

**A Review of the President's Fiscal Year 2026 Budget Request for the Department of
Transportation
Testimony of Secretary of Transportation
Sean P. Duffy
Before the Senate Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing, and Urban Development
May 15, 2025**

Chairman Hyde-Smith, Ranking Member Gillibrand, and Members of the Subcommittee – thank you for inviting me to testify before you today. My aim over the course of this hearing is to provide you a sense of how building big, beautiful infrastructure is at the top of the President's priorities, and how we can work together on this bipartisan effort.

Our Department has already saved taxpayers more than \$9.5 billion in the President's first 100 days. Those savings include money pulled from projects tied up by wasteful DEI and climate requirements. We inherited an unprecedented backlog of over 3,200 awarded projects without signed grant agreements. Many of these projects dated back to 2022. The last administration was unorganized and unfocused as projects around the country were stalled by inaction, and inefficiency. No one is more frustrated with the inefficiencies of this process than I am. Currently there are 10-14 different systems to track the status of grants across the Department. Under my leadership, I am committed to consolidating all of this information into one dashboard so grantees and can see how our money is spent. I promise to ensure radical transparency to you all as well as the American people.

The Department of Transportation is one of the few non-Defense federal agencies to receive an increase in funding under the President's Budget for the Fiscal Year (FY) 2026. The reason is simple: the president wants to build. Our budget carefully focuses taxpayer resources on items critical to our most fundamental mission of safety and investing in transportation infrastructure. We have pushed forward with the approval of 405 grants totaling \$4.9 billion in the President's first 100 days. In total, the President's Budget requests \$26.7 billion in new discretionary funding for FY 2026, or \$1.5 billion more than FY 2025 enacted, about a 5.8 percent increase.

We do not take additional funds from hard-working taxpayers for granted in an era where government has become too big, too inefficient, and too wasteful. We have carefully planned for these dollars to fund urgent projects that once built, will serve future generations for decades.

Our budget requests \$18 billion in discretionary appropriations for the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), \$1 billion more than FY 2025 enacted. Recent tragedies such as the mid-air collision above DCA have demonstrated the need to refocus our agency on the core mission of safety. That's why we are increasing funding for the FAA. Specifically, the budget supports hiring and training 2,500 new air traffic controllers, revamping key air traffic facilities, and replacing antiquated radar systems with the latest technology.

The President has also expressed the revitalization of American shipbuilding as a central pillar of his Administration's plan to make America great again. Our budget provides the Maritime Administration (MARAD) \$596 million more than FY 2025 enacted. These funds will enable

MARAD to carry out the President's historic executive order for the creation of a golden age in shipbuilding. The request includes \$550 million to reinforce port infrastructure and \$105 million to resurrect neglected shipyards. The budget also boosts the President's infrastructure focus by providing an additional \$770 million for INFRA—the Nationally Significant Multimodal Freight & Highways Projects program. Finally, our budget makes a five-fold investment in rail safety and infrastructure by providing \$500 million in additional Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements Program (CRISI) funds.

There's so much more we can do together, and I look forward to working with Congress on unlocking what's possible through these historic investments to American infrastructure.