

Testimony of Polly E. Trottenberg
Nominee to be Deputy Secretary of Transportation
Before the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation
March 3, 2021

Chair Cantwell, Ranking Member Wicker and Members of the Committee, it is an honor to appear before you today as the nominee for Deputy Secretary of the U.S. Department of Transportation. I want to thank President Biden and Secretary Buttigieg for selecting me to fill this important role.

I would like to thank Secretary Ray LaHood for his generous introduction. And I want to introduce my husband Mark Zuckerman, my stepdaughter Naomi, and my stepson Noah.

If I am honored enough to be confirmed, I pledge that I will work diligently to support Secretary Buttigieg and the extraordinary team at the Department as we seek to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic and invest in our infrastructure and our future. I would also work closely with the Members of this Committee to advance our nation's transportation goals.

The Department of Transportation's highest priority will always be safety, across all modes, including aviation, roadways, mass transit, rail, waterways and pipelines. In response to the pandemic, the Biden Administration has made the safety of the traveling public and the transportation workforce a top goal. At the Department, the strong team that the Secretary has assembled is building on the efforts of Secretary Chao and her team to respond to COVID-19. If confirmed, I look forward to supporting that effort.

Transportation is essential to the President's Build Back Better plan, which will:

- Connect people to jobs and opportunity;
- Strengthen our nation's small businesses, manufacturing and agricultural sectors;
- Revitalize communities that have not shared equitably in our nation's prosperity;
- Foster innovation and global competitiveness;
- Improve resiliency; and
- Help our nation tackle climate change.

To support this work, I believe my nearly three decades of operational, managerial, and policymaking experience – including the last seven years as New York City's Commissioner of Transportation and my prior service at the U.S. Department of Transportation – has prepared me to serve the American people.

During my time in New York, I was responsible for managing a multi-billion-dollar transportation agency that impacts the daily lives of the City's 8.6 million residents. I prioritized

roadway safety as the first U.S. city to adopt Vision Zero, a comprehensive and data-driven program to eliminate all traffic fatalities and severe injuries, while increasing safe, sustainable and equitable mobility for all. Even as traffic fatalities rose nationally, through our efforts in New York, we saw years of safer streets for all road users.

I also focused on providing better mobility options, including more reliable bus service, particularly in underserved communities. I worked to expand cycling and bring in new technologies like e-scooters and cargo bikes, as well as growing passenger ferry service. And we provided those options in very close collaboration with local communities and stakeholders, seeking their input and insights to make our projects even better, which I would do at the U.S. Department of Transportation if confirmed.

I also worked with state and regional partners to find solutions to the larger transportation challenges the New York Metropolitan region faced -- growing congestion, aging highways, bridge and transit infrastructure, the urgent need to make our sidewalks and mass transit system fully accessible to people with disabilities, and to make our entire transportation system more equitable, sustainable and resilient. On the operational side, I prioritized innovation, better project delivery, stronger agency planning, and transparency and value for taxpayer dollars.

In my previous roles at the U.S. Department of Transportation, I focused on policy aimed at creating a more robust, sustainable, accessible and performance-based transportation system with strong partnerships at the federal, state, local, Tribal and territorial levels. I helped implement the TIGER and High-Speed Rail programs, working to address the needs of state and local transportation agencies on every type of project: from roads and bridges, to transit and rail, to airports, ports and pipelines. I also focused on strengthening and investing in a national multimodal freight network and bolstering the Department's credit programs to enable a broader range of projects to participate.

Prior to the U.S. Department of Transportation, I had the privilege of serving as a Senate staffer for 12 years working on transportation legislation and have a deep understanding of the importance of this Committee and how its Members work to meet the needs of their constituents and their communities. I also know how important it is to listen to and work with Members of Congress and a broad range of stakeholders to find bipartisan solutions to the challenges we face. Throughout my career, I always valued the ability to work with colleagues across the aisle on transportation issues and find bipartisan solutions. If confirmed, I look forward to working with you all.

As we begin to emerge from the pandemic, we face a once-in-a-generation opportunity to improve our transportation system and ensure that it equitably serves all Americans – in communities both large and small. If confirmed, I look forward to working with you all to achieve these goals.

In closing, I thank the Committee for the opportunity to appear before you today and I welcome your questions.