

Senator Wicker, Ranking Member Cantwell, and distinguished Members of this Committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. Thank you all for arranging this hearing consistent with public health guidance. Thank you also to the President for nominating me to serve as the Inspector General of the Department of Transportation. It is a profound honor. I'd also like to thank Senator Young of my home state of Indiana for his words of introduction. Our great Hoosier State always remains the place I long to see and be.

I am likewise grateful for the support of my family, friends, and colleagues, especially my wife, Miran, a naturalized U.S. citizen who came fearlessly to this country as an adult to study accounting and realize her dreams. She inspires me every day and has made me the luckiest person I know. I would also like to thank our two children, Aaron and Lev, who bring so much curiosity and joy to my life. I am so proud to be the father of each of you.

At an early age, I learned that public service is a high calling and have aspired to heed that call. My father, a lawyer, was a leader in fighting to protect the civil rights of institutionalized persons. His father was an accountant known for his generous assistance to the underserved in the community. My mother began her career as a librarian before becoming an expert on emerging technologies, education, and training. And her father, who we called "Zeyde," landed on the beaches of Normandy and fought his way into the heart of Germany with the Allied advance. My step-parents, Steve Haskin and Katherine Soskin, have likewise been important influences for many decades.

My career in public service has also been inspired by mentors along the way. I wish I had the time to recognize them all today for the roles they have played. Judge Paul Diamond, who served as an Assistant District Attorney and counsel to Senator Arlen Specter prior to his judicial service, instilled in me the values of a public servant. Peter Wells, a cornerstone of the Williams College faculty, taught me that a good leader actively seeks ideas for improvement from every source

imaginable. And Jane Keller, my childhood chaperone, taught me life lessons about graceful living and overcoming hardship, and inspired my appreciation for the inherent value of all people and their creation in God's image. I also remember with gratitude the influence of the many terrific educators at Park Tudor School in Indianapolis, at Little Flower Montessori (now called Montessori Academy at Edison Lakes) in Mishawaka, at Williams College, and at Harvard Law School, and would like to thank them collectively here.

Since entering Harvard Law School in 2002, I have been committed to public service, joining the Department of Justice as a career civil servant and representing the United States with independence and integrity for nearly fourteen years. Every day when I enter my office, I see there a book by Elliott Richardson, who served as Attorney General, Secretary of Defense, Secretary of Commerce, and Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare. In his book, I have highlighted his words reminding me that "there is no greater reward than the satisfaction of applying professional knowledge to the benefit of your fellow citizens." This daily inspiration renews my appreciation for the great honor and privilege that I have in serving the people of the United States. This is what brought me to the Department of Justice and it is why my path has brought me to this hearing today, at which I aspire to continue to serve the people by providing oversight of the Department of Transportation with independence and without fear or favor.

As a litigator with the Federal Programs Branch of the Civil Division, I provide leadership in a vast array of matters, representing agencies from across the entire Executive Branch in legally difficult, high-stakes, and politically-sensitive lawsuits that affect the lives of millions of Americans or involve hundreds of millions of dollars of taxpayer funds. Managing many of these cases at one time as a generalist, one of my core skills is digging deeply into the complex details of new statutes, programs, and factual situations to quickly understand the issues and to objectively assess the challenges they entail. Law enforcement agencies are among my most important clients, and my practice involves leading

cross-functional teams, directing factual investigations, and communicating orally and in writing with many types of stakeholders. Throughout my career across three administrations, I have upheld the highest standards of professionalism of the Department of Justice.

These are all skills that will lend themselves directly to my successful tenure as Inspector General of the Department of Transportation. My experience working across government agencies has led me to recognize the critical role of the Inspector General in each agency in combating waste, fraud, and abuse and advancing efficiency and effectiveness in the delivery of government programs. An IG should be, like me, a leader passionate about upholding public confidence in our federal institutions and sustaining our democracy by ensuring accountability and thereby delivering the results the public expects from their government. As IG, I will provide oversight to the Department and ensure that core DOT values are upheld, including safety for the traveling public and efficiency in the Department's programs to sustain and improve the arteries of public prosperity.

Beyond my experience and dedication to public service, I bring to the job of Inspector General a trained, fresh eye accustomed to looking at complex situations and establishing priorities, a vital skill in an office that routinely initiates new audits and investigations to safeguard taxpayer funds and to ensure that the Department adheres to the letter of the law and the established will of Congress. I would be honored to lead the Office of Inspector General and its staff of talented, career civil servants in accordance with Congress's commands of independence and objectivity. If confirmed, I will act with integrity and be honest and impartial in continuing the office's work. My team and I will use the tools established by Congress in the IG Act to provide accountability, promote transportation safety, and enhance public confidence while maintaining the Office's high standards of clear, timely, and transparent communications with you, the rest of the Congress, and the public.

Thank you again for this opportunity to be considered by the Senate and to appear before you. I sincerely appreciate your time and I look forward to answering your questions.