

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

Full Committee

Nomination of Mr. Sean Duffy to be Secretary of the Department of Transportation  
Wednesday, January 15, 2025, at 10:00 A.M.

**DEMOCRATIC QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD**

**COVER PAGE**

## **RANKING MEMBER MARIA CANTWELL (D-WA)**

**Implement Open NTSB Recommendations.** There are over 1,100 open recommendations from the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB). This includes recommendations to DOT in response to the East Palestine derailment, airplane crashes, and autonomous vehicle incidents.

1: Will you work with NTSB Chair Homendy to address open recommendations directed towards the Department?

**Answer: Yes.**

**Regulatory Waivers.** Nearly every agency in the Department of Transportation has the statutory authority to provide waivers to safety requirements.

2: What is your philosophy on providing waivers to safety requirements? When is it appropriate and when should it be avoided?

**Answer: Safety is paramount and will drive decision-making at DOT if I am confirmed. Such waivers can be appropriate and effective tools when fully reviewed and monitored to ensure that safety will not be compromised.**

**Amtrak.** Passenger rail travel is growing in the Pacific Northwest with over 900,000 riders traveling on the Amtrak Cascades Route in 2024, a 40% increase from 2023. There are now seven daily round trips between Seattle and Portland and two daily trips from Seattle to Vancouver, British Columbia. If confirmed, you will be installed as a Member of the Amtrak Board of Directors.

3: The Secretary of Transportation is a member of the Amtrak Board of Directors; will you commit to ensuring the Amtrak Cascades gets the support it needs from Amtrak?

**Answer: Yes**

4: The State of Washington is served by the Empire Builder and the Coastal Starlight. Do you support the continuation of all existing long-distance routes?

**Answer: I will support the determination made by Amtrak's leadership with regards to service and routes on the Northeast Corridor, State Supported Routes, and Long-Distance routes.**

5: In our meeting you discussed potential efficiencies for Amtrak. What efficiency do you think are needed?

**Answer: If I am confirmed as Secretary, I will be focused on improving safety and efficiency across all modes of transportation. Efficiencies may be gained by improved technology, fiscal responsibility, permitting reform to speed up infrastructure project delivery, and operations to improve efficiency of transit. I would apply that observation to all forms of transportation, including Amtrak.**

**Railway Safety Act.** As you know, Vice President-Elect Vance was a lead author of the Railway Safety Act, and it was endorsed by President Trump along with rail labor groups, chemical shippers, governors, and local governments. My staff provided you a copy and summary of the legislation.

6: Do you support S.576 the Railway Safety Act? If you cannot answer “yes,” why not?

**Answer: If confirmed, I will work with Congress and all stakeholders to find ways to improve railway safety. On the particular legislation, because it has been a priority of the incoming administration, I want to have a discussion with President Trump and Vice President-Elect Vance after they are sworn in.**

7: Do you support requiring railroads to install hotbox detectors or other advanced safety technologies that can identify failed ball bearings like the one that caused the East Palestine derailment?

**Answer: If confirmed, I will review the data on this subject and seek input from stakeholders to see how best to proceed that ensures maximum safety.**

8. Do you support increased information sharing, funding, and training to better prepare our first responders to respond to hazardous materials incidents?

**Answer: Yes.**

9: Do you support increasing human inspections of railcars and locomotives to ensure trains are properly maintained?

**Answer: I support the inspection methods for railcars and locomotives that will provide the highest level of safety assurance.**

10: Do you support the NTSB’s recommendation that the DOT-111 tank car, which failed to hold combustible liquids in the East Palestine crash, be phased out of combustible liquid service be transported in stronger rail cars like the DOT-117 that crude oil is currently transported in?

**Answer: Yes.**

11: Do you support increasing the maximum civil penalty that DOT can impose on a railroad for violations of federal rail safety law?

**Answer: When and where it provides the necessary deterrent from recurrence, yes.**

**CRISI Grants:** Freight rail is critical to the movement of goods in the United States, shortline railroads are critical first and last mile connectors. Thanks to the bipartisan infrastructure law,

shortline freight railroads have received \$2 billion for over 128 projects across the country through the Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI) Program. These improvements help goods get where they need to go more quickly and efficiently lowering costs to consumers.

12. Should the next surface transportation reauthorization bill reauthorize, and provide funding to rail programs like the CRISI grant program?

**Answer: Yes.**

**Blocked Railroad Crossings.** Mr. Duffy, you authored legislation that would require the Secretary of Transportation to assess a civil penalty against a railroad carrier in the amount of \$10,000 for each complete hour in which a shift change of such carrier's train employees causes a blockage of vehicular traffic at a grade crossing.

13. Do you stand by your support of this legislation?

**Answer: Yes.**

14. What will you do as Secretary to address the challenge of blocked rail crossings?

**Answer: I will work to ensure the FRA, the railroads, and the States work collaboratively on existing and new ways to expedite ways in which to reduce and/or eliminate crossings blocked for excessive periods of time.**

**Highway Trust Fund.** To cover shortfalls in the Highway Trust Fund, Congress has enacted legislation that, since 2008, has transferred over \$275 billion to the Highway Trust Fund, mostly from Treasury's general fund.

15: How should Congress address this shortfall?

**Answer: America's infrastructure is the backbone of our Nation's economy. If confirmed, I will work with Congress to identify the best means of protecting, rebuilding, and expanding our Nation's transportation infrastructure.**

16: Do you support reducing funding so that HTF revenues and spending are the same?

**Answer: I support enhancing our Nation's infrastructure, creating jobs, increasing private investment, and using taxpayer dollars responsibly, while working with Congress to devise solutions that will put the American people first.**

17: Do you support raising revenues to address the shortfall?

**Answer: One approach could be to consider adding some means for electric vehicles to contribute to the Highway Trust Fund. Beyond that, I look forward to working with Congress on best approaches.**

18: If the highway trust fund receives general fund revenues to fill its long-term shortfalls, do you think other modes of transportation should receive long term general fund revenues?

**Answer: If confirmed as Secretary, I look forward to working with Congress to address possible funding changes.**

19: Do you support reauthorizing transit programs that currently receive transit funding from the highway trust fund in the next surface transportation reauthorization?

**Answer: If confirmed as Secretary, I look forward to working with Congress to address possible funding changes.**

20: Will you protect programs funded by the highway trust fund from impoundment?

**Answer: If confirmed as Secretary, I will follow all statutory authorities assigned to the Department by Congress.**

**Ferries.** Washington State Ferries (WSF) is the largest operating public ferry system in the United States, and one of the largest ferry systems in the world. Nearly 20 million people used the Washington State Ferries in 2024. In my home state our ferry system is so integral to our overall transportation system ferry routes are designated as part of the state highway system.

Mr. Duffy, these States and the rural communities within rely on US Department of Transportation funding, through Federal-aid highway funds, Federal Transit Administration funds, and other sources that help build and improve these ferry operations. The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law included funding increases to flagship ferry grant programs, such as the Passenger Ferry Program, Ferry Boat Program Grant, and created two new discretionary ferry programs including the Ferry Service for Rural Communities Program, and the Electric or Low-Emitting Ferry Pilot Program. This funding is instrumental in improving and modernizing Washington state's ferry system. Federal ferry funding is not only a lifeline in Washington state, but also states including Alaska, North Carolina, Louisiana, Texas, New York, New Jersey, Michigan, and California.

21: If confirmed, will you commit to protect these programs from impoundment?

**Answer: If confirmed, I will seek to ensure that rural communities – long underfunded – receive resources that help provide critical access.**

22: Do you think these programs should be reauthorized in the next surface transportation reauthorization?

**Answer: If confirmed, I look forward to ensuring that the Department is executing on all programs mandated by Congress. Any future changes to the law enacted by Congress will likewise be executed on by the Department.**

**2026 World Cup.** Seattle will be host to six FIFA World Cup matches in 2026. Event organizers estimate 750,000 people will visit Seattle from all over the world for the six games it is hosting. As the World Cup brings travelers, tourists, and fans to the city, security risks and the threat of targeted terrorist attacks will increase for the event's affiliated facilities, eventgoers, and staff. Consequently, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security has determined that Seattle will have over 70 Special Event Assessment Rating (SEAR) events. To help address this challenge, Sen. Moran and I introduced the Transportation Assistance for Olympic and World Cup Cities Act.

23: Will you work with Sen. Moran and I on our legislation?

**Answer: Yes.**

24: As Secretary of Transportation, how will you work with state, local, and other federal agencies to ensure that local transportation systems have the capacity they need to move soccer fans and local residents?

**Answer: I will ensure that the Federal Transit Agency works closely with affected states, cities, and event organizers to identify and develop solutions for World Cup events.**

**Roadway Safety.** In Washington state, 810 people were killed in traffic-related accidents in 2023, a 33-year high, and a 10 percent increase from the year before. Some of the leading causes of traffic fatalities are impaired and distracted driving. The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law included provisions to require the use of safety technology to combat impairment and distracted driving. During the hearing, you testified that safety was a top priority for you.

As of last Month, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration within DOT had only finalized four of the eleven safety rulemakings required by the BIL.

25: Will you continue to advance the bipartisan lifesaving safety measures required by the law?

**Answer: Yes.**

26: If confirmed, will you ensure that the safety of vulnerable road users, including pedestrians and cyclists, is prioritized by the Department?

**Answer: I will work to ensure the safety of all road users.**

27: The BIL established and funded the Safe Streets and Roads for All grant program to assist local governments in creating and implementing comprehensive safety action plans to address the staggering number of fatalities and serious injuries that occur on our roads. In the first three years of the grant program, over 1,600 communities across all 50 states and Puerto Rico have received awards under this program. Will you support continued funding for the Safe Streets and Roads for All grant program?

**Answer: If confirmed, I will follow the law as directed by Congress. Any future changes to the law enacted by Congress will likewise be executed on by the Department.**

28: The Safe Streets and Roads for All grant program recognizes the role regional governing bodies, such as Metropolitan Planning Organizations, play in designing and building safe transportation infrastructure. If confirmed, will you commit to working to improve access to federal funding for these regional entities?

**Answer: If confirmed, I will follow the law as directed by Congress, and I will work with all entities who are seeking to improve access to federal funding.**

29: Do you support federal funding for community-based Vision Zero plans?

**Answer: If confirmed, I look forward to ensuring that the Department is executing on all programs mandated by Congress. Any future changes to the law enacted by Congress will likewise be executed on by the Department.**

**Autonomous Vehicles.** As new automated vehicle technologies are being deployed on roads across the country, transparency is essential to maintaining public trust both in new technologies and the Department's commitment to holding safety as a top priority.

