

## **Testimony of Gregory Zerzan**

### **Nominee for General Counsel of the U.S. Department of Transportation**

#### **Before the U.S. Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation**

**July 23, 2025**

Good morning, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Cantwell and Members of the Committee, and thank you for allowing me to appear before you today. My name is Greg Zerzan and I have been nominated for the position of General Counsel at the U.S. Department of Transportation.

To begin, I would like to thank President Trump for placing his faith in me by nominating me for this position.

I was born in Portland, Oregon, as the youngest child of Charles and Joan Zerzan<sup>1</sup>. My parents were both members of the Greatest Generation, who lived through the Great Depression, the Second World War, and the Cold War. Dad fought in the China-Burma-India theater of the second world war; Mom served as a volunteer plane spotter while working on ranches in Southern Oregon and Northern California.

My parents met in college after Dad returned from the fighting. At the end of their wedding ceremony in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, where Dad was attending medical school, the priest gave my parents the standard injunction to “be fruitful; go forth, and multiply.” My parents took to this task with enthusiasm and alacrity, going on to have 12 children mostly on Army bases across America. I am the last and youngest of these 12.

My parents taught us that God, family and country are the three great causes to which one might profitably dedicate one’s life. They also taught us that the things that unite us are far more important than those that divide us. One of my earliest political memories was my Dad’s unbridled enthusiasm for Ronald Reagan during the 1980 campaign, and in equal measure, his frustration that he could not dissuade my Mom from voting for President Carter, who, she said, seemed like an honorable man.

I mention my parents because they taught us that it is important to disagree without being disagreeable. Our family was a large, diverse organization and my parents taught us that it was possible, indeed, necessary, to work together even when we disagreed. It is my hope, if I am so fortunate as to be confirmed, that I will bring these lessons with me to the Department. If I am so fortunate as to be confirmed I promise I will do my best to live out the values my parents

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<sup>1</sup> The Honorable Greg Walden graciously eulogized my parents in the Congressional Record, which can be found here (Tribute to Dr. Charles Joseph Zerzan Jr., [Congressional Record, Volume 154 Issue 90 \(Tuesday, June 3, 2008\)](#)) and here (Commemorating the Life of Joan Margaret Kathan Zerzan [Congressional Record, Volume 159 Issue 36 \(Wednesday, March 13, 2013\)](#))

taught us, and to work with you all with respect and humility, even if there are sincere policy disagreements.

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee, if I may I would like to close by thanking you for your service to our country. I would like to thank Interior Secretary Burgum for having put his faith in me these last several months. I would like to thank the excellent, professional career civil servants with whom I have now had the privilege of serving in three Presidential Administrations- it is with no false modesty that I can say that, to the extent I have enjoyed any professional success, it is because of the hard working, dedicated, patriotic members of our career civil service.

Lastly and most importantly, Mr. Chairman, I would like to thank my beautiful wife, Shannon. She made me a Texan and a father, to our two sons, Charlie and George. No matter whatever else happens in my life I will consider myself a success for having somehow convinced her to marry me.

Thank you all very much for this opportunity.