

Daniel Edwards, Nominee to be Assistant Secretary of Transportation of Aviation & International Affairs

Opening Statement

Chairman Cruz, Ranking Member Cantwell, and members of the committee, good afternoon.

My name is Dan Edwards, and it is truly my honor to be nominated as the Assistant Secretary of Aviation & International Affairs for the United States Department of Transportation.

I want to start by thanking President Trump for the honor of nomination and Secretary Sean Duffy for the confidence and steadfast support during my time at DOT. Senator Budd, I greatly appreciate the kind introduction and your service to the great state of North Carolina.

Joining me today is my wife of 30 years and anchor to the Edwards family—Kimberly. I owe the Air Force a huge debt for stationing me near her hometown of Utica, NY where we met and began a life where she thought she signed on to a turbulence-free full-motion simulator ride, but instead got strapped into a high-G journey with an uncertain destination.

Also here are my identical twin 27-year-old daughters—Jillian and Kaelyn. They were born on July 4th in Camden, NJ into a level IV Neonatal Intensive Care Unit—the highest level of critical care—and to this day follow the light. When they were 16, they enlisted the help of their grandfather, Earl, who was an accountant, to start a non-profit called Jillian's Jitterbug. The organization continues to provide financial assistance for families to purchase equipment that allows their disabled children to become independent. Lastly, I am joined by my brother,

Colonel Doug Edwards, and his wife and son, Joy and Ethan—without whom my service in Washington would not be possible.

I began my public service in 1987 when I attended the United States Air Force Academy and served in the Air Force and Air Force Reserves for 23 years. In that time, I was an airfield engineer, and a KC-10 pilot, flying over 100 combat missions. During my time in the reserves, I flew as a commercial pilot and accumulated over 4,000 flight hours as both a military and commercial pilot.

Following my time as an Air Force and airline pilot, I dedicated the next 25 years of my career to the aerospace and defense industry. This experience allowed me to gain a broad understanding spanning product development, safety, airfield engineering and construction, C4ISR, supply chain and distribution, and aircraft maintenance. I am eager to apply those skills to public service and contribute to the next big leap in aviation.

I have found my time at DOT over the last 6 months professionally rewarding given the broad and profound impact of our work. If confirmed, serving as the Assistant Secretary for Aviation and International Affairs would represent the apex of my career, and it is my intent to demonstrate my fitness to do so today in this hearing. I humbly thank you for your time and consideration.

I believe we find ourselves at a pivotal time in Aviation. 60 years passed between the Wright Brothers' first flight in Kitty Hawk, NC and John Glenn's orbit around Earth. We are 63 years removed from that first orbit and, with the advent of Advanced Air Mobility, we are sitting on the next inflection point in aviation history.

Safety is paramount. Takeoffs and landings must remain in balance. If confirmed, I would continue to work, under Secretary Duffy's leadership, to continue the department's core mission of ensuring transportation safety—especially in America's skies.

While maintaining safety, as the most important goal, I will pursue three additional key goals: (1) ensuring the economic viability of US carriers through thoughtful economic licensing, development and enforcement of international agreements and access to a competition-friendly market; (2) supporting the development of infrastructure that will meet the dynamic needs of the American economy and commercializing new technologies to ensure U.S. aviation leadership; and, perhaps most importantly, (3) sustaining and enhancing access to commercial air service for all Americans.

I have been blessed with the opportunity to lead large organizations in the military and private sectors, gaining extensive experience leading multi-site global businesses. I am hopeful that you will find that the path I've taken to this chamber, on this day, worthy of confirmation to serve in the DOT.

Thank you and I look forward to your questions.