

Statement of Victor M. Mendez
Acting Deputy Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation

BEFORE THE
Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation
U.S. Senate

June 11, 2014

Chairman Rockefeller, Ranking Member Thune, and Members of the Committee, I appreciate the opportunity to be here today as you consider my nomination to serve as the next Deputy Secretary of Transportation.

It is an honor and a privilege to be recommended by Secretary Foxx and nominated by President Obama for this very important position. I appreciate the significant role this Committee plays in establishing transportation policy and, if confirmed, I pledge to you that I will work every day to support Secretary Foxx and the talented professionals of the Department of Transportation.

Transportation is a critical engine of the Nation's economy. Investments in the national air, highway, rail, port, and pipeline transportation networks over the country's history, and especially the last half-century, have been instrumental in developing the world's largest economy and most mobile society and this system continues to be essential to the long term prosperity of the United States.

While the Department's mission is to ensure the safe and efficient movement of people and goods, we face daunting challenges ahead. Safety will always be the top priority of the Department. In addition, virtually every element of our transportation system faces daunting capacity constraints and investment needs. 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 and economy now and into the future. Further, the Highway Trust Fund is in danger of becoming insolvent if we fail to take action.

I am mindful of these challenges. However, I am confident that, if confirmed I would be able to apply the skills I have developed over 30 years in the transportation arena, including five years as administrator of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), over seven years as Director of the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) and my hands-on transportation expertise to support Secretary Foxx and working with you to address these challenges head on.

During the President's first term, I had the privilege of serving as Administrator of the FHWA. The FHWA is the second largest mode in the Department with field offices in every state and an annual budget of almost \$40 billion. Early in my tenure as Administrator, I launched the Every Day Counts (EDC) innovation initiative that identified three areas for initial focus: Shortening Project Delivery, Accelerating Technology and Innovation Deployment, and the Going Greener initiative, which is focused on how the Agency can improve the environment through

improvements in the internal operations. EDC gives states a range of tools to streamline construction projects and make them more cost effective - all while drawing upon new and established technologies and working within current legal requirements. This very successful program has encouraged numerous innovative projects such as the "Slide-in" construction bridge, one of my favorites, and is an example of the type of leadership I would bring to bear as Deputy Secretary.

Prior to joining the Department, I served as the Director of ADOT. During my tenure as Director of ADOT we: 1) built the Regional Freeway System in the Phoenix area six years ahead of schedule, 2) delivered the statewide transportation construction program on time for the past eight years, and 3) continued to provide excellent customer service at all Motor Vehicle Division (MVD) field offices throughout the State. This was accomplished through innovative management strategies and solutions during a time of hyper-growth in Arizona, when demand for MVD services increased dramatically and the highway construction program doubled. I also led ADOT in implementing many innovations in the areas of funding and financing, technology, infrastructure, research, planning and internal operations, that resulted in improved agency operations and program delivery.

Chairman Rockefeller and Members of the Committee, thank you for your consideration and the opportunity to appear before you today. I am committed to working with you, the Administration, Secretary Foxx, and all transportation stakeholders to find ways to meet our Nation's transportation needs, and I look forward to your questions.