30: Will you continue the Department's policy requiring manufacturers and operators of automated driving systems and SAE Level 2 advanced driver assistance systems equipped vehicles to report crashes to the agency, including the specific location of those crashes?

**Answer: Autonomous vehicles hold tremendous promise. If I am confirmed, the Department will consider a range of interests and concerns, especially safety, before issuing rules and policies related to autonomous vehicles.**

**Pipeline Safety.** There are currently five open rulemakings sitting with PHMSA's Office of Pipeline Safety that were Congressionally mandated by this committee anywhere from 2011 to 2020. Many are well past Congress's statutory deadlines.

31: Will you commit to rapidly finalizing the nearly complete Leak Detection and Repair rule that is already years overdue?

**Answer: If I am confirmed, I will prioritize congressional mandates, such as the Leak Detection and Repair Rule.**

32: Will you commit to a robust modernization of safety standards for new types of infrastructure such as carbon dioxide pipelines?

**Answer: I am aware that CO2 pipeline safety is an important priority. If I am confirmed, I will work to make sure that our nation's CO2 pipeline network is operating safely.**

**Multimodal Freight and Supply Chain Resiliency.** The movement of freight is the key economic driver in the State of Washington and across the country. Approximately 1.5 million

workers in Washington are employed by freight-dependent industries, and freight movement generates nearly \$213 billion GDP in Washington per year. Our Freight transportation system – including rail, roads, aviation, waterways, and pipelines, handles about \$707 billion of cargo annually.

The BIL established the Office of Multimodal Freight Infrastructure and Policy within the Department of Transportation with the goal of promoting and facilitating the sharing of information between the private and public sectors with respect to freight issues.

33: If confirmed, how will you elevate and support this office's critical work?

**Answer: If confirmed as Secretary, I will work to maximize the effectiveness of all offices within OST at the Department.**

34: Currently, the INFRA competitive grant program and the Federal Highway Administration's freight formula program have 30 percent caps on non-highway investment. Both programs are needed to advance critical freight projects, but this cap is limiting and fails to recognize the interconnected nature of goods movement. Moreover, states and localities must have the flexibility to address their most pressing freight infrastructure needs, regardless of mode. Would you support elimination of the non-highway investment caps in the INFRA and freight formula programs?

**Answer: Highway funding is a critical priority for our nation to have great transportation infrastructure. Any congressional mandates will be carried out by the Department, and I look forward to working with Congress on tweaks to existing programs in the future.**

**Pipeline Safety.** There are currently five open rulemakings sitting with PHMSA's Office of Pipeline Safety that were Congressionally mandated by this committee anywhere from 2011 to 2020. Many are well past Congress's statutory deadlines.

35: Will you commit to rapidly finalizing the Leak Detection and Repair rule that received unanimous support for the Gas Pipeline Advisory Committee?

**Answer: If I am confirmed, I will prioritize congressional mandates, such as the Leak Detection and Repair Rule.**

36: Will you advance safety standards for new types of infrastructure such as carbon dioxide pipelines?

**Answer: I am aware that CO2 pipeline safety is an important priority, especially after the Denbury pipeline incident in Satartia, Mississippi in 2020. If I am confirmed, I will work to make sure that our nation's CO2 pipeline network is operating safely.**

**Executive Orders.** President-elect Trump shared plans to release a large number of executive orders on his first days in office.



37: Can you share the executive orders that will have an impact on transportation generally so that the industry is able to prepare?

**Answer: Because I am not confirmed yet and President Trump has not been sworn in yet, I cannot speak on behalf President Trump's plans for any executive orders he may be consider issuing once in office.**

**Aviation Safety.** Administrator Whitaker required Boeing to create and implement a Comprehensive Safety and Quality action plan and is adding 55 FAA inspectors to factory floors, which includes more in Washington state and South Carolina.

38. Do you commit to continuing to ensure that DOT and FAA require Boeing to fully implement its action plan?

**Answer: At the earliest feasible moment, I plan to meet with Boeing's leadership to make clear that the Department and the FAA will continue to hold them accountable to the action plan they developed, and which was accepted by the Department. I will also be instructing FAA leadership to monitor the adequacy of the action plan.**

39: Administrator Whitaker capped Boeing's production of the 737 MAX at 38 aircraft per month. Do you commit to keeping the cap in place until Boeing has demonstrated that it can safely produce airplanes? In your mind, what do you need to see to even consider allowing the cap to be lifted?

**Answer: Yes. The cap will be maintained and will be lifted when I, in consultation with the career safety experts at FAA and the Administrator, have confidence that a production increase will not reduce the quality of the aircraft being produced.**

40: In 2022, FAA extended Boeing's Organization Designation Authority (ODA) but only three years, rather than the standard five, meaning that a decision on the renewal will occur again this year. Will you commit to ensuring that FAA carefully considers whether Boeing deserves to have its ODA extended again, and if so, for how long?

**Answer: I will work with the FAA Administrator and career safety experts on the future parameters of Boeing's ODA.**

41: Do you commit to ensuring that FAA, under DOT's leadership, will implement section 371 of the FAA Reauthorization Law and ensure FAA exercises their full civil penalty authority to hold regulated entities accountable for retaliating against whistleblowers?

**Answer: Yes.**

42: Do you commit to ensuring that Boeing has a robust Safety Management System, something Congress required in both the Aircraft Certification Safety and Accountability Act and the FAA Reauthorization?

**Answer: Yes.**

43: Do you commit to ensuring that FAA's own Safety Management System is serious and robust, which was the subject of S. 4979, the FAA SMS Compliance Review Act of 2024?

**Answer: Yes.**

**Aviation Consumer Protection.** After hearing directly from my constituents in the State of Washington about how their travel plans were upended by widespread flight delays, cancellations, and poor customer service during the Southwest Airlines' Winter Storm Elliott meltdown, I worked with my colleagues to make sure the flying public was not left holding the bag and wondering if they would ever be made whole if airlines cancelled or delayed their flights in the future.

That's why in the FAA Reauthorization law, we led the way to ensure passengers are entitled to hassle-free refunds when their flights are cancelled or significantly delayed by an airline - no matter the cause. And we empower the Department of Transportation to be a strong cop on the beat by establishing a new separate Office of Aviation Consumer Protection to uphold passenger rights and act with consumers' best interests in mind as more and more Americans choose to fly.

However, I'm very concerned that during the first Trump Administration, the Department issued a rule that curtailed DOT's regulation of unfair and deceptive practices by airlines. Project 2025 has called for that rule to be re-instated. This seems counterintuitive to DOT's mission to uphold passenger protections, especially when American consumers across the country have experienced so many widespread travel disruptions – whether the disruptions were in the airline's control or not – in the past three years.

44: Do you commit to ensuring that DOT provides vigorous oversight and enforcement of aviation consumer protection regulations and standards?

**Answer: Yes.**

45: Do you commit to ensuring the standalone Office of Aviation Consumer Protection gets stood up at DOT as required by the FAA Reauthorization Law?

**Answer: The Department will follow the law.**

**Affordable Housing to Support the Airport Workforce.** The FAA has had longstanding restrictions on airport sponsors using any land they own that is designated for "non-aeronautical purposes" for residential use cases. However, there is an interest by some U.S. airports to make available unused sections of land on their property to support housing developments, including to help provide affordable housing to individuals who work at the airports. Notably, many airport service workers, who work contracted jobs for airlines and airports and earn low wages, could benefit from additional affordable housing options close to the airport.

46: If confirmed, how would you ensure that DOT and FAA look into innovative ways to accommodate affordable housing developments on airport sponsor-owned land, provided the proximity of such housing does not pose a safety risk to airport operations?

**Answer: I will work with airports and the FAA to address affordable housing opportunities.**

47: Do you commit to engaging with relevant stakeholders to try to find a solution to this issue, such as interested airport sponsors and affordable housing advocates?

**Answer: Yes.**

### **Responsiveness to Committee Requests.**

48: Do you commit to provide prompt and good faith responses to oversight requests from me, and provide documentation when requested?

**Answer: Yes.**

**Commercial Space Launch and Reentry.** The commercial space industry has encountered significant issues with the FAA's Office of Commercial Space Transportation (AST), including chronic resource shortages, regulatory inefficiencies, and delays in processing licensing and approvals. These problems will only get worse as the commercial space industry grows. Last year's rate of licensed launches was up 33.3 percent from 2023, and 97.4 percent from 2022. 85% of the licensed launches in 2024 were conducted by SpaceX, including 4 Starship launches, which means that SpaceX receives more time and attention from the FAA than any other launch company. Yet SpaceX and Elon Musk have been the most vocal public critics of the FAA's Commercial Space Transportation Office.

Last year, FAA's Commercial Space Transportation Advisory Committee (COMSTAC) unanimously approved a recommendation that AST be moved out of the FAA and turned into a standalone organization directly under the Secretary of Transportation.

49: Smaller innovators and new start commercial space companies often struggle to compete against well established players. What role do you see the Department of Transportation and the FAA playing in ensuring the government fosters a diversified ecosystem of space providers to increase resiliency and reduce dependency on any single company?

**Answer: Competition is good. The Department, including the FAA, should be broadly supportive of all qualified applicants seeking launch and reentry approvals, consistent with safety protocols.**

50: As you consider proposals to increase domestic commercial launch industry competitiveness, will you also commit to maintaining public safety and the safety of human spaceflight participants?

**Answer: Yes, to the extent the Department is provided that responsibility under law. As you are aware, there is currently a congressionally mandated moratorium on regulating the safety of individuals on board commercial spacecraft, except under certain scenarios.**

**Bipartisan Cooperation.** Prior to your nomination, you regularly provided public commentary on TV and your podcast. I recognize that off-the-cuff statements might not always come through as intended. But I want to highlight just a few that stood out to me:

- When discussing federal agencies during an August 1, 2024, podcast episode, you said “communists have infiltrated these organizations.”
- During a July 26, 2024, podcast episode, you suggested the “deep state” was responsible for “the assassination of JFK” and the “takeout of Nixon with Watergate.”
- During a September 15, 2023, podcast episode, you claimed that “women are liberal because they're not very politically savvy or smart. They don't know the history. They're gullible.”

Mr. Duffy, do you actually believe these things?

52: Will you commit that, if confirmed, you will refrain from this type of divisive rhetoric and instead work across the aisle to get things done for the American people?

