

**STATEMENT OF  
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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

**BEFORE THE**

**SUBCOMMITTEE ON TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION  
COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY  
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

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*DOT's Research and Development to Support the  
Department of Transportation's Strategic Goals*

Chairman Wu, Ranking Member Smith, and Members of the Subcommittee:

On behalf of Secretary Ray LaHood, I'd like to thank you for the opportunity to appear here today with my colleague Peter Appel to discuss the research and policy priorities for the U.S. Department of Transportation.

USDOT greatly appreciates the leadership this Committee has shown on transportation research and we value the guidance and oversight you have provided the Department over the years.

As this Committee has recognized, research is a critical component to accomplish the goals we all share of creating a national transportation policy that is transparent and accountable, data-driven, focused on achieving strategic outcomes and on maximizing the value of public investment.

Having had the opportunity to work on many key transportation bills during my 12 years as a staff member in the Senate, I know firsthand how important timely and targeted research is for Congressional decisionmakers.

As such, the Office of Policy has made it a top priority to provide accessible and relevant research to leaders in Congress, the Administration, and the larger national transportation community. This is particularly important as we consider the next

surface transportation bill at a time that our Nation's transportation system faces profound economic, social and environmental challenges. Our transportation system also faces unprecedented fiscal challenges, with dedicated revenue sources no longer adequate to maintain our existing infrastructure or to fund the future investments we will need.

At USDOT we are currently developing our 2010-2015 Strategic Plan, which will outline our strategic goals and priorities. The Plan is not yet complete, but it will focus on key priorities that Secretary LaHood has publicly articulated – namely, creating a National transportation system that improves safety and public health, fosters livable communities, promotes a state of good repair and long-term economic competitiveness, while achieving environmental sustainability.

This Administration believes that we must create a safe, truly multimodal transportation system that provides the traveling public and U.S. businesses with safe, convenient, affordable and environmentally sustainable transportation choices.

Improving safety is the top priority of USDOT. Secretary Ray LaHood has tasked all DOT employees with fostering a safety culture in our daily work and encouraging our partners, stakeholders and the public to redouble their efforts to reduce transportation-related fatalities and injuries. As this Committee knows, we conduct and support significant research in the safety area, which Administrator Appel will describe in more detail.

Creating livable communities that provide residents with affordable transportation options is another key USDOT priority. DOT has formed an interagency livability partnership with the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to integrate transportation, housing, economic development and environmental planning and research. This innovative, cross-cutting effort seeks to promote increased access to jobs, school, health services, and other activities for our citizens while improving the quality of life in their communities.

The U.S. must also maintain our existing infrastructure in a state of good repair. Our nation has built one of the world's most extensive and productive transportation systems, representing trillions of dollars of public and private investment. It is essential that we adequately maintain and modernize this vast, existing infrastructure to maximize its reliability, capacity and performance, to reduce operational and replacement costs and to extend the system's useful life.

We also seek to achieve the maximum economic impact from our transportation investments and lay the groundwork for long-term economic growth and prosperity. It is essential to determine which investments yield the greatest benefits to the transportation network especially during this period of economic hardship and with difficult budget choices occurring at all levels of government.

Finally, the Obama Administration is committed to a comprehensive national energy and environmental policy that emphasizes reducing carbon emissions and consumption of fossil fuels as well as protecting and enhancing natural resources. Thus, USDOT is committed to advancing transportation policies and investments that reduce energy use and foster protection of critical watersheds and ecosystems. Our work on livable communities also helps us move towards clean energy and sustainable environment.

Clearly achieving these ambitious priorities will require USDOT to accelerate the rate at which we convert research into outcomes. Too often in the past, we have done a good job of funding cutting-edge research, but have not done a good enough job of making sure that the results of that research were translated by policymakers into better, safer, more efficient transportation. We intend to focus on the entire innovation process -- from research to policy development -- to make sure that the American people are getting their money's worth from the research that we support.

Thank you and I look forward to your questions.