cooperate in providing the Committee with requested witnesses, including technical experts and career employees, with firsthand knowledge of matters of interest to the Committee?

Yes

4. Are you willing to appear and testify before any duly constituted committee of the Congress on such occasions as you may be reasonably requested to do so?

Yes

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(Nominee is to include this signed affidavit along with answers to the above questions.)

**F. Affidavit**

JOEL SZABAT being duly sworn, hereby states that he/she has read and signed the foregoing Statement on Biographical and Financial Information and that the information provided therein is, to the best of his/her knowledge, current, accurate, and complete.



  
Signature of Nominee

Subscribed and sworn before me this 2nd day of August, 2018.

  
Notary Public

Joel Szabat



**2002-2006, 2008-Present**

**US Department of Transportation (DOT)**

Washington, DC

Deputy Assistant Secretary for Aviation and International Affairs since January, 2018. Run the office in the absence of a non-career appointee. Oversee staff that: negotiates agreements for US air carriers to operate internationally; licenses all foreign and domestic air carriers to operate in the United States; rules on airline merger and joint venture requests; manages the Essential Air Service and Small Community Air Service Development grant programs; and coordinates international activities and policy for the Secretary across DOT.

Executive Director of the Maritime Administration (MARAD) from 2011-2018. MARAD's senior career official and Chief Operating Officer, overseeing MARAD's career staff of nearly 800 federal employees, and several hundred contractors, with an annual budget of over \$700 million, and over \$1 billion of outstanding loans and grants. MARAD runs the nation's only civilian federal service academy (university), the United States Merchant Marine Academy at King's Point, New York. MARAD maintains a reserve fleet of cargo ships for military sealift and manages a commercial program including most of the US-flag international fleet. MARAD rose from the bottom third to the top half of agencies in the federal Best Places to Work survey, during this period.

Deputy Assistant Secretary for Transportation Policy from 2002-2003, 2008-2011. Named DOT's federal officer responsible for the Recovery Act in 2009. Stood up a dozen programs, which invested \$48 billion in over 15,000 road, transit and rail surface transportation projects nationwide. Oversaw the initial development and administration of the first three rounds of TIGER grants. Coordinated a seven-federal agency effort in 2002 under a Presidential executive order, to streamline project reviews of key transportation infrastructure. Co-chaired, along with the Department of Defense, the steering group of a multi-agency committee that developed and coordinated the federal government's GPS policy. Managed budget, staff and contract resources for the Office of the Under Secretary, including Aviation & International Affairs.

Senior Counselor for Transportation Infrastructure from 2005-2006. Advised Secretary. Led special projects such as Pandemic Flu preparation, reviewing research and development across the department, and Hurricane Katrina Lessons Learned.

Deputy Assistant Secretary for Management & Budget from 2003-2005. Led DOT's participation in the President's Management Agenda. Tied for first federal agency to meet all requirements in four measured areas (Human Capital, Budget and Performance Integration, Competitive Sourcing, E-Government).

**2006 – 2008**

**Chief of Staff, Small Business Administration**

Washington, DC

Spearheaded the creation of the Patriot Express loan program, to help veterans and their families. Helped to reform SBA's disaster-assistance program, and to establish a public scorecard to track the progress of federal agencies in meeting their small business contracting goals. Supervised the Chief Financial Officer, Human Resources, and other administration. Inherited the lowest score among large agencies in the Best Places to Work survey. The very next survey gave SBA the largest increase (30%) of any large federal agency.

**February 2005 – September 2005**

**Transportation Counselor to the Ambassador**

Baghdad, Iraq

Directed the US government's transportation reconstruction program in Iraq. Managed \$544m in federal funds, and coordinated with foreign governments, to restore ports, airports and railroads in Iraq.

**2001-2002**

**Principal, White Dragon Group**

Sacramento, CA

Advised Asian Pacific American business leaders on how to increase their civic engagement and effectiveness.

**1993-2001**

**Principal Consultant for Transportation, California State Assembly**

Sacramento, CA

Served as the minority (Republican) party's sole transportation consultant. Analyzed bills, recommended how to vote, negotiated with stakeholders and with the majority. Developed a proposal for long-term infrastructure investment in California (the '20/20 vision'), adopted by the party.

**1990-1993**

**Executive Officer, US Environmental Protection Agency**

Washington, DC – Sacramento, CA

Advised the Administrator and Deputy Administrator on management, budget and personnel issues. Piloted a program to embed federal officials with state governments for better federal-state cooperation.

