

**Testimony of Alvin Brown
Nominee to be a Member of the National
Transportation Safety Board
Before the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science,
and Transportation**

June 21, 2023

Chair Cantwell, Ranking Member Cruz, and Members of the Committee, I am honored to appear before you today as the nominee to become a Member of the National Transportation Safety Board. I am grateful to President Biden for selecting me to serve in this important role.

I want to begin by thanking my wonderful wife of thirty years – Santhea – and my two sons – Joshua and Jordan – for their love and support. My wife Santhea is here with me today, and my sons are watching today’s hearings from home.

My passion for public service is inspired by my early life experience. My wonderful mother raised five children by herself, and I had a loving grandmother who instilled values of community service, faith, and hard work. I worked full-time at Winn-Dixie, initially as part of a stock crew and eventually become a meat-cutter, to pay my way through school and became the first member of my family to graduate from college.

Early on in my career, a great deal of trust and responsibility was placed on me as a senior member of the White House leadership team under President Bill Clinton and Vice President Al Gore. As Vice President Al Gore's Senior Advisor for Urban Policy, and Vice Chair of the White House Community Empowerment Board, I advised the President and Vice President on a wide range of domestic issues, including community revitalization, job creation, new business development and affordable housing. As Executive Director of the White House Community Empowerment Board, I led the Administration's \$4 billion community empowerment initiatives. The highly successful programs revitalized impoverished urban and rural communities and generated unprecedented levels of public-private partnerships resulting in over \$10 billion in private investments. I also served as Senior Advisor to the late Commerce Secretary Ron Brown, focusing on base redevelopment, and I served as Senior Advisor at the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). At HUD, I oversaw the Department's \$100 million disaster recovery initiatives, and led an overhaul of the Department's disaster response effort.

In 2011, I made history as the first-ever Black elected Mayor of Jacksonville, Florida, which is the 12th largest city in the United States, comprised of 840 square miles with urban and rural communities. I was responsible for over 7,500 city employees and managed an annual budget of over \$1.6 billion dollars. Jacksonville has one of the largest ports in the United States, and as mayor I led successful partnership efforts to modernize and improve safety at JAXPORT, including the Harbor Deepening Project, the Mile Point Navigation Fix, and the construction of a state-of-the-art Intermodal Container Transfer Facility.

As Mayor, I also launched a six-month campaign to improve pedestrian and bicycle safety in Jacksonville. The coalition for the initiative included the City Council, the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office, the Jacksonville Transportation Authority, Duval County Public Schools, the Florida Department of Transportation, and the Florida Highway Patrol. The Federal Highway Administration had selected Jacksonville as a Pedestrian Focus City, and the initiative sought to improve Jacksonville's then-current status as one of the most dangerous US cities for pedestrians and bicyclists.

Additionally, during my term as Mayor I was responsible for the appointment of multiple Board members to the Jacksonville Aviation Authority, Jacksonville Port Authority, and Jacksonville Transportation Authority.

If confirmed by the Senate to become a Member of the National Transportation Safety Board, I would look forward to supporting the Board's mission: Making transportation safer by conducting independent accident investigations, and advocating for safety improvements.

The NTSB's mission is a deeply personal one for me. On October 26, 1995, my grandparents Tillman and Elizabeth Brown were involved in a crash while riding in a van along interstate highway I-95 South near Manning, South Carolina. The van hit something in the middle of the road, and hydroplaned. Due to a major defect in the van's design, the doors opened during the crash and the occupants were thrown out of the vehicle. Both of my grandparents and an uncle were killed as a result. This is a loss I feel deeply to this day.

- I would like to thank the Committee for considering my nomination this morning, and I look forward to answering your questions.
- Thank you.

