

**Department of Transportation FY25 Budget  
Chairman Womack Opening Statement  
April 30, 2024**

The Subcommittee will come to order. Welcome to our first subcommittee hearing of fiscal year 2025 and my first hearing as Chairman of this Subcommittee. I'm deeply honored to lead this piece of the Appropriations Committee with potentially the most direct impact on each Congressional district across the United States, including my own.

Today, we welcome testimony from the Honorable Pete Buttigieg, Secretary of the Department of Transportation, on the Fiscal Year 2025 budget. Thank you, Mr. Mayor, for appearing before us today and for your service to this country. I know I've said it to you before, but as a former mayor myself, I appreciate that we have such a successful mayor at the helm of DOT.

The Department of Transportation is requesting \$25.5 billion in discretionary budget authority for fiscal year 2025. Coupled with the \$36.8 billion in advanced appropriations provided by the Infrastructure Investments and Jobs Act—the IIJA—and the nearly \$81 billion from the Highway Trust Fund, DOT is seeking \$143 billion in total resources.

In total, the IIJA provides \$184 billion in advance appropriations from 2022 to 2026. Let me remind you, these appropriations are under the jurisdiction of this Committee. As such, we will

continue to subject the IIJA appropriations to strong oversight as we develop the fiscal year 2025 bill.

Mr. Secretary, I look forward to working with you to prioritize our nation's vital infrastructure and transportation needs in Arkansas' Third District and across the country while safeguarding hard-earned taxpayer dollars. I know our work on this subcommittee impacts the safety, economic opportunity, and quality of life of every American, a duty I take seriously.

Even as we work to rein in excessive spending, let me assure you that safety will remain a top priority for this subcommittee as we prepare our 2025 bill. From the Francis Scott Key Bridge collapse to the East Palestine train derailment, to the close calls happening far too often at our airports, you can see the importance of safe transportation systems. We will continue to provide appropriate levels of support to DOT programs that ensure the safety of our skies, roads, and railroads.

I want to work with you, Mr. Secretary, to ensure that our states and localities are getting the most “bang for their buck” out of this infusion of federal support for infrastructure. We cannot expect these unprecedented levels of funding to continue in perpetuity—which means the grants getting delivered now need to be an effective use of taxpayer dollars. Burdensome 100-page applications and an immense web of new regulatory requirements is not helpful to grantees trying to get shovels in the ground.

I also want to ensure that the impacts of these unprecedented levels of investment continue to be felt by *all* districts around the country, not just the large urban areas. I recognize the mega

projects that have been needed for a long time in our big cities, but Arkansas' Third District and rural areas around this nation need a level playing field.

I look forward to your testimony today and working with you to ensure the Department can continue to deliver on its mission to ensure a safe and modern transportation system.

The jurisdiction of this subcommittee is one of the most unique of the Appropriations Committee, as its impacts are seen in every single Congressional District. As such, we have a history of bipartisanship that I look forward to continuing as we begin the FY2025 process.

I'd now like to recognize the Ranking Member from Illinois, Mr. Quigley, for his opening statement.

Thank you. We will now begin our questions. Each member will have five minutes for their questions and answers. When the timer turns yellow, you have one minute remaining.

Members will be recognized in order of seniority based on who is seated at the beginning of the hearing, going back and forth between parties.

First, I will recognize myself.