

Statement of Mayor Anthony Foxx
Secretary-Designate, United States Department of Transportation
Before the Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation
United States Senate

May 22, 2013

Chairman Rockefeller, Ranking Member Thune, members of the Committee, it is an honor for me to appear before you today as President Obama's nominee to be U.S. Secretary of Transportation.

I want to thank Senators Richard Burr and Kay Hagan for their kind introductions.

And I also want to thank my beautiful wife, Samara, who is here with me today. My children, Hillary and Zachary, wanted to be here but couldn't miss school.

If I have the honor to lead the Department, I will bring the perspective of serving as Mayor of Charlotte, America's 17th largest city.

As Mayor, I know transportation from the ground up, but I learned the value of quality transportation – and hard work – even earlier. I was born and raised in Charlotte by my mother and my grandparents, who were public school teachers. Things were not always easy growing up. Many times, there would be a \$20 bill on the table, and my family would have to choose between basic necessities and funding a school field trip. Somehow, they always made the investment in me and for that I am forever grateful. Together, they taught me to take pride in hard work, to take responsibility for my actions, and to understand that education would unlock countless doors.

My first job – when I was 12 years old – was at Charlotte’s Discovery Place Science Museum. I rode the Number 6 bus there after school.

The Number 6 connected me to a larger world of opportunity, and I truly believe, whether it is a bus route, a road, a train, a plane or a ship, our transportation system, at its best, connects our people to jobs and a better quality of life.

When I became Mayor in 2009, Charlotte was facing an economic downturn and steep revenue declines. I decided to make efficient and innovative transportation investment the centerpiece of Charlotte’s job creation and economic recovery efforts.

These investments included extending the LYNX light rail system to the University of North Carolina, expanding Charlotte-Douglas International Airport, breaking ground on the Charlotte Regional Intermodal Facility, completing our I-485 beltway, repairing the Yadkin Bridge, and starting the Charlotte Streetcar Project.

Today, more than 19 million riders have used the existing light rail line since it opened in 2007, with more than 15,000 riders on an average weekday.

Passenger traffic at the Charlotte Douglas Airport reached a record high in 2012.

And our Streetcar is expected to connect people with jobs, schools, and medical facilities in the heart of my city.

We did not accomplish these successes alone. Business, the public, and all levels of government worked together to find pragmatic solutions for the transportation challenges we faced while avoiding a “one size fits all” approach. It’s the kind of bipartisan approach that I believe made Secretary LaHood so effective at DOT, and a model I will also follow.

If confirmed, I plan to focus on three key areas:

Ensuring that our transportation system is the safest in the world will be my top priority, as it has been for Secretary LaHood, the dedicated DOT workforce, and this Committee.

My second focus will be on improving the efficiency and performance of our existing transportation system.

Cutting edge transportation leaders across the country are finding new ways to boost productivity through better use of technology, data, economic analysis, and private sector innovation, such as public-private partnerships, to bring more private sector capital – and innovation -- into the infrastructure market.

Third, we must build this country’s infrastructure to meet the needs of the next generation of Americans. The private sector cannot do this alone, and the federal government has a responsibility to help ensure our global competitiveness, by investing in a robust, multimodal transportation system, a stronger national freight network, and key innovations like NextGen and advanced roadway and rail technology. As a Mayor who has delivered projects to my constituents, I know too

well that future uncertainty at the Federal level makes it difficult to do smart, cost-effective long-term planning and project development.

We also need investments and policies that promote opportunity, enhance quality of life, promote environmental sustainability, and reduce dependence on foreign oil.

I look forward to working with Congress and the broader transportation community to tackle the tough challenges and seize the exciting opportunities we have to innovate, invest and make the American transportation system the best in the world.

To conclude Mr. Chairman, thank you again for scheduling this hearing. I will be happy to respond to any questions you and the Members may have.