

Testimony of Heidi King

Nominee to be Administrator of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

Before the

U.S. Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

May 16, 2018

Good afternoon Chairman Thune, Ranking Member Nelson, and distinguished Members of this Committee. Thank you for the invitation to testify today as a nominee to serve as the Administrator of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

I am grateful to President Donald Trump and Secretary Elaine L. Chao for their support and for providing me with the opportunity to serve our nation by advancing safety on our nation's roadways and for the traveling public. It is also my pleasure to introduce my daughter, Kristin, who has traveled across the country to be here with me today. Public safety is a vocation in our family. I'm proud to tell you that my daughter served at my side as an Emergency Medical Technician in Chatham NJ. We witnessed first-hand the devastating effects of traffic crashes on individuals, on families and in our communities.

That experience instilled in me a deep and abiding commitment to saving lives that is shared by all the men and women of NHTSA. NHTSA's mission is to save lives, prevent injuries, and reduce the costs of traffic crashes. I am honored to serve at an agency whose primary objective is the safety of the American traveling public, an agency that is working tirelessly toward that day when we will not have to bear the cry of grief from a wife who has lost her husband, or a child who lost a parent, in a needless traffic crash.

My early professional career as a California State Park Ranger, emergency medical technician, and as a 9-1-1 dispatcher, provided me with a first-hand and up-close understanding of the tragic consequences of roadway crashes. My later professional experience in both the public and private sector, including at the White House's Office of Management and Budget and General Electric, provided the leadership experience necessary to lead an agency. It would be

my intention to lead NHTSA to continue the agency's long history of data-driven and performance-based decision-making.

I have met with many of you and your staff in recent weeks, and I appreciate the opportunity to hear from you directly. I want to assure the Committee that I will maintain an open line of communication that you expect from any nominee.

Over the past seven months, it has been my privilege to serve as NHTSA's Deputy Administrator, leading the team of dedicated and talented professionals. If confirmed as NHTSA's Administrator, it would be my great honor to continue and expand upon their outstanding work in achieving that safety mission.

I would like to briefly mention just a few of NHTSA's accomplishments during my brief tenure as the Deputy Administrator. In February, NHTSA announced the creation of a new compliance assistance program to facilitate and improve compliance with federal safety standards. In March, NHTSA hosted a summit launching an initiative to combat drug-impaired driving on our roadways.

Last month, NHTSA brought online a new electronic application tool for use by States and Territories when applying for Highway Safety Grants, fulfilling another FAST Act directive. Throughout my time at NHTSA, the agency has been busy implementing historic improvements to our data management and risk analysis for recalls and defects investigations.

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Nelson, and distinguished Members of the Committee, thank you for your time and consideration of my nomination. If I am confirmed, I would welcome the chance to work with all of you to improve the safety of our nation's roadways. I am happy to answer any questions.