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**NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION**  
**ADMINISTRATOR-DESIGNATE**  
**statement before the**  
**COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE AND TRANSPORTATION**  
**UNITED STATES SENATE**  
**NOMINATIONS HEARING**  
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Chairman Rockefeller, Ranking Member Thune, and Members of the Committee, it is an honor to appear before you today as the nominee for Administrator of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). I would like to thank President Obama for this nomination and Secretary Foxx for his support in my selection.

Before I begin, please let me introduce some very special people joining me today. My wife, Dr. Debra Babcock, is here. She always provides unwavering support and has enriched my life for over 30 years. Our son, Aaron, and his new bride, Dr. Madalyn Radlauer, are viewing from Minneapolis, and our daughter, Eve, is watching in Baltimore. My mother, Marilyn, and mother-in-law, Lila Babcock, are viewing at home in the San Francisco Bay Area. My family is a remarkable gift and constant source of strength in my life.

Professionally, former National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) Chairman Deborah Hersman and my other NTSB colleagues have been tremendous partners passionate about enhancing transportation safety.

NHTSA touches all of our lives in some way every day. As drivers, passengers, pedestrians or bicyclists, NHTSA's mission is to help keep all of us safe as we move about our nation's roadways. The agency's mission is to save lives, prevent injuries, and reduce the economic costs of crashes, but in 2012, 33,561 lives were lost and 2.36 million individuals were injured in crashes on America's roads. These are 2.4 million reasons why roadway safety must always be a national priority and constantly improved. The numbers become staggering when considered over the past decade. Of course, the actual toll is much higher when realizing that each one of these individuals has family, friends, co-workers, classmates, and others whose lives are also changed forever.

It is the personal, human, and individual costs that should be foremost in our minds as we discuss NHTSA's safety mission. This discussion must acknowledge how much NHTSA's hard work has already made our roadways safer. The opportunity to protect lives now and in the future is certainly what drives the safety

professionals at NHTSA. It is through their efforts, in collaboration with many others across the country, that we have made significant safety achievements over the past 60 years with fatalities reaching their lowest levels since 1950. Although much still needs to be done, in many respects NHTSA has led the world in building data driven processes that have sparked the advancement of safety technologies and systems contributing to this tremendous decline.

NHTSA pursues its safety mission through programs that recognize the complexity of human behavior, the evolution of automotive engineering, and innovations in technology. Core safety programs establish a foundation for crash prevention and survivability, while regulation and enforcement provide crucial safety standards. This includes identifying defects and recalls, developing educational materials and activities that touch every segment of our society, improvement of fuel efficiency and emissions, the Emergency Medical Services system, and so much more. NHTSA leverages this diverse portfolio to enhance safety, though it is always critical to ensure that resources and authority align with mission and expectations. This must be balanced with the need for ongoing efforts to identify and pursue actions that will constantly improve the agency's effectiveness in meeting its objectives.

If confirmed, I plan to apply my knowledge, experience, and passion for safety to NHTSA's crucial safety mission. The NTSB shares the same safety objectives as NHTSA, to save lives and prevent injuries. For the past four and a half years as an NTSB Board Member, it has been my privilege to pursue accident investigations, issue safety recommendations, and undertake advocacy efforts that make our transportation system safer. As a scientist, I developed an analytical, data-driven approach to examining problems and became an expert in human fatigue that is relevant to safety in all environments. While at NASA, I expanded my field of knowledge into varied human factors arenas and translated that science into effective solutions that address operational problems in safety-critical environments. Work in the private sector provided invaluable lessons on developing innovative solutions to complex, challenging real-world safety problems.

I recognize my nomination to lead NHTSA comes at a pivotal juncture. If confirmed, you have my commitment that I will maintain an aggressive focus on continuing to improve NHTSA's safety record and ensuring that NHTSA's regulatory regime is current for today's safety environment. To this task, I will bring a fresh set of eyes and a different perspective honed over the years as a safety professional and manager at NASA, NTSB and in the private sector.

Mr. Chairman, in closing, safety has also been a very personal priority for me since my earliest days. My father was a San Francisco Police Officer killed in the line of duty by a driver who ran a red light. Through

this single and profound event in my own life, I share in the individual and personal stories of so many people who have been affected by preventable tragedy on our roadways.

Thank you again for your consideration of my nomination to serve as NHTSA Administrator. I look forward to your questions.