**1988-1990**

**Associate, Strategic Planning Associates (now Mercer Management)**

Washington, DC

As a management consultant, advised railroad and trucking firms. Helped develop an economic pricing model for long-haul trucking.

**1981-1986**

**Captain, United States Army**

Fulda Gap, Germany – Fort Devens, Massachusetts

Led a tank platoon and an Armored Cavalry Troop, as Executive Officer and Acting Commander, patrolling the East-West German border during the Cold War.

## **Education**

Received a B.A. in Economics and Government from Georgetown University (1981) and an MBA from Harvard Business School (1988)

## **Personal**

Born in Texas; grew up in Massachusetts. Co-founded the International Leadership Foundation (ILF), a non-profit organization promoting public service for Asian Pacific American college students. Married to Chiling Tong, a prominent APA activist, and co-founder of the ILF.

Received the Presidential Meritorious Rank Award for leading the Recovery Act and TIGER within DOT. Named an 'inspirational leader' in DOT in 2015. Earned the Meritorious Service Medal in the Army, and awarded the Ellis Island Foundation Medal of Honor for work with the Asian Pacific American community.

## **Career and Non-Career Positions**

Appointed to a Schedule C (Administratively Determined) position at USEPA from 1990-1993. Appointed to a Schedule C Senior Executive Service position from 2002-2008. While at the Small Business Administration in 2008, applied to, and was accepted for, a vacant career Senior Executive Service position at USDOT. Have been a career SES ever since.

## **Addendum**

### **Specific Past Aviation & International Experience Department of Transportation**

Supervised MARAD's international office. Led trips to South Korea, Panama, Canada and the Philippines for bi-lateral discussions, to negotiate MOAs, and to represent MARAD at multilateral conferences. Met regularly with military attaches and diplomatic staff (the 'Cactus Club') from the European Union and other allies to discuss issues of mutual concern. Represented the Maritime Administration on the National Defense Transportation Association (NDTA). The NDTA is comprised of the major domestic commercial aviation, rail, trucking, maritime and logistics firms as well as the Department of Defense agencies which rely on them for most of DOD's logistics.

Responsible for budget, personnel and management issues for the Under Secretary, during both stints as Deputy Assistant Secretary (2002-2003, 2008-2011) including the Office of Aviation and International Affairs, and key programs in OST-X, such as EAS, SCASDP and Alaskan Mail Rates. Co-led DOT's accession into the US-China Strategic Economic Dialogue (SED). Helped negotiate DOT's first MOAs with the newly-formed Chinese Ministry of Transport. Negotiated with Chinese counterparts to break a logjam in fireworks exports to the United States in time to prevent a shortage of fireworks for the 4<sup>th</sup> of July in 2008. DOT's representative on, and co-chair of, the Executive Steering Group of the seven-federal-agency Executive Committee on Space-Based Position, Navigation and Timing (EXCOM). The EXCOM sets GPS policy, essential for FAA's Next Generation (NextGen) air transportation system. Worked closely with senior FAA executives to ensure their equities were represented in federal government policy. Served as DOT's representative to the annual GPS/Galileo conference in Oberpfaffenhoffen, Germany, in 2012.

Served as the Deputy Secretary's designated representative to the NDTA. Represented DOT in aviation negotiations in Abuja, as Nigeria sought to go from Tier 2 to Tier 1 in FAA's International Aviation Safety Assessment Program to comply with international safety standards, and allow direct flights between Nigeria and the United States.

**US Embassy, Baghdad, Iraq**

Supervised US DOT staff in Iraq, including a Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) team at the Baghdad airport. Oversaw \$544m in contract work rebuilding Iraq airports, ports and railroads. Negotiated with the Government of Iraq (GOI) and US corporations to complete work at the Baghdad International Airport, and secure payment for the finished work. Negotiated with foreign donors, especially the Government of Japan, for contributions to ship channel dredging and other important transportation infrastructure. Initiated discussions with FAA for a Special Federal Aviation Regulation (SFAR) to allow US-connected air service into Kurdistan airports. Flights were eventually allowed in 2012. Negotiated with the GOI, Government of Kuwait, and other foreign countries, for the return of Iraqi commercial aircraft impounded in other countries, so Iraq could restart its national airline. Participated in discussions with the US military, the Government of Jordan, and GOI over a smuggling ring led by GOI officials that threatened to shut down commercial air service in Baghdad.

**US Environmental Protection Agency**

Led first trade mission to promote the sales of environmental technologies from US businesses to Indonesia, Singapore, and Thailand. Led initial negotiations with ASEAN countries to establish the US-Asian Environmental Partnership (AEP). Today, AEP is part of the State Department, located in six Southeast Asian countries.