

Testimony of John Porcari
Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation
May 19th, 2009

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Hutchison, and members of the Committee: It is both a personal and professional honor to have been nominated by the President for the position of Deputy Secretary of the United States Department of Transportation and to appear before you today.

If confirmed, I pledge to you that I will work enthusiastically and diligently every day to support Secretary LaHood and the talented professionals of the Department of Transportation.

I would like to introduce my wife Heidi, my children Emily, James, Anna, John, and Julia; my Dad Jim and his wife Nancy; my sister Lieutenant Commander Jinny Keough, my brother Jim and his wife Vicky, my brother Charles and his wife Jennifer, and my cousin Lieutenant Colonel Van Oporp.

The Department's mission of ensuring the safe and efficient movement of people and goods has never been more important than it is today. Safety has been, and must continue to be, the top priority of the Department. In addition, virtually every element of our transportation system faces daunting capacity constraints. Our transportation system is essential to the long-term prosperity of the United States and must also play a key role in advancing important policy goals such as livable communities, energy conservation and climate change. We also face unprecedented challenges in maintaining our existing infrastructure while simultaneously building a true multi-modal transportation system that will serve the varied needs of our communities. I am confident that, together, we have the ability to successfully address these challenges. If confirmed, I look forward to working with Secretary LaHood and the excellent team that he has assembled.

Having served two tours at a state-level in Maryland DOT from 1999-2003 and 2007 until today, I have had the opportunity to manage an agency that uniquely incorporates all of the transportation modes under one roof—highways, transit, aviation, maritime commerce, passenger and freight rail, as well as a toll authority and motor vehicle administration. I have a keen sense of why we must have a balanced transportation system that meets the Nation's diverse needs. The large, complex public organizations that I have had the honor to serve in have provided me with the management, teamwork and leadership skills necessary to support the Administration, Secretary LaHood and the Department. Having completed significant highway projects like the Woodrow Wilson bridge replacement, major terminal improvements to BWI Thurgood Marshall airport, light rail, subway and commuter rail projects for the Maryland Transit Administration and new facilities for the Port of Baltimore, I understand the imperative of delivering projects on-time, on-budget. Likewise, the financial, human resources, procurement and administrative challenges of the department are ones that I bring a hands-on perspective to.

We must relentlessly focus on safety, accountability and transparency, while at the same time encourage innovation and collaboration. We must also coordinate with other federal agencies and departments.

Mr. Chairman, you, the members of the committee and staff have my commitment that I will work closely with you on our mutual goal of preserving and enhancing America's transportation system, one of the keystones of our quality of life.

I would be pleased to answer any questions. Thank you for your consideration of my nomination.