**Answer: My role as a political and policy commentator, where I was often having a discussion with my wife or daughter, is distinct from the role of Secretary of the Department of Transportation. During my time in the House, I often worked across the aisle to get things done for Wisconsin and America. For example, I worked with Senators Baldwin and Klobuchar to fund the construction of the St. Croix Crossing between Wisconsin and Minnesota. We helped replace a failing bridge that was more than 80 years old and structurally deficient.**

**On House Financial Services, I had the opportunity to work with Maxine Waters on many issues, including bipartisan flood insurance legislation.**

**The transportation sector is a unifying space in our politics, and I will work with members of all parties on the challenges facing our country's infrastructure.**

**The Maritime Administration (“MARAD”).** MARAD is the agency responsible for facilitating maritime commerce, including supporting the U.S. flag fleet, maritime sector economic development, and maritime workforce development including overseeing the United States Merchant Marine Academy. Project 2025 recommended that MARAD should be moved to another department.

53: Do you support maintaining MARAD as an agency within the Department of Transportation? If not, why not, and where would you propose addressing DOT and MARAD maritime authorities under Title 49 and elsewhere?

**Answer: MARAD is a welcome part of DOT's mission to enable a safe, secure, and efficient national transportation system. The authority to reorganize executive departments rests with Congress. If confirmed, I will lead all of DOT's modal administrations, based on the organization codified by Congress, to execute the Department's mission.**

**Maritime Infrastructure, Jones Act, Domestic Shipbuilding and Buy America.** The Jones Act requires that water-borne cargo carried between domestic ports must be carried on U.S. flag, U.S. built and U.S. crewed ships. According to the American Maritime Partnership, the Jones Act supports 650,000 American jobs and generates \$150 billion in economic benefits annually. The Jones Act also helps ensure the U.S. maintains the critical skills needed to build and crew ships needed for national security purposes. The DOT, through MARAD, is formally consulted in the decision-making process to waive the Jones Act for non-Department of Defense requests. Further, a number of DOT programs support maritime infrastructure, grants, training, and financing necessary to support a Jones Act fleet for commercial and government (defense and food aid) cargo. Beyond just the Jones Act, according to the Department of Commerce, the marine economy contributed a total of \$476 billion in economic impact in 2022, making up nearly 2% of the nation's gross domestic product (GDP). It generated \$777 billion in sales, and supported 2.4 million jobs in 2022.

54: Do you support the Jones Act?

**Answer: Yes.**

55: As Secretary, how would you invest in the maritime sector, including to grow our U.S. flagged fleet and further develop port infrastructure throughout the country?

**Answer: The global supply chain is more competitive than ever, and the U.S. must remain a leader. This starts with ensuring that our maritime industry has the capacity and technology to handle increasing trade volumes efficiently. By reducing regulatory barriers to modernization and incentivizing investment in infrastructure, we can position the American maritime sector as world-class hubs of commerce. We should also prioritize workforce development to ensure maritime workers have the skills and conditions needed for 21st-century logistics. A robust and reliable American maritime system is key to maintaining America's leadership in the global economy.**

56: There are a number of laws that support the domestic shipbuilding industry, including 10 U.S.C. 8679, which requires that military vessels are built in the United States. While Title 10 is not under the jurisdiction of DOT, building military vessels overseas would have a profound impact on American shipyards and result in thousands of hard-working Americans losing their jobs. Do you support building American military vessels in allied countries overseas? How

would that impact commercial shipbuilding in the United States? As Secretary, what would your role be in protecting and growing the shipbuilding industry in the United States?

**Answer: The U.S. shipbuilding industry is critical to our national security and economic strength, providing thousands of skilled jobs and ensuring a host of national security benefits. Title 10, as you note, falls outside the jurisdiction of the Department of Transportation. However, if confirmed, I would prioritize policies that strengthen our maritime sector, including supporting commercial shipbuilding and maintaining a skilled workforce via all the Department's existing authorities.**

57: Growing the domestic shipbuilding and repair industry is an economic and national security imperative. The MARAD Small Shipyard Grant Program is a key tool to enable small shipyards to secure new innovative infrastructure such as cranes, port infrastructure, and other needs to maintain competitiveness. Do you support the Small Shipyard Grant Program, and will you work to increase funding for this program if confirmed?

**Answer: Growing the domestic shipbuilding and repair industry is indeed an economic and national security priority, and the MARAD Small Shipyard Grant Program plays an important role in supporting the competitiveness of small shipyards. Consistent with President Trump's focus on strengthening American economy, I recognize the importance of programs like this in advancing American maritime competitiveness. If confirmed, I will work to ensure the program continues to deliver value and will collaborate with stakeholders to assess how best to support the long-term growth and health of the American shipbuilding and repair industry.**

58: The MARAD Federal Ship Financing Program (also known as "Title XI") is a key financial tool for American shipbuilding. Title XI provides below market interest rates for long term loans to finance the construction of large ships, as well as shipyard improvements. Title XI also generates revenue, helping to reduce the national deficit. Title XI has been historically overprescribed and the industry has called on MARAD to increase loan authority to meet the high demand for building American vessels in American shipyards. Do you support the Title XI Program? How will you work to expand Title XI to increase production of ships here in the United States? How would you work to make Title XI more accessible to Americans interested in investing in maritime shipping?

**Answer: If confirmed, I will utilize all the tools provided by Congress to promote a strong and competitive maritime sector.**

59: Title XI also funds shipbuilding projects to support use of alternative fuels, such as LNG, which reduces greenhouse gas emissions. Will you continue to support Title XI projects aimed at decarbonization of the maritime sector?

**Answer: America’s energy dominance is essential to our economic strength, job creation, and national security. The maritime industry plays a critical role in advancing that dominance by utilizing innovative technologies like LNG. If confirmed, I will support efforts to ensure the Department enables projects that strengthen our maritime industry and advance energy independence.**

**Maritime Workforce and Port Automation.** A hurdle in contract negotiations between the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (“ILWU”) and the International Longshoreman Association (“ILA”) contract negotiations on the West Coast, and East and Gulf coasts was marine terminal operator and carrier efforts to automate port facilities, which would have resulted in fewer job opportunities for longshore workers. Congress has passed authorizing and appropriation legislation to limit the ability for the Secretary of Transportation to fund Port Infrastructure Development grant proposals that would result in a net job loss at ports in an effort to protect longshoremen jobs. In December 2024 when referencing the ILA contract negotiation, President-elect Trump said on Truth Social:

“The amount of money saved is nowhere near the distress, hurt and harm it causes for American Workers...Foreign companies have made a fortune in the U.S. by giving them access to our markets. They shouldn’t be looking for every last penny knowing how many families are hurt...”

60: As Secretary, would you support efforts to automate America’s ports? Should the federal government subsidize the automation of our ports through DOT grant programs?

**Answer: Because this is an area President Trump has weighed in and he has not yet been sworn in, I would work with the incoming White House, if I am confirmed, on any future policy proposals.**

61: The Port Infrastructure Development Program does not fund projects that would result in net job loss within the boundary of a port. As Secretary, would you support maintaining this protection in law?

**Answer: I will follow the law as directed by Congress.**

62: Would you support expanding protections for workers by prohibiting federal funding for projects that would result in any job loss for longshore and other dock workers?

**Answer: The conditions related to federal funding rest with Congress. If confirmed, I will implement the Department’s programs consistent with the law and President Trump’s vision to protect American workers and unleash the American economy.**

63: President Elect Trump has spoken about investments in infrastructure. Would you support funding automation projects that could lead to lost jobs through a budget reconciliation, an infrastructure package, or any other legislation if it would result in any American jobs lost?

**Answer: On any future proposal, I look forward to working with your office, the Commerce Committee and all of Congress to see how it impacts jobs and infrastructure.**

**Maritime Workforce.** According to the Department of Defense, the Department of Transportation, the Coast Guard, and the maritime industry, there is a significant shortage of professional U.S. mariners – and this is a significant economic and national security concern. We do not have enough mariners to crew our current fleet of commercial ships, let alone the size of the fleet to keep America competitive, and the costs to consumers down. This issue has become so critical that the Navy is publicly reporting that it may remove crews from 17 support ships due to the lack of civilian mariners. These mariners are needed both to help carry goods onboard U.S. vessels, and to ensure we have the logistical capacity needed to support the Department of Defense during an emergency or contingency.

64: Do you consider the shortage of U.S. merchant mariners a national and economic security risk?

**Answer: Yes.**

65: How do you intend to leverage DOT resources to develop the maritime workforce of the future?

**Answer: The maritime workforce is critical to America’s economic strength and national security. To develop the workforce of the future, I will leverage DOT resources like MARAD’s Maritime Centers of Excellence, the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy, and workforce training grants to expand access to maritime education and apprenticeships. Collaboration with agencies like the Department of Defense and the Department of Homeland Security will be essential, particularly in areas like mariner attraction for transitioning service members, licensing, and credentialing. I will also work closely with the private sector to raise public awareness about the opportunities and benefits of a maritime career. By partnering with stakeholders and educational institutions, we can promote the maritime industry as a desirable and rewarding career path, highlighting its critical role in commerce, national security, and economic growth.**

66: How do you intend to improve the training facilities, including at the United States Merchant Marine Academy (“USMMA”), State Maritime Academies, and Military to Mariner Programs aimed at developing the future maritime workforce?

**Answer: Anyone willing to serve our country deserves a world-class training environment. To ensure we are developing the next generation of skilled mariners, I am committed to finding ways to improve the training facilities at the United States Merchant Marine Academy (USMMA), State Maritime Academies, and Military to Mariner Program.**



67: Should efforts to build and develop the U.S. maritime workforce be included in a future infrastructure or national security legislative packages?

**Answer: If I am confirmed, I look forward to working with Congress on implementing the programs it creates or modernizes in future national security legislation.**

**U.S. Merchant Marine Academy (USMMA).** USMMA, which is operated by MARAD, is the nation's only federal service academy dedicated to training licensed mariners to support domestic and international trade and the maritime transportation needs of the U.S. military. The Academy graduates more than 200 young women and men into the maritime workforce every year, all fully qualified to serve as Merchant Mariners. However, the Government Accountability Office has recently reported on numbers long-standing facility and infrastructure concerns on the USMMA campus.

68: What is your plan to revitalize the facilities and USMMA to ensure can continue to educate the mariners of the future?

**Answer: The U.S. Merchant Marine Academy plays a critical role in training the mariners who keep America's economy strong and support our national security readiness. Ensuring that Kings Point remains a world-class institution is a priority. To ensure we are developing the next generation of skilled mariners, I am committed to finding ways to improve the training facilities at the United States Merchant Marine Academy (USMMA).**

69: Do you support increasing USMMA's budget in order to facilitate facility and infrastructure improvements throughout the campus?

