

TESTIMONY
THE HONORABLE PETER BUTTIGIEG
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BEFORE THE
APPROPRIATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE ON
TRANSPORTATION, HOUSING, AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT AND RELATED
AGENCIES
UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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Chairman Price, Ranking Member Diaz-Balart, and members of the Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to discuss the President’s Fiscal Year 2023 Budget request for the Department of Transportation.

I first want to thank the Members of Congress on both sides of the aisle who delivered the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) as well as the Fiscal Year 2022 Omnibus. Because of these historic investments, the Department is now in a much stronger position to help build the transportation future the American people need and deserve... one that is safer, more efficient, and more affordable for everyone, from families transporting kids to businesses moving goods. And we have acted urgently—and responsibly—to start delivering that.

We recently saw the dramatic collapse of a bridge in Pittsburgh, the emergency closure of the major I-40 Hernando de Soto bridge that connects Tennessee and Arkansas, and the closure or weight-limiting of so many bridges affecting communities across the country. In December, we were able to allocate the largest Federal Highway funding to states in decades, \$52.5 billion, to make roads and bridges safer, more modern, and more resilient so people can get where they need to go.

Another urgent priority for us is addressing the pandemic-driven supply chain disruptions and accompanying inflation, while acting to ensure our supply chains are resilient into the future. The steps we are taking include efforts to support truck drivers, supplement inland ports, and

modernize our port infrastructure – all to help move record volumes of goods more quickly and stem the rising costs of shipping. And it's showing results. The total number of container ships waiting for berths at U.S. ports has dropