

**SENATE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND
TRANSPORTATION**

Full Committee

Nominations Hearing

Wednesday, November 5, 2025 at 2:15 P.M.

REPUBLICAN QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD

Mr. Daniel Edwards

COVER PAGE

SENATOR JOHN THUNE (R-SD)

The current U.S. pilot retirement age of 65 greatly impacts regional airline staffing. In October 2025, the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) made the concerning decision to reject a proposal to raise the recommended international pilot age from 65 to 67.

1. If confirmed, will you commit to working with the Ambassador to ICAO in supporting a raise in the pilot retirement age both domestically and on the international stage to ensure that the U.S. pilot supply remains robust for many years to come?

I recognize that the retirement rules impact regional airline staffing and the availability of diverse business models to provide the safe airline services that Americans demand, especially in small and rural communities. Safety is and will remain the Department's priority, and I will work with Secretary Duffy and Administrator Bedford, who lead on this issue, to engage as appropriate at ICAO.

SENATOR JERRY MORAN (R-KS)

1. Can you provide an update on the status of the report authorized in the Advanced Air Mobility Coordination and Leadership Act?

Answer: The large expert federal working group has completed its work, having worked closely with stakeholders throughout the aviation, telecom, and infrastructure development industries, as well as with State, local, Tribal, and Territorial governments. The national strategy, and its associated comprehensive plan, are complete and will be an excellent template to develop a new industry with new capabilities for the American people. The Department will partner with Congressional leaders in this area to release the strategy as soon as possible.

2. Can you provide an update on the implementation of Sec. 912, the Drone Infrastructure Inspection Grant Act, and Sec. 702 as it relates to the eligibility of Advanced Digital Construction Management Systems?

Answer: The FAA also continues to implement the provisions of the 2024 reauthorization act, including Section. 912, and has thus far prioritized provisions that are funded to realize the intent of Congress.

3. New technology will be vital in elevating aviation safety and creating a safer NAS, and new companies are offering aircraft operating systems designed to make the aircraft safer in every environment while lessening the cognitive load on pilots. How will you work to ensure platforms that make it fundamentally safer to fly make it to market?

Answer: If confirmed, I will support the safe and timely certification of new technologies that enhance aviation safety and reduce pilot workload. The Department, including the FAA, must continue to modernize its approval processes to keep pace with innovation while maintaining rigorous safety standards, ensuring that proven, safety-enhancing platforms can enter the market without unnecessary delay.

4. You have also been selected to serve as the FAA Associate Administrator for Airports, which is a key position, especially considering the ongoing focus on enhancing aviation safety and efficiency. How will you ensure your role as Assistant Secretary doesn't prevent you from fulfilling the needs of the FAA Office of Airports and the airport community?

Answer: If confirmed I will ensure dedicated focus on the FAA Office of Airports by maintaining close coordination with FAA leadership and stakeholders, prioritizing resources and

engagement to address airport safety, efficiency, and operational needs while also fulfilling my responsibility as Assistant Secretary for Aviation and International Affairs. I have significant relevant experience in airfield safety, infrastructure and engineering and am passionate about preparing our nation's airports for the next generation of aviation and economic growth. I also have experience simultaneously leading and integrating multiple organizations and lines of business and will bring that to bear to ensure that the airports team fulfills its mission.

5. Airports in Kansas and around the country are working to upgrade outdated facilities and make investments that help accommodate rising demand and improve safety. The FAA Office of Airports plays an important role in helping airports move forward with their critical infrastructure projects and ensure the safety of aircraft operations on the ground. What are your priorities as the Associate Administrator for Airports?

Answer: As the Associate Administrator for Airports, safety is my top priority. I will work to ensure that the operation of aircraft, including within and around the airport environment, remains safe. I am also passionate about preparing our nation's airports the next generation of aviation technology.

6. Airports have been calling for the FAA to streamline the review and approval processes for airport infrastructure projects while proposing other commonsense recommendations to reduce regulatory red tape. How will you ensure that the Trump administration's deregulatory agenda is implemented for the benefit of airports?

Answer: If confirmed, I will ensure airport projects benefit from President Trump's deregulatory agenda, implementing streamlined processes and approvals consistent with applicable law.

7. FAA predicts airports face \$67.5 billion in capital needs over the next five years – can you provide assurance that FAA will not attempt to claw-back or cancel previously appropriated funding for airports?

Answer: I can provide assurance that I, under Secretary Duffy's leadership, will uphold the letter of the law.