**Answer: Funding decisions are the prerogative of Congress. If confirmed, I will implement the law consistent with Congress' intent.**

70: Do you support growing the student population size at USMMA as a way to increase the size of the U.S. merchant marine workforce?

**Answer: I will execute President Trump's vision so that anyone willing to serve our country via attending one of our service academies has a 21st century training/learning environment.**

**Sealift Capacity.** The United States Transportation Command (USTRANSCOM) relies upon the Maritime Security Program, the Tanker Security Program, and the Cable Security Program to ensure that there are U.S. flagged vessels operating in the international trade and available to support Department of Defense (DOD) logistics during an emergency or contingency. Furthermore, USTRANSCOM testified before the House Armed Services Committee last year

that their top readiness concern is air and sea refueling – and maritime refueling for the DOD is supported by MARAD’s Tanker Security Program.

71: Do you support the Maritime Security Program, the Cable Ship Security Program, and the Tanker Security Program? If not, how would you ensure the U.S. fleet has enough maritime capacity to support DOD logistics during an emergency or contingency?

**Answer: I look forward to learning more about these programs and understanding the critical role they play in working with DoD to protect our national security.**

There is public reporting that the Tanker Security Program is simply not large enough to meet the needs of our military logistics. Last month, with bipartisan support, this Committee secured passage of legislation that increased authorization levels for this vital program as part of the Fiscal Year 2025 National Defense Authorization Act.

72: Do you support increasing the size of the Tanker Security Program? If not, how would you ensure the U.S. military has access to enough tanker ships during an emergency or contingency?

**Answer: If confirmed, I will implement this law as directed by Congress.**

**Culverts:** The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law established the National Culvert Removal, Replacement, and Restoration Grant Program. We have worked tirelessly in a bipartisan manner to recover fish populations through habitat restoration, fishing regulations, and much more. But none of that work matters if fish can’t migrate to their spawning grounds.

73: You have committed to supporting the Culvert Grant Program and working with the Committee on this vital issue. Something that tribes, fishermen, and the outdoor community all agree on is the importance of science. Will you work with NOAA and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to provide the necessary resources to ensure we’re removing culverts that the best available fisheries science shows will help us recover fish populations?

**Answer: If confirmed, I look forward to collaborating with those agencies on the best path forward, consistent with federal law.**

74: Will you work with us to ensure that Tribes and rural communities are able to access this program by improving the application and providing technical assistance?

**Answer: Yes.**

**Technical Assistance.** Technical assistance is an important part of drafting bipartisan legislation, including maritime legislation.

75: Will you work with us to improve access to technical assistance in a bipartisan basis, and in a timely manner? Will you commit to sending the committee a MARAD reauthorization proposal no later than April 1?

**Answer: If confirmed, I will commit to being responsive to the Committee and the Congress as a whole in its legislative/oversight missions.**

**Transit.** Transit in Washington state and across the country is critical for connecting communities and enabling people to get to work every day. Federal funding for transit infrastructure is a vital resource to enable transit agencies to meet the needs of their ridership and growing communities. The FTA's Capital Investment Grants program is USDOT's primary tool to support these efforts, with a lengthy, merit-based process for evaluating which projects should receive federal funds.

76: Will you commit that under your leadership FTA will continue to give full and fair consideration of projects in the Capital Investment Grant pipeline, including the timely approval of Full Funding Grant Agreements for projects that meet the necessary criteria?

**Answer: Yes.**

77: Can you please outline the Administration's priorities and goals for public transportation generally and the CIG program specifically?

**Answer: If I am confirmed, I will ensure that all grant programs are executed, consistent with all laws as enacted by Congress.**

78. How will the Trump Administration meet the growing demands for public transportation in urban, suburban, and rural communities through the final years of IIJA implementation and the next Surface Transportation Authorization bill?

**Answer: If confirmed, I will ensure that Departmental resources as mandated by Congress are used as efficiently as possible to promote safe mobility. I know that many Americans rely on public transportation to move throughout their communities. This will be an important topic as we approach the next Surface Transportation Authorization bill.**

## **SENATOR AMY KLOBUCHAR (D-MN)**

1. I am concerned that the shortage of trained aviation manufacturers, mechanics, and air traffic controllers is leading to more flight cancellations and repair delays. I led bipartisan legislation in the FAA reauthorization bill to recruit and prepare students for aviation careers. If confirmed, what will you do to ensure we have a pipeline of new talent and bolster our existing aviation workforce?

**Answer: I will implement the legislation set out in the FAA reauthorization to recruit and prepare more students for aviation careers. We should also seek feedback from the**

**industry to better understand what actions the Department can take that would improve the recruitment, retention, training, and licensing of aviation professionals by industry members.**

2. In your testimony, you underlined the importance of Air Traffic Controllers in keeping our skies safe. The FAA's contract tower program provides air traffic control service to 256 smaller airports across the country, including St. Cloud and Anoka County airports in Minnesota. If confirmed, how will you work to support this program and help small and rural airports?

**Answer: If confirmed, I will prioritize understanding the needs of tower operators and airports, and work with them to address any concerns related to personnel, guidance, or equipment, as appropriate.**

3. The United States will host a number of major international sporting events over the next decade, and as co-chair of the Senate Travel and Tourism Caucus, I am working to draw more international visitors to the U.S. and support local tourism businesses across the country. If confirmed, how will you work with state and local governments—and other federal agencies—to ensure the success and security of these events?

**Answer: It's important that domestic and international travelers have choices when traveling to our host cities. I will work with airlines and airports to ensure we can manage temporary changes to flight routes and volume associated with tourism and special events.**

## **SENATOR BRIAN SCHATZ (D-HI)**

1. In your confirmation hearing, you committed to working together to improve safety for pedestrians and cyclists. If confirmed, what specific actions will you prioritize to help achieve this shared goal?

**Answer: If I am confirmed, the Department will continue to fund projects and take actions that enhance the safety of the traveling public. These actions will include grants and**

**rulemakings. The Department will also promote innovation in transportation to enhance safety through technological improvements.**

2. The Safe Streets and Roads for All grant program was one of the most significant investments our country has made towards achieving our shared goal of reducing pedestrian and cyclist deaths. Do you support the continuation of this program?

**Answer: If I am confirmed, the Department will continue to administer the Safe Streets and Roads for All grant as set out in the legislation passed by Congress.**

3. My legislation to establish the Office of Aviation Consumer Protection was signed into law as part of the bipartisan Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act of 2024. This office will make sure that regulations intended to protect American air travelers are enforced. Will you commit to working together to upholding the office as established in the FAA Reauthorization Act of 2024?

**Answer: The department will follow the law.**

4. How do you think the Office of Aviation Consumer Protection can best support air travelers?

**Answer: The mission of the Department, including the FAA, is to ensure a safe and efficient system of transportation. Included in that mission is the ability of air travelers to reasonably participate in our aviation economy. The Office of Aviation Consumer Protection should support that effort.**

5. In general, what do you see as the U.S. Department of Transportation's role in addressing consumer complaints from air passengers?

**Answer: As the father of nine children, I know air travel can be very frustrating. The Department of Transportation has entities designed to help passengers address fair and deceptive practices being carried out by airlines.**

6. The design of Hawaii's airspace was completed over 30 years ago and needs to be updated. Hawaii residents rely on interisland flights to attend medical appointments and go to work—making it all the more critical that flight spacing reflect current needs. Additionally, given the Department of Defense's equities in Hawaii, an updated design is of importance to our national security. The Hawaiian Islands Airspace Modernization Project was temporarily paused by the Federal Aviation Administration after fiscal year 2024. The Federal Aviation Administration has said that it plans to begin scoping the project in the fourth quarter of fiscal year 2025. Do I have your commitment to follow through with this timeline and continue to update me of your progress?

**Answer: If I am confirmed, I will order a complete report from FAA on this effort and update your office.**

7. In your confirmation hearing, you committed to continue the long-standing tradition of bipartisanship at the Department of Transportation. If confirmed, will you commit to responding

to requests for information in a timely and complete manner, and having open communication with committee and member offices regardless of which side of the aisle they sit on?

**Answer: Yes.**

8. Taxpayer dollars should be used to create good family wage jobs, and policies like Davis Bacon and the Jones Act have been central to that. Do I have your commitment to support and uphold the Jones Act, and the decades-long practice of providing prevailing wages under the Davis Bacon Act?

**Answer: If confirmed as Secretary, I will ensure that all Departmental offices and modes uphold current law.**

9. In the coming years our nation will be hosting several major international sporting events including the 2028 Summer Olympics in Los Angeles. This great sporting event will present challenges in efficiently and safely moving millions of attendees and thousands of athletes between numerous venues. In the past, when our nation hosted the world for the Olympics, the U.S. Department of Transportation played a significant role in funding, facilitating and coordinating the transportation needs of the Games. Do I have your commitment to proactively participate in the planning and implementation of these Games' transportation needs?

**Answer: Yes.**

## **SENATOR EDWARD MARKEY (D-MA)**

1. The transportation sector is the largest source of greenhouse gas emissions in the country, accounting for 28 percent of our country's climate pollution. Additionally, as climate patterns shift and extreme weather events increase, trillions of dollars of transportation infrastructure assets will be at risk. How do you plan to lead the Department of Transportation in reducing emissions from transportation?

**Answer: Building upon the success of his first Administration, President Trump has prioritized achieving clean air and clean water for our Nation. If confirmed as Secretary, I will be committed to a robust system of transportation infrastructure across the Nation that puts the American people's health and safety first. America's infrastructure is crumbling, and we need to ensure Americans are safe regardless of the mode of transportation.**

1a. Do you agree that the climate crisis puts transportation assets at risk? If yes, how will you plan to address those risks? If no, why not?

**Answer: America's infrastructure is crumbling, and we need to ensure Americans are safe regardless of the mode of transportation. That's why I believe that we must continue to look at all risks to a safe, efficient transportation system across America, and invest in upgrading our infrastructure.**

2. Electric vehicle charging programs like the National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (NEVI) and Charging Fueling Infrastructure (CFI) program require collaboration between the Department of Transportation, state transportation offices, utilities, local governments, businesses, and technology developers. Will you implement the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and these grant program as intended and passed by Congress?

**Answer: If I am confirmed, the Department will follow the law.**

2a. So far, 37 states have issued nearly 950 awards totaling \$510 million in NEVI funds. How will you work with these state governments to ensure that obligated and awarded funds can continue to be effectively disseminated?

