

**TESTIMONY OF STEVEN GILL BRADBURY**

**Nominee to be Deputy Secretary of Transportation**

**Before the  
Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation  
United States Senate**

**Thursday, February 20, 2025**

Chairman Cruz, Ranking Member Cantwell, and distinguished Members of this Committee: It is the highest honor of my life to come before you today as the President's nominee to be the Deputy Secretary of Transportation.

I am profoundly grateful to President Trump for placing his trust in me, and I am deeply thankful to Secretary Duffy for his confidence and his growing friendship.

I also want to thank my family for their love and support and wisdom. I am forever grateful for the love of my life, my wife Hilde, my rock, who is here to support me today, and for our three amazing children, each of whom has grown to be an accomplished role model for me. I learn from them.

Let me take a moment, too, to remember my mother, Cora Gill Bradbury. The daughter of Cornish and Irish miners from Butte, Montana, she raised me as a hard-working single mom in Portland, Oregon. She ironed clothes for customers at 75-cents an hour and worked nights in a bakery to support my grandmother and me and to supplement our monthly social security checks.

She was the kindest, most selfless person I've ever known. It was only because of her unfailing support and encouragement that I came to be the first in our family to attend a four-year university.

After graduating from Stanford University and later from the University of Michigan Law School, I was drawn to the practice of law here in the Nation's capital.

Early on, I had the tremendous good fortune of clerking for Judge James L. Buckley on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit and for Justice Clarence Thomas on the Supreme Court—two of our greatest jurists and greatest Americans who, though coming from completely opposite backgrounds, have both had a profound influence on my life and my career in the law.

That career has included more than 20 years of private practice in major law firms in Washington, D.C., where my work focused primarily on the limits of administrative power and the proper exercise of the federal government's regulatory authorities.

I have also had the privilege of extensive prior service in the Executive Branch.

From 2004 to 2009, I served as the Principal Deputy Assistant Attorney General in the Office of Legal Counsel at the U.S. Department of Justice, and for most of that time, I was the senior appointed official in charge of the Office. My job was to advise the President, the Attorney General, and the heads of executive departments and agencies on the requirements of the law, to help ensure faithful compliance with the Constitution and the statutes and treaties of the United States.

More recently, during the first Trump administration, I served as the Senate-confirmed General Counsel of the Department of Transportation, managing all legal

functions and matters for DOT and supervising the work of more than 500 attorneys across the Department.

As General Counsel, I was also the Regulatory Policy Officer of DOT, responsible for overseeing the Department's regulatory actions and for implementing President Trump's regulatory reform agenda. Under my tenure, DOT was a leader in achieving efficiencies and very sizable regulatory cost savings for the American economy without compromising safety.

We favored performance-based standards over highly prescriptive rules to preserve incentives for private investment in safety-enhancing technologies. Among other reforms, we streamlined the FAA's commercial space licensing rules, we made headway in developing the regulatory frameworks for commercial drones and automated vehicles, and we reset the Nation's fuel-economy standards to promote safety and the affordability of new cars and trucks for America's families.

We also put in place important procedural reforms to achieve greater transparency and public input in costly rulemakings, clearer requirements and consistency in the approval and use of guidance documents, and a firmer emphasis on due process in enforcement actions.

In addition, I was involved in helping lead the Department's response to the unprecedented COVID public health emergency, when we succeeded in keeping America's vital transportation systems operating for the benefit of the American people. And I was proud to help supervise the Department's responses to significant oversight requests from Congress.

As a member of Secretary Chao's senior leadership team, I participated in nearly all major policy decisions of the Secretary, including decisions on

discretionary infrastructure grants, Build America Bureau loans, and budgetary proposals. And I provided advice and support to the Secretary in connection with significant challenges facing the Department, like the FAA's response to the 737-MAX disasters.

By designation of the President, from September 2019 until the end of the first Trump administration, I exercised all the functions and duties of the Deputy Secretary of Transportation. In that capacity, I assisted in developing the Secretary's policy proposals for legislation and infrastructure projects, and I served as Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Union Station Redevelopment Corporation and as a member of the FAA's Management Advisory Committee.

For eight days at the end of the first Trump administration, I was the Acting Secretary of Transportation in accordance with the Department's standing order of succession, and I kept a steady hand on the tiller to ensure the Department was responsibly managed as we prepared for the transition to the new administration.

Since leaving government service in January 2021, including in my capacity as a Distinguished Fellow at The Heritage Foundation, I have continued to write and speak on issues of public policy relevant to the regulatory authorities of DOT.

As a result of these experiences, I believe I know the Department well, and I have great affection and respect for the dedicated career staff of DOT.

I have a deep appreciation for the critical safety mission of DOT and a commitment to the proper exercise of the Secretary's authorities in accordance with the law, including a healthy respect for the limits of those authorities vis-à-vis Congress and the States.

DOT's mission is exceptionally important, in no small part because the liberty and prosperity of the American people depend on the safe, efficient operation of the Nation's transportation systems and infrastructure.

If I am fortunate to be confirmed as Deputy Secretary of Transportation, I will devote myself to helping the Secretary promote transportation safety and efficiency through faithful application of the legal authorities and resources granted by Congress in accordance with the Constitution and the policy directions of the President.

Of particular importance in light of the terrible aviation crashes experienced in recent days, I believe I can effectively assist the Secretary as he works with the FAA and Congress to upgrade our Nation's air traffic control operations and improve the effectiveness of FAA's safety oversight and enforcement.

I would also expect to assist the Secretary in advancing smart regulatory reforms that maintain competitive markets and incentives to innovate consistent with the law, as well as promoting cost-beneficial infrastructure improvements of national importance in accordance with the authorizations and appropriations provided by Congress.

And I would expect to help the Secretary achieve improved overall outcomes for the Department with greater systems efficiencies and lower costs and to eliminate unnecessary policy requirements that detract from the Department's ability to carry out its primary safety mission efficiently and effectively.

In all these endeavors, I would be an advocate for transparency with Congress and the public, and I would stress the importance of maintaining consistently open and candid channels of communication with Congress, including with this Committee and the other Committees with jurisdiction over DOT.

I pledge to you that, if confirmed, I will bring these values to work with me every day at the Department of Transportation.

With this Committee's consent, I am eager to partner with Secretary Duffy to get to work for the American people.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That concludes my statement, and I would be happy to answer the Committee's questions.

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