

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

Full Committee

Nominations Hearing

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

DEMOCRATIC QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD

Mr. Trent Morse

COVER PAGE

SENATOR MARIA CANTWELL (D-WA)

Lobbying. The Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority (MWAA) operates Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport (DCA), which is a major hub for American Airlines, as well as Washington Dulles International Airport (IAD). After leaving the White House, you began lobbying for American Airlines, as well as FedEx. You made several commitments to me and my staff regarding how you would mitigate conflicts of interest with your lobbying practice if confirmed. Please confirm the following for the record:

Question 1: You will drop both American Airlines and FedEx as clients if you are confirmed to the MWAA Board of Directors?

Answer: Yes

Question 2: You do not currently represent any other clients in the transportation space that could give rise to a conflict of interest or an appearance of a conflict of interest with MWAA?

Answer: No

Question 3: You will not represent any new clients in the aviation space if confirmed?

Answer: Correct, I will not represent any new clients in the aviation space.

Question 4: Are you aware of any other conflict of interest or the appearance of a conflict of interest between MWAA and your lobbying work, as defined under the statutory conflicts of interest requirements for MWAA or MWAA's code of ethics for members of the board of directors? If yes, please list each and provide a complete description of how you intend to address each.

Answer: I am not aware of any other conflicts of interest or the appearance of a conflict of interest. I will work with MWAA ethics officials to ensure compliance.

Incomplete Financial Disclosure Paperwork. On August 19, 2025, while you still worked at the White House, you executed your OGE 450 financial disclosure form. This was more than two weeks before you were formally nominated for the MWAA Board of Directors position, and it was before you started your own lobbying firm. On October 28, 2025, my staff requested in writing that you submit an updated OGE 450 to accurately reflect, among other things, your reportable private-sector income, fees, commissions, and assets. My staff reiterated this outstanding item on October 31, November 3, and November 4. To date, you have not submitted an updated OGE 450 or a corresponding letter from an MWAA ethics official assessing your updated OGE 450 for conflicts of interest, despite telling my staff that you would do so.

This is already a departure from the Committee's practice, which typically calls for nominees to submit complete financial disclosure and ethics paperwork prior to a nomination hearing.

Question 1: To confirm: Do you intend to submit a complete OGE 450 and corresponding MWAA ethics review letter to the Committee?

Answer: In the addendum filed with the Committee, I have already disclosed my income and assets. I will work with MWAA ethics officials to ensure compliance.

Question 2: If yes, by when should the Committee expect to receive these materials?

Answer: As outlined by Mr. Heppen's letter to the Office of Government Ethics about my nomination, once appointed to the Board of Directors, I will be required to complete the Airports Authority's financial disclosure form within 30 days of assuming the position and comply with all other applicable ethics policies and procedures, as outlined in the Code of Ethics for Members of the Board of Directors

Question 3: Do you agree that this Committee is entitled to receive your complete financial disclosure paperwork and appropriate ethics assessment prior to your nomination proceeding for further consideration?

Answer: I plan to complete the Airports Authority's financial disclosure form within 30 days of assuming the position and comply with all other applicable ethics policies and procedures, as outlined in the Code of Ethics for Members of the Board of Directors

Question 4: Will you commit to following all OGE and MWAA agency ethics agreements and advice, including recusing from particular matters where a conflict of interest or an appearance of a conflict may exist?

Answer: Yes

Wages and Benefits for Airport Contract Workers at DCA and Dulles. While MWAA leases both airports from the Federal government, MWAA sets the wage rates for airport concessions and contract workers employed at both DCA and IAD through the Airport Workers Wage Program. In 2019, the MWAA Board approved a measure to boost the minimum wage for these workers to \$15 an hour by 2023. Recently, the MWAA Board approved increases to the basic wage rate ensuring compensation at \$16.78 an hour as of January 1, 2025. The Board also set requirements for covered businesses to provide at least 40 hours of paid leave per year for full-time covered workers.

MWAA's workforce supports over 53 million passengers each year and passenger traffic grew by 5.8 percent in the preceding year. MWAA's workers struggle with high costs of living in the greater DC area and deserve wage increases commensurate with the growing passenger traffic demands MWAA airports are facing.

Question 1: Yes or No: If confirmed to be a Member of the Board, would you support fair compensation for airport concessions and contract workers at DCA and IAD, including wage increases to at a minimum keep pace with inflation?

Answer: I support fair compensation for airport workers, as long as we continue to keep costs low for consumers.

Question 2: Yes or No: If confirmed to be a Member of the Board, would you support guaranteeing meaningful benefits such as health insurance and paid leave to help attract and retain a stable airport concessionaire and contract workforce at DCA and IAD?

Answer: I support fair compensation for airport workers, as long as we continue to keep costs low for consumers.

Illegal Firings at Independent Agencies. The White House has been illegally firing independent Board Members and Commissioners responsible for ensuring public safety and protecting consumers. This includes Members on the National Transportation Safety Board, Consumer Product Safety Commission, Federal Trade Commission, and other independent agencies under this Committee's jurisdiction.

You personally sent emails terminating these independent Board members without any cause, in violation of the law.

Question 1: How is the testimony you provided at your hearing, during which you said you would not carry out an illegal order, consistent with your involvement in initiating these illegal firings?

Answer: I would refer you to White House counsel and the Department of Justice on these matters.

Question 2: Why should we trust you to be independent and follow the law when you have been central to illegally removing independent authorities across the federal government?

Answer: I would refer you to White House counsel and the Department of Justice on these matters.

Question 3: Do you believe there is any hypocrisy in asking the Senate to confirm you to an independent Board position, after you spent months in the White House initiating illegal terminations of independent Board members?

Answer: I would refer you to White House counsel and the Department of Justice on these matters.

SENATOR TAMMY DUCKWORTH (D-IL)

Question Topic: Federal Elections

1. Setting aside the Congressional count and certification, do you believe President Donald Trump received more votes than Vice President Kamala Harris in the 2024 U.S. presidential election?

Answer: As I said in my hearing, Congress certified President Trump in the 2024 election, verifying the electoral college vote.

2. Setting aside the official Congressional count and certification, do you believe President Joe Biden received more votes than President Donald Trump in the 2020 U.S. presidential election?

Answer: As I said in my hearing, Congress certified President Biden in the 2020 election, verifying the electoral college vote.

SENATOR BEN RAY LUJAN (D-NM)

1. Did Joe Biden lawfully win the 2020 presidential election?

Answer: As I said in my hearing, Congress certified President Biden in the 2020 election, verifying the electoral college vote.

2. Did Donald Trump lawfully win the 2024 presidential election?

Answer: As I said in my hearing, Congress certified President Trump in the 2024 election, verifying the electoral college vote.