**Answer: If I am confirmed, the Department will work with Congress and state/local/tribal governments on the implementation of grant programs and ensure that the law is followed.**

3. The Department of Transportation is overseeing the approval of some of the largest-ever proposed offshore oil and gas export terminals. New billion-dollar offshore export terminals could result in higher energy bills for U.S. households and businesses. What criteria do you think are the most important for the Maritime Administration to apply to determine if deepwater ports are actually in the national interest?

**Answer: When evaluating projects, the Department's most criteria should be ensuring that they are safe (consistent with the law and regulation).**

4. The Department of Transportation is responsible for overseeing the safety of pipelines and hazardous materials. Common-sense pipeline regulations and operating practices are critical to ensure devastating accidents—such as the San Bruno, California gas pipeline explosion, the 2018 Merrimack Valley over-pressurization disaster, and the Satartia, Mississippi rupture of a carbon dioxide pipeline—are not repeated, how do you think the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration should comprehensively address the public safety, environmental integrity, and transparency of pipeline operations across the United States?

**Answer: If confirmed as Secretary, safety will be my top priority for all modal administrations within the Department, including PHMSA. As Secretary, I will direct PHMSA to engage with public, industry, and government stakeholders to ensure that adequate safety regulations are promulgated.**

5. Will you commit to following and implementing current law, including by finalizing rules for gas distribution line safety and advanced leak detection and repair, as required by the bipartisan PIPES Act of 2020?

**Answer: If I am confirmed, it will be my responsibility to ensure that the Department prioritizes completing congressional mandates.**

6. There are currently over 5,000 miles of carbon capture and storage pipelines and 1,600 hydrogen pipelines in operation—with plans to expand both of these networks substantially. Do you agree that comprehensive standards can help ensure that CO2 and hydrogen pipelines are effectively regulated to avoid new safety concerns related to those technologies?

**Answer: If confirmed as Secretary, safety will be my top priority for all modal administrations within the Department, including PHMSA. As Secretary, I will direct PHMSA to engage with public, industry, and government stakeholders to ensure that adequate safety regulations are promulgated.**

7. There is a clear conflict of interest between executives and lobbyists from one industry helming the federal agency that oversees that industry. Can you describe your experience lobbying on behalf of oil and gas companies, the airline industry, data and AI and how you plan to address these conflicts of interest—specifically for clients including S&P Global, SAS Institute, Diem Networks, and U.S., pipeline operator Enterprise Products, and the Partnership for Fair and Open Skies?

**Answer: I have consulted with the Office of Government Ethics (OGE) and the Department of Transportation's Designated Agency Ethics Official to identify potential conflicts of interest. Any potential conflicts of interest will be resolved in accordance with the terms of the ethics agreement I have entered into with DOT's Designated Agency Ethics Official and that has been provided to the Committee. You can also find a [copy here](#).**

8. Less than a year ago, you lobbied for one of North America's largest midstream oil and gas companies. Given your lobbying background, how will you ensure your decision-making on fuel economy standards remains impartial and prioritizes public interest over industry influence?

**Answer: On the topic of fuel economy standards, it's an issue of great importance for consumers across America. The President has said that he wants to lower the cost of a car for the average family. The cost of a new car in this country is \$48,000. That's far too much for a schoolteacher to afford.**

**I will look at the data on fuel economy standards, including their impact on prices for consumers and our infrastructure, and I will consult with President Trump, Congress and stakeholders on any decisions.**

9. Airport service workers serve on the frontlines of our nation's aviation system and keep our airports safe, secure and accessible through weather disasters, global pandemics, other airport emergencies, and busy travel seasons. The very people who keep our world moving are, too often, these very same workers who are denied a decent wage and benefits like paid time off or affordable healthcare, leaving them unable to support their families and seek necessary medical care. Many airport service workers' wages have been near the poverty level for the past 20 years.



And we know that these workers are overwhelmingly workers of color – a staggering 84 percent – who often do the lowest-paid jobs within our airports.

Congress recognized the contributions of these frontline workers—who include cabin and terminal cleaners, wheelchair passenger service agents, baggage handlers, concessionaires, and non-TSA security personnel—when it provided billions of dollars during the pandemic to keep them on the payroll as they kept the airport functioning. Despite the health risks, these workers played, and continue to play, an essential role in our aviation system. Airports around the country have increasingly recognized that better job standards for service workers leads to reduced staff turnover and improved security outcomes. A fairly paid and experienced airport service workforce helps ensure a safe, secure, and accessible aviation system.

Do you agree that airport service workers are critical for the safety and operations of the aviation system?

**Answer: Yes.**

10. If confirmed, how will you ensure that this essential workforce receives the resources, training, wages, and benefits to ensure these provide a decent living for the workers who make air travel possible, which in turn makes airports safer and more secure?

**Answer: If I am confirmed, I commit to ensuring that the FAA studies the airport service workforce and takes appropriate action using grantmaking and rulemaking authority.**

11. The bipartisan FAA Reauthorization Act authorized the Government Accountability Office (GAO) to study the airport service workforce and provided the Secretary of Transportation with the option to convene aviation stakeholders to study the GAO findings. If confirmed, will you commit to convening aviation stakeholders to consider policies that raise the wages and benefits of the airport service workforce as a means to ensure our system is safe and secure?

**Answer: Yes.**

12. Last December, CEOs from some of the largest airlines testified before the U.S. Senate regarding the junk fees passengers are being charged for baggage, seat selection, and other services. If confirmed, what will you do to hold airlines accountable for padding their bottom-line with junk fees?

**Answer: The Department has the responsibility of ensuring airlines avoid unfair and deceptive practices while promoting as much competition as possible within the marketplace. I intend for the Department to review airline actions through that lens and take action as necessary.**

13. The FAA Reauthorization Act included a provision that Vice President-elect J.D. Vance and I authored to ban family seating fees. The FAA began a rulemaking to implement our provision last fall. Do you agree that family seating fees are an outrageous airline practice?

**Answer: I am acutely aware of how expensive it is to travel as a family and how airline fees can accumulate. I also understand how difficult it can be to book and accommodate families on aircraft. I look forward to working with your office and Vice President-elect Vance on appropriate actions to address these issues.**

13a. Will you commit to swiftly completing that rulemaking?

**Answer: If I am confirmed, I commit to implementing the law as enacted by Congress.**

14. Last year, Secretary Buttigieg launched an investigation into the four largest airlines' rewards programs. This review will examine the fairness, transparency, predictability, and competitiveness of airlines' rewards programs, looking at issues related to rewards devaluation, hidden and dynamic pricing, fees, and these programs' impact on competition and choice. Will you commit to continuing this investigation into airlines' rewards programs and ensuring a comprehensive review and investigation?

**Answer: Yes.**

15. In October 2024, the Department of Transportation entered into a bipartisan Airline Passenger Protection Partnership with attorneys general from 22 states and U.S. territories, including the attorney general from Massachusetts, to protect consumers from unfair and deceptive aviation practices. Will you commit to continuing to work with state attorneys general to protect passengers' rights?

**Answer: If I am confirmed, I will request an update on the status of this partnership and will determine appropriate actions, consistent with federal law.**

16. Over the last eight years, more than 275,000 people have died on U.S. roads, including more than 2,963 people in Massachusetts. If confirmed, can you describe your plan to eliminate the growing number of road injuries and fatalities?

**Answer: I believe improving roadway safety will require multiple changes, including on technology, infrastructure, and regulation. Safety will be my top priority as Secretary, if I am confirmed, and I commit to working towards approaches that can improve roadway safety.**

17. In 2022, 7,522 pedestrians were killed in traffic crashes in the U.S., the highest number killed since 1981 and up 83% from the all-time low in 2009. Another 67,336 pedestrians were injured in traffic crashes that year. Similarly, in 2022, 1,105 bicyclists were killed 46,195 bicyclists were injured. If confirmed, what specific actions will you take to address deaths and injuries of vulnerable road users including pedestrians and bicyclists?

**Answer: Safety is the core mission of the Department of Transportation. If I am confirmed, the Department will continue to fund projects and take actions that enhance the safety of the traveling public.**

18. Research has shown that advanced vehicle technologies, such as automatic emergency braking (AEB), lane departure warning (LDW), blind spot detection (BSD), rear AEB, and rear

cross-traffic alert, can help to reduce motor vehicle fatalities and injuries. If confirmed, what specific actions will you take to promote the installation and use of these vehicle safety technologies?

**Answer: If I am confirmed, the Department will follow the law with respect to directed rulemakings from Congress, including those that encompass technological requirements. The Department will also promote innovation in vehicle technologies while prioritizing safety.**

19. During your time in the House of Representatives, you consistently supported bills that permitted heavier trucks to operate on interstate roads. However, numerous studies from the Department of Transportation have concluded that larger and heavier vehicles are more frequently involved in truck crashes. Do you continue to support allowing heavier trucks to operate on interstate roads?

**Answer: If confirmed as Secretary, I will continue to seek the best possible information to ensuring truck transportation is as safe and efficient as possible across U.S. roadways.**

19a. If confirmed, how will you address the safety risks caused by heavier trucks?

**Answer: If confirmed as Secretary, I will continue to seek the best possible information to ensuring truck transportation is as safe and efficient as possible across U.S. roadways.**

20. In 2021, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration issued a “Standard General Order” requiring vehicle manufacturers to submit information to the agency about crashes involving vehicles equipped with an automated driving systems or SAE-2 advanced driver assistance systems. This data has been essential for NHTSA and the public to understand the safety risks with autonomous vehicles. Will you commit to maintaining this “Standard General Order”?

**Answer: If confirmed, I will review the status of this matter. Autonomous vehicles hold tremendous promise. If I am confirmed, the Department will prioritize safety and will take into account a range of factors and perspectives, when issuing rules and policies related to autonomous vehicles.**

21. Given that the Department of Transportation affects almost every single American, the Department must effectively engage with stakeholders. How will you ensure that victims, survivors, and other safety stakeholders are included in the planning and evaluation stages of DOT safety programs?

**Answer: If I am confirmed, I will ensure that the Department actively and robustly engages with all stakeholders, very much to include victims and survivors.**

22. During your nomination hearing in the front of the Senate Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee on January 15, you touched on the importance of balancing new technologies and protecting people’s privacy. Modern modes of transportation, especially cars,

collect, use, and share many types of sensitive information, such as location, photos, audio, and even video recordings. If confirmed, how would you work as Secretary of the Department of Transportation to ensure individual privacy is protected in both ongoing and new work undertaken by the Department?

