

Statement of Todd Inman
Nominee to be a Member of the National Transportation Safety Board
Before the
U.S. Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation
United States Senate
12/07/2023

Chair Cantwell, Ranking Member Cruz, and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today.

It is an honor to be nominated by President Biden and supported by Leader McConnell to serve as a member of the National Transportation Safety Board.

I would like to begin by thanking my wonderful wife Ann Duncan Inman who is here with us today and all my friends and colleagues in the audience and watching remotely.

I am a proud native of Calvert City, Kentucky. When I was growing up, the town had a population of less than 3,000 people and only two stop lights. My mother was a schoolteacher who taught me the value of education. My father began his career as a union ironworker hanging steel on bridges that still transport hundreds of thousands of people safely ever year. My parents taught me the value of hard work. I am so thankful to both of them.

Unfortunately, my parents both passed in the last year. While they are not here physically, I know they are looking down and beaming with pride.

After graduating college one of my first jobs was a claims specialist at State Farm—the largest property and casualty insurer in the United States. I could never have imagined that job would be the beginning of a career in public safety, setting the path for me to be sitting here before you today. I spent six years investigating accidents, fires, and fraud. For three of those years, I worked in the special investigative unit and specialized in the investigation of fire origin and cause. I was a certified expert in state and federal court and became an instructor for the National Fire Academy teaching regional delivery of arson detection for first responders. I served on the national catastrophe team, managed litigation, and supervised teams of adjusters, law firms and outside experts.

I went on to manage my own insurance agency for seventeen years. I am proud to say that it was named one of the top 50 out of 17,000 in the country. I handled over a thousand automobile accidents: hundreds of homeowners' claims and numerous natural disasters. To say I understand the grief of those who have been involved in a transportation accident is an understatement. I often was their first call and in many cases I was on the phone with them before first responders arrived.

I joined the United States Department of Transportation as the director of operations in 2017. I quickly rose from director of operations to the Department's deputy chief of staff and then chief of staff to the Secretary of Transportation.

Above all else, my four years at DOT were focused on the Department's number one priority: safety. At DOT, I led the security response and intelligence division, which tracks over 17,000 transportation incidents annually. During this time, the department worked closely with the NTSB on many significant accidents including Amtrak derailments, the collapse of the I-85 bridge in Atlanta, the Florida International University bridge collapse, and the Boeing 737 Max grounding and ungrounding.

These events gave me a direct view into NTSB investigations and how safety recommendations are derived and implemented. One example is Positive Train Control which the Federal Railroad Administration implemented during my tenure. The NTSB had been recommending Positive Train Control for 30 years, and thanks to the hard work of the NTSB and others at DOT, it is now a reality.

After leaving DOT, I was confirmed unanimously and on a bipartisan basis by the Florida Senate as the Secretary of Management Services.

As Secretary, I oversaw 1,000 full time employees and a one billion-dollar budget. Beyond being responsible for the safety of Florida state workers in over 12 million square feet of office space, I signed and began implementation of the most comprehensive update ever procured to the state law enforcement radio system—this is the system that first responders rely upon to do their important safety work. I also led two of the national response framework divisions for emergency services which handled communications and logistics.

Transportation disasters are devastating for victims and families, and they can raise public concern about the safety of our transportation system. My career has given me decades of experience in investigating crashes and disasters along with responding to transportation incidents, and supporting victims and families as they recover.

The NTSB and its dedicated workforce are the international gold standard for transportation safety. If confirmed, I would use my experience to help NTSB continue that legacy.

I would like to thank everyone on the Committee for considering my nomination, and I look forward to your questions.