**Answer: Privacy is an important value in ensuring a free, open, safe, and efficient transportation system in America. I look forward to engaging with your office on the best means of advancing these goals.**

23. Last year, Secretary Pete Buttigieg began a Department of Transportation privacy review of the nation's ten largest airlines. I was pleased that this investigation also properly included DOT's responsibility to enforce airlines' compliance with my Children's Online Privacy Protection Act. Will you commit to continuing this investigation into airlines' privacy policies and practices and ensuring a comprehensive review and investigation?

**Answer: If I am confirmed, I commit to reviewing the results of the review, seeking input from other federal agencies as appropriate, and taking action to the extent there is a violation of law, including compliance with the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act.**

24. Public transportation provides millions of rides every day, connecting people in communities large and small to jobs, healthcare, school, and services. The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law provided a generational investment in transit. If confirmed, how will you support public transportation across the country?

**Answer: If I am confirmed, I will ensure that all agencies across the Department follow the law, including public transportation programs that – as you note – provide mobility to so many.**

25. A 2023 report by Brookings underscored how a lack of dedicated funding for airports to increase their climate resilience poses dire economic and environmental security risks, finding that an estimated 24 U.S. airports – carrying a quarter of all passengers in 2019 – will experience some level of flooding by 2050. If confirmed, how will you ensure airports are prepared to address the impact of extreme storms and climate change?

**Answer: If I am confirmed, I will ensure the FAA implements the changes Congress directed in order to strengthen our Nation's infrastructure.**

26. The current transportation system favors individuals with access to a car, but nondrivers make up a significant portion of the population, from rural areas to big cities. Across the United States, around 30 percent of people do not have a driver's license, and many more licensed individuals do not drive. How do you plan to increase mobility options and access for non-drivers?

**Answer: If I am confirmed, I look forward to improving transportation across the board, including via new technologies.**

27. Transportation equity ensures that all communities, including historically underserved and marginalized groups, have access to safe, reliable, and affordable transportation options. What

specific policies or initiatives will you implement to address transportation inequities and ensure that federal investments benefit all communities fairly?

**Answer: If I am confirmed, I will work to ensure that all communities are considered in order to improve the affordability and accessibility of the U.S. transportation system.**

28. On your podcast in August 2023, you said that Congress should “get rid of the Department of Energy and get rid of the EPA.” Do you stand by those statements?

**Answer: My role as a political and policy commentator is distinct from the role of Secretary of the Department of Transportation. The transportation sector is a unifying space in our politics, and I will work with members of all parties on the challenges facing our country’s infrastructure.**

**Relevant policy decisions will be made by the President a. If confirmed, I will work with all relevant agency leaders and Congress to accomplish the President’s goals.**

## **SENATOR GARY PETERS (D-MI)**

1. Mr. Duffy, investment in our air traffic control infrastructure is essential for safe air travel and to reduce airport delays. That's why I have advocated to address the national backlog of Air Traffic Control facilities – especially at Grand Rapids Airport, which is a hub airport with a 60-year-old tower. If confirmed, will you work with me on finding a way to replace Grand Rapids' tower and invest in modernizing our air traffic control facilities?

**Answer: Yes.**

2. Mr. Duffy, I am a champion of passenger rail projects in Michigan, including one that would bring back rail service to the historic Michigan Central Station in Detroit – and extend that service across our border with Canada into Windsor. This project requires continued support and coordination from DOT to move forward. If confirmed, do you commit to continuing DOT's work to help achieve this important Michigan rail priority?

**Answer: Yes.**

3. Mr. Duffy, as you pointed out in your testimony, far too many Americans die on our roads every day – that is unacceptable and preventable. Last year I held a hearing on how to improve roadway safety and highlighted the work Michigan is doing to turn around this national trend, including through Safe Streets for All funding and technology improvements. I believe one key to improving safety is finally having a confirmed leader at the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration after 6 years. Do you agree we need strong, qualified leadership at NHTSA to carry out its safety mission? What would be your approach to NHTSA's role in roadway safety?

**Answer: Yes, I agree on the need for strong, qualified leadership at NHTSA. If I am confirmed, I will work to ensure that NHTSA uses all its resources to make tangible improvements to road safety.**

4. I have been a consistent champion for NHTSA's public-private PARTS program which allows automakers to confidentially share safety data on emerging safety technologies with NHTSA through a third party that the agency would otherwise not have access to. If confirmed, do you commit to continuing this partnership and working with me to strengthen it?

**Answer: Yes. Balanced with privacy, this is an important role for NHTSA.**

5. In 2023, the Office of Automation Safety was created within NHTSA's Office of Rulemaking to work on issues relating to autonomous vehicles. Funding and fully staffing this office is key to building public trust and transparency and also working towards regulatory certainty and reasonable safeguards in the deployment of autonomous vehicles. If confirmed, do you commit to continuing to support the work of this office moving forward?

**Answer: Yes.**

6. Mr. Duffy, as Ranking Member of the Homeland Security and Government Affairs Committee, I have led efforts to ensure that federal, state and local law enforcement have the authorities and resources they need to counter nefarious Unmanned Aerial Systems – or drones – in our airspace. As a member of this committee, I have been supportive of commercial innovation in the drone space. For America to lead in this key technology we must have both security and innovation. If confirmed, will you commit to working with me and the inter-agencies responsible for securing our airspace from malign drone use while also pursuing responsible policies for commercial drone integration?

**Answer: Yes.**

7. In recent years, several very large companies have shifted much of their trucking fleets to subcontracted companies, who act as the employer of their drivers. While nothing in law prevents them from doing so, the scope of some of these subcontracted fleets makes it difficult for FMCSA to collect data and to track safety violations. For example, tight deadlines for delivery services can prompt drivers to speed or engage in risky driving to meet quotas, can have driver fatigue due to working extended hours, or can be distracted drivers due to checking their phones or managing package deliveries while driving. If confirmed, would you consider how FMCSA can collect high quality safety data related to these fleets?

**Answer: Yes.**

8. Mr. Duffy, I am concerned about a negative trend in the global recognition and adoption of U.S. vehicle safety standards – the Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards (FMVSS) – which DoT develops, implements, and (under the previous 3 administrations) promotes internationally. Without broad international recognition of U.S. standards, American automakers face barriers to exporting their products, limiting market access and their competitiveness in key auto markets. If confirmed, will you prioritize DoT's role in promoting other countries' acceptance of vehicles built to FMVSS so that American auto companies and their workers can export to those markets?

**Answer: Yes.**

**SENATOR TAMMY BALDWIN (D-WI)**

1. As a member of the Amtrak Board, will you support continued investment in Amtrak's infrastructure and growth?

**Answer: If I am confirmed, I will ensure that all Departmental programs are executed consistent with congressional mandates, to include rail infrastructure grant programs.**

2. What are your thoughts on the Essential Air Service (EAS) program? Will you support the elimination of EAS?

**Answer: I support EAS.**

3. One of FAA's most successful public-private partnerships is the contract tower program. More than 206 airports are in the program, including nine in Wisconsin. Will this program continue to be a high priority for DOT and FAA? How will DOT and FAA address staffing challenges facing contract tower airports under your leadership?

**Answer: If confirmed, I commit to continuing to support the contract tower program, to understanding the needs of those tower operators and airports, and to working with them to address any concerns related to personnel, guidance, or equipment, as appropriate.**

4. How would you address the pilot shortage, which has negatively impacted air service to small and rural communities across the country?

**Answer: If I am confirmed, it starts with implementing the provisions of the FAA Reauthorization Act of 2024 that are aimed at improving the pilot pipeline, such as the workforce grant program.**

5. Wisconsin has been hit hard by extreme weather and flooding that has washed out roads and damaged highways and bridges. As extreme weather becomes more frequent, states and local communities will need to build stronger and more resilient roads and bridges that can withstand the next storm or natural disaster. How will the Department of Transportation, under your leadership, integrate climate risk and resilience into decision-making and infrastructure investments?

**Answer: America's infrastructure is crumbling, and we need to ensure Americans are safe regardless of the mode of transportation. That's why I believe that we must invest in upgrading our infrastructure.**

6. The MARAD Small Shipyard Grant Program is a key tool for small shipyards to secure new infrastructure, such as cranes, port infrastructure, and other needs to maintain competitiveness. This program is a vital means to help modernize our country's small



shipyards, spur American manufacturing, and strengthen local economies. Do you support the Small Shipyard Grant Program?

**Answer: Yes.**

## **SENATOR TAMMY DUCKWORTH (D-IL)**

1. In 2023, 1,241 people died in car crashes in Illinois. Under your leadership, how would the Department of Transportation work to eliminate traffic fatalities and serious injuries?

**Answer: Safety is critical. We must find ways to reduce crashes on our roadways. If I am confirmed, I will work to support ongoing efforts across the Department to implement technology and programs to improve safety for all roadway users.**

2. The United States has long been the global leader in aviation. How would you ensure the Department of Transportation and FAA foster aviation safety and innovation internationally to protect Americans traveling abroad?

**Answer: While the Department lacks regulatory authority over non-U.S. carriers operating outside the U.S., we can continue raising the global safety standard for aviation. I would instruct the Department to continue this effort through appropriate channels with ICAO, continuing technical assistance to other aviation authorities, working with the FAA's international partners on improving aircraft design standards, and ensuring U.S. carriers hold their codeshare partners to the highest standards.**

3. The FAA Reauthorization Act of 2024 included several provisions that would improve the safe and dignified treatment of all air travelers, including passengers with disabilities. The Department of Transportation promulgated a final rule that was well received by the disability community and will improve the air travel experience of wheelchair users in particular. Enforcement of the law's requirements will be key to protecting the health and safety of disabled passengers who use wheelchairs. If confirmed, how will the Department of Transportation work with stakeholders, including airlines and passengers with disabilities, to implement the disability protections and accessibility improvements in the FAA Reauthorization Act of 2024?

**Answer: I appreciate your advocacy on behalf of passengers with disabilities. If I am confirmed, I commit to ensuring airlines follow the law and instructing the Department to take appropriate action if they fail to do so. I also commit to seeking the input of stakeholders as the Department works to implement the FAA's 2024 reauthorization.**

## **SENATOR BEN RAY LUJÁN (D-NM)**

1. Thank you for talking with me today about the importance of putting an end to drunk driving on our roadways. As you know, this issue is personal to me, and I am committed to working with you to get this rulemaking done by the statutory deadline of November 15, 2027. If confirmed, I understand that you will need some time to familiarize yourself with the Department's work on this issue. Do you commit to sending me an update in writing on the current status of the rulemaking, including the timeline to complete it, within 6 months of your confirmation?

**Answer: Yes.**

2. I appreciate you mentioning our shared priority that as vehicles become more technologically advanced, we must ensure that drivers' privacy is protected. Do you commit to issuing a rulemaking for the impaired driving provision of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law that protects drivers' privacy, ensuring that driver data is not collected, stored, shared, or sold?

**Answer: If I am confirmed, I will order the relevant agencies to implement the law as enacted by Congress.**

3. In addition to the HALT/RIDE Act and other key safety provisions, the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law established several funding programs to make our infrastructure safer, including the Safe Streets for All and the Railroad Crossing Elimination programs. Yes or no, do you support continuing to fund the safety-focused programs that were established by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law?

**Answer: If I am confirmed, the Department will administer all congressionally enacted programs consistent with existing law. Should Congress update those programs in future legislation, the Department will adapt to any changes, again consistent with the law.**

4. One of my priorities in the upcoming Surface Transportation Reauthorization package is ensuring that our Tribes and small local governments get their fair share from these programs. Far too often, I hear that lack of awareness and limited people-power prevent communities from going after this funding—including the communities that need it the most. Do you support making it easier for our Tribes and small counties and towns throughout the country to access key infrastructure and safety funding?

**Answer: I support all small, rural, and tribal communities being able to access key infrastructure and safety funding. I would appreciate the chance – if confirmed – to work with your office on ways to ensure that any roadblocks are removed, consistent with the Department's statutory authority.**

5. Will you commit to maintaining the Office of Tribal Government Affairs at DOT, formalizing Tribal Consultation requirements for Department officials, and holding regular Tribal Transportation Summits to increase awareness and technical assistance for Tribes so Tribes can access competitive agency funding?

**Answer: Yes.**

6. As you know, there is a significant shortage of air traffic controllers across our aviation system. At the end of Fiscal Year 2024, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) had 1,020 fewer Certified Professional Controllers (CPCs) than at the end of Fiscal Year 2012.

Last year, I was proud to work with my colleagues to include language in the FAA Reauthorization package that mandates maximum hiring of air traffic controller trainees for five years, so long as there is adequate funding. I appreciate that in your testimony you noted that you agree that we need more air traffic controllers. Will you commit to supporting the implementation of maximum hiring targets, including ensuring that there is sufficient funding to meet those targets?

**Answer: Yes.**

7. When we last spoke, I highlighted the importance of the Southwest Chief to connect New Mexico to the rest of the country. In recent years, champions that fight for the Southwest Chief and the rest of Amtrak's long-distance network, including my Senate Commerce colleague Senator Moran, have pushed back against efforts to slash service. Under the previous Trump Administration, there were efforts to move parts of the Southwest Chief's service to bus service. Yes or no, if confirmed do you commit to maintaining and expanding Amtrak's long-distance routes including the Southwest Chief?

**Answer: If I am confirmed, I will order the Department to comply with all relevant mandates contained in the law as authorized by Congress.**

8. Stakeholder engagement is critical as the programs and policies enacted by the Department of Transportation affect almost every single American's life. Last Congress, I introduced the DOT Victim and Survivor Advocate Act to ensure the Department has dedicated staff who are responsible for ensuring roadway safety crash victims, survivors, and their families are a part of Department decision-making. What is your plan to ensure the voices of victims and survivors and other safety stakeholders are included in USDOT safety programs and other department processes?

**Answer: If I am confirmed, I commit to ensuring a robust stakeholder outreach program to ensure safety concerns in particular are high on the radar screen with all Departmental offices and modes.**

9. Do you commit that the Department, under your leadership, will be responsive to victims, survivors, and their families?

**Answer: Yes.**

10. As of this hearing on January 15, 2024, it has been 856 days since we have had a Senate confirmed leader of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). Over the past 8 years, we have only had a confirmed administrator for 96 days. That is just 3% of the last 8 years. Over that 8-year period, more than 275,000 people have died on U.S. roads, including more than 3,415 in New Mexico. The NHTSA Administrator role is critical to improving roadway safety in New Mexico and across the country. As Secretary of Transportation, will you commit to working with the President to ensure a safety-focused NHTSA leader that can be successfully confirmed by the Senate is expeditiously nominated?

**Answer: Yes.**

11. Unfortunately, there are many examples of NHTSA missing statutory deadlines and failing to complete final rules in accordance with Congressional mandates. If confirmed, how will you ensure the agencies within the Department, including NHTSA, meet the deadlines and mandates set for them by Congress?

**Answer: If I am confirmed, the Department will prioritize meeting all deadlines and fulfilling all mandates prescribed by the law as enacted by Congress.**

12. Fraud is a growing problem in the transportation industry, with incidents such as cargo theft, identity theft, and financial scams causing significant losses and posing serious safety and consumer risks, as well as significant costs. These crimes threaten the reliability of supply chains, jeopardize food security, and are increasingly linked to transnational crime rings. They impact not only businesses but also workers and consumers who depend on safe, efficient, and reliable logistics systems. Will you commit to quickly using the Department's authority to help curb fraud in the industry and better safeguard the supply chain, safety and consumer interests?

**Answer: If confirmed, I will review what authorities the Department can use to address fraud issues, and I would particularly appreciate the ability to hear in detail from your office about specific concerns.**

13. As we discussed in our meeting, it is a priority for me to put an end to trucking fatalities—and in particular, underride crashes. In 2015, 16-year-old Riley Hein was killed in a collision with an 18-wheeler in Tijeras, New Mexico. Because the truck did not have side underride guards, Riley's car became wedged underneath it during the collision and was dragged for half a mile. Eventually, the car caught fire and Riley burned to death. Underride crashes are extremely dangerous, and often result in serious injuries or death. But they are preventable, and the technology to prevent them already exists. Do you commit to working with industry, advocacy, and other safety partners to address underride crashes and stop preventable deaths on our roadways?

**Answer: Yes.**

14. In addition, underride crashes are severely underreported. The Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS) is a nationwide census providing NHTSA, Congress and the American public yearly data regarding fatal injuries suffered in motor vehicle traffic crashes. However, the data is

often inaccurate due to differences on how each state collects and reports this data. For example, many states do not have an Underride/Override checkbox on their electronic State Police Crash Report Forms, making it difficult to accurately report these crashes and represent them in the system. When data is inaccurate, the Department is unable to make informed decisions about how to address fatalities and mitigate and prevent specific types of crashes, including underride crashes. If confirmed, do you commit to addressing inaccuracies in the FARS system and working with states to standardize reporting?

**Answer: If I am confirmed, I will work closely with the states to understand and improve upon existing reporting, including the FARS system.**

15. We are in the midst of a truck crash crisis. Nearly 6,000 fatal truck crashes occurred in the most recent year for which data is available, a 75% increase since 2009. New Mexico has one of the highest truck crash fatality rates in the country. If confirmed, what specific actions will you take to reverse this trend and make interstate trucking safer?

**Answer: If I am confirmed, I will work with other federal agencies, state/local/tribal governments, and stakeholders to identify infrastructure, technology, and process improvements to improve the safety of our roadways.**

16. It is increasingly important that consumers, aftermarket suppliers, and independent repair shops have access to the tools necessary to repair modern vehicles, while balancing concerns about cybersecurity and proprietary information. If confirmed as Secretary of Transportation, would you support promoting a robust ecosystem of vehicle repair that gives consumers choice?

**Answer: If I am confirmed, I will ensure that the Department works with all stakeholders, both in government and outside it, to pursue reform that can be a benefit to consumers.**

17. Currently, there are 168 recommendations from the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) to the Department of Transportation that are marked Open-Unacceptable. If confirmed, do you commit to reviewing these recommendations and ensuring the Department provides a sufficient and public response on what is being done to address these open recommendations?

**Answer: If I am confirmed, the Department will review all open recommendations issued by NTSB and ensure we prioritize safety with all Departmental actions.**

## **SENATOR JOHN HICKENLOOPER (D-CO)**

1. Colorado has key passenger rail service routes operated by Amtrak and other private railroad operators, and serves as a hub for the Mountain West. In recent years we have seen how key rail service is to travel, tourism, and our growing economy. DOT has awarded funding through the Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI) program to support safer freight rail traffic and invest in passenger rail. If confirmed, how will you ensure the Department of Transportation passenger rail projects increase mobility for passengers while maintaining high levels of safety and on-time service performance?

**Answer: If I am confirmed, the Department will continue to execute on the grant programs as authorized by Congress – including CRISI.**

2. In April 2024, the Colorado Department of Transportation discovered a significant crack in the high-strength steel support structure of the Blue Mesa Bridge during a routine inspection, prompting its immediate closure. This critical infrastructure failure left rural, mountainous communities in Southwest Colorado effectively cut off from essential services. We appreciate the Department of Transportation's investments from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, providing over \$5 billion to our state, and know that critical projects in our state, including the Blue Mesa Bridge, will continue to benefit from this investment. If confirmed, will you continue to invest the funding included in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law on critical infrastructure projects, including the Blue Mesa Bridge project, to receive necessary funding to restore connectivity and support the needs of Colorado's rural communities?

**Answer: If I am confirmed, underserved rural communities will be a particular priority for infrastructure dollars. I look forward to learning more from your office about the Blue Mesa Bridge and how the Department may be able to assist.**

3. It is clear the United States needs to quickly modernize our infrastructure, technology, and grow our workforce to maintain safety across the National Airspace System (NAS). In Colorado, several airports like Northern Colorado Regional Airport (FNL) located in rural communities are part of the Federal Contract Tower Program or are pursuing establishing a Remote Tower system once technology vendors are certified by the Federal Aviation Administration. An airport's location in a rural or urban area should not compromise the level of safety and efficiency an airport can provide passengers. If confirmed, will you commit to taking all necessary steps to ensure:

- (1) Airports' air traffic control personnel needs are fulfilled under the Federal Contract Tower Program? And;
- (2) Airports receive clear communication from the FAA on the status of testing for technologies seeking certification under the Remote Tower Pilot Program?

**Answer: Yes to both.**

4. Impaired or distracted driving can cause significant accidents, leave survivors with lifelong injuries or trauma, and even be fatal. Under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, Congress directed the Department of Transportation to initiate several rules to incentivize auto manufacturers to install new detection or safety technologies in an effort to increase safety and reduce avoidable accidents from occurring. Unfortunately, only 4 out of 11 Congressionally-mandated

rulemakings from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law have been completed. Congress also mandated a study between the Departments of Transportation, Justice, and Health & Human Services to identify specific barriers that prevent the research of marijuana-impaired driving. If confirmed, what steps will you take to increase research and develop safety standards to prevent marijuana-impaired driving? And how would you ensure the Department of Transportation quickly implements required safety rulemakings it has yet to complete?

**Answer: If confirmed, I will work with all relevant Departmental offices and modes to determine the current status of the research that can support efforts to address impaired driving.**

5. The aviation sector has fallen victim to significant disruptions to air travel due to malfunctions in information technology systems of U.S. airlines. With proper investment, rigorous oversight, and routine maintenance, Americans can reach their destinations on time and without unnecessary delays. If confirmed, how would you work with U.S. airlines to ensure they take the necessary measures within their control, such as IT modernization and thorough planning, to prevent future disruptions to air travel?

**Answer: If I am confirmed, I will instruct the Department's staff, including at FAA, to work with airlines to determine immediate and ongoing steps to promote IT modernization and cybersecurity improvements.**

6. In 2024, the FAA approved 156 licensed launches into space. As stated in your questionnaire to this Committee, the growth and competitiveness of the United States' aerospace sector is key for economic growth and is a national security imperative. We introduced the bipartisan SPACEPORT Act to provide dedicated infrastructure funding for licensed and emerging spaceports such as the Colorado Air and Space Port and across the United States to remain at the forefront with modern infrastructure. The SPACEPORT Act accomplishes this goal by revitalizing the FAA's Space Transportation Infrastructure Matching (STIM) Program. Will you commit to working with us to ensure the STIM Program is reauthorized by Congress with sufficient funding to support the needs of U.S. spaceports?

**Answer: Ultimately Congress holds the decisions to reauthorize. The Department will be a resource in that process on any questions or data needs.**

7. The growth of space launches benefits our global competitiveness and fulfills key national security objectives. The increasing pace of space launches and dynamic nature of launch windows, however, can be impacted by factors such as weather and space launch system malfunctions. This can impact the general and commercial aviation sector due to certain airspace becoming temporarily inaccessible. The FAA Reauthorization Act included funding for the FAA to expedite its development, acquisition, and deployment of technology to integrate space launch and reentry data directly onto air traffic controller displays. If confirmed, how will you ensure the general and commercial aviation communities have the necessary information they need to effectively plan service routes and avoid delays from space launch and reentry activities?

**Answer: I will follow the law as set out in the FAA reauthorization.**

8. The Department of Transportation (DOT) and Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) oversee bleeding edge technological innovations that will transform aviation for passengers. Supersonic aviation, once fully tested and operational, has the potential to dramatically shorten long-distance



domestic and international travel for passengers. The International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) is convening international partners to examine the testing and safety frameworks needed to foster growth in the supersonic aviation industry, including by reducing aircraft noise during takeoff and landing. If confirmed, how will you ensure the DOT, FAA, and U.S. stakeholders have their views on supersonic aviation properly represented before international bodies such as ICAO?

**Answer: The FAA has been a leader in aviation globally since its inception and it is important that we use our experience and aspirations to push forward aviation innovation home and abroad. ICAO is one such venue where we need to continue to provide input, influence, and remain involved. If I am confirmed, I commit to supporting efforts to ensure the U.S. remains closely engaged.**

## **SENATOR JOHN FETTERMAN (D-PA)**

1. Pennsylvania communities have made important progress toward returning passenger rail service to Pennsylvania. I'm especially excited about the Schuylkill River Passenger Rail Authority (which would serve Reading, Pottstown, and Phoenixville) and the Scranton to New York rail service. Expanded rail service is a transportation and economic development issue for these communities. The Reading and Scranton rail projects are currently moving forward thanks to the Corridor ID program and will need future capital grants through CRISI and FSP to get across the finish line. How will you support ongoing passenger rail efforts begun under the prior administration?

**Answer: If I am confirmed, the Department will continue to execute on all infrastructure programs consistent with the law as enacted by Congress.**

1a. Would you support continued funding for passenger rail capital grants in the next surface transportation bill?

**Answer: If I am confirmed, the Department will continue to execute on all grant programs consistent with the law as mandated by Congress. Any future legislation enacted by Congress will be similarly upheld by the work of the Department.**

2. After a Norfolk Southern train derailed on the border of Pennsylvania and Ohio, Vice President-Elect Vance and I worked with our colleagues to introduce the Railway Safety Act to prevent similar tragedies. In your nomination hearing, you indicated that you would stand by the Federal Railroad Administration's rule requiring two crewmembers on freight rail trains. Will you support the Railway Safety Act and its other provisions if you are confirmed as DOT Secretary?

**Answer: I will work with Congress and all stakeholders to find ways to improve safety. On the particular legislation, because it has been a priority of the incoming administration, I want to have a discussion with President Trump and Vice President-Elect Vance after they are sworn in.**

3. Transit is essential to so many Pennsylvanians. While preventing the fiscal cliff and improving service is paramount, I'm also concerned about potential cuts to construction funds. There are major projects coming down the pike in PA, the largest being Philadelphia's Roosevelt Boulevard transit proposal, which would be a huge deal for the city and the region. Will you support cuts to transit capital programs or decreases in the federal match under New Starts?

**Answer: If confirmed, I will ensure that all existing programs are executed by the Department consistent with congressional mandates. Any future changes to law as enacted by Congress will likewise find the Department ready to act in support of the law.**

3a. Will you continue to work with SEPTA, PRT, rabbitransit, and the other transit agencies in Pennsylvania on their federally funded bus and rail car grants and capital projects?

**Answer: Yes.**

3b. You've expressed your interest in reducing permitting delays for major projects. How would you improve construction timelines for transit projects in older cities like Philadelphia?

**Answer: If confirmed, I will make permitting reform a top priority for infrastructure solutions. I appreciate you flagging that different communities may have different abilities when it comes to improving the process. I would like to work with your office on ways that we can speed up project delivery in each and every community in your state and across the several states.**

4. I was glad to hear you discuss the importance of roadway safety in your testimony and during the hearing. Pennsylvania communities have received more than \$100 million through the Safe Streets for All grant program. Many small and rural communities in the commonwealth have shared their need for the program to continue, as a street safety and economic development investment. Nationwide, localities applied for three times the amount of funding available – it's clear that other levels of government have not been investing in these smaller street and roadway

projects. Would you support any version of this program in a surface transportation reauthorization?

**Answer: If I am confirmed, the Department will continue to administer the Safe Streets and Roads for All grant program as set out by Congress in the law. We will implement that mission using whatever tools Congress authorizes in any future legislation.**

### **SENATOR LISA BLUNT ROCHESTER (D-DE)**

1. As I shared with you in the hearing, the federal government should be doing everything it can to support Delaware State University's (DSU) premier aviation bachelor's program. Amidst critical pilot shortages, DSU, the only HBCU in Delaware, equips students with the skills and training they need for successful careers in the aviation industry.

Will you commit to visiting DSU's program to see firsthand the groundbreaking work they are doing?

**Answer: Yes**

2. As Secretary, how do you plan to partner with HBCUs like DSU to address aviation industry job shortages and support their innovative program?

**Answer: If I am confirmed, I plan to continue the FAA's support of existing programs which are training the next generation of aviation professionals. Institutions like DSU, other HBCUs, and all institutions of higher learning can be valued partners for these programs.**

3. As we discussed, many of America's rural and coastal communities do not have adequate access to public transportation. That is why I am working to restore rail access to and from central and southern Delaware. Will you support additional funding for the Corridor ID program in the next Surface Transportation Reauthorization?

**Answer: If I am confirmed, the Department will abide by all program mandates contained in legislation enacted by Congress. We will abide by all future congressional enacted legislation, as well.**

4. Will you seek funding cuts for our existing passenger rail infrastructure, including Amtrak and SEPTA?

**Answer: If I am confirmed, the Department will abide by all program mandates contained in legislation enacted by Congress. We will abide by all future congressional enacted legislation, as well.**

5. A topic we discussed in my office was the Reconnecting Communities Program. I helped author this program. During the 1950s and the immediate decades to follow, the construction of the Interstate Highway System and other federally sponsored infrastructure and urban renewal projects divided and tore through low-income neighborhoods and communities of color. These intentional planning decisions, with little public input, forever changed the urban fabric of towns and cities like Wilmington, Delaware, where the racial and socioeconomic divisions resulting from these projects persist today. Will you commit to continuing the Department's work to rectify the harm caused by federal infrastructure projects that divided our communities and reduced economic opportunities?

**Answer: If I am confirmed, the Department will follow the law as set out by Congress and work to improve safe mobility and connectivity for all communities.**

6. Will you support additional funding for the Reconnecting Communities Program to address this legacy?

**Answer: If I am confirmed, the Department will continue to administer all programs consistent with the law as enacted by Congress. Any future legislation enacted by Congress will likewise receive the full engagement of the Department.**

7. The domestic auto industry has spent billions of dollars tooling up to compete in the global EV revolution thanks to investments and commitments made by the United States. If we don't continue to support the US auto industry, Chinese car manufacturers will enthusiastically fill the

gap as the world moves toward EVs. How will you approach this issue so that the US auto industry can compete globally in the EV market?

**Answer: I believe in consumers having a choice with respect to which vehicles they purchase. We will promote a robust marketplace for all vehicle types without preference to one specific type, enhancing the competitive edge and a diversified market for the United States.**

8. Mr. Duffy, the U.S. commercial space launch and reentry industry continues to grow at a significant rate each year. The FAA has an important role to play both in timely licensing but also increasingly in supporting the infrastructure necessary to support these space transportation activities. For example, the FAA-licensed commercial Mid-Atlantic Regional Spaceport at Wallops Island on the Eastern Shore of Delaware, Maryland and Virginia is America's busiest spaceport outside of the two Space Force run launch sites in Florida and California.

Will you commit to directing the FAA to follow through on its statutory direction from Congress to invest in spaceport infrastructure?

**Answer: If I am confirmed, the Department, including FAA, will certainly follow through on congressional dictates with respect to all infrastructure, including spaceport infrastructure.**

## **SENATOR ANDY KIM**

In your testimony, you highlighted the importance of safety on the roads, noting the 40,000 lives lost in roadway accidents each year. One of the most exciting areas of development today is autonomous vehicles, but we still do not have a binding safety framework to regulate them. Will you commit to developing a binding safety framework for AVs that does not compromise the safety of American citizens on the road?

**Answer: I will work with the Administrator and experts in NHTSA to develop a framework for AV regulation that promotes safety and allows for innovation.**

In recent years, the Department of Transportation has rolled out tools to enhance customer service-style governance, including an Airline Customer Service Dashboard that provides important information regarding fee-free family seating, airline cancellation commitments, and more. Will you commit to continuing to improve the customer service relationship the Department of Transportation has with Americans, and sustain these efforts?

**Answer: I will work to ensure that the Department uses its authorities to promote aviation consumer protection in a manner consistent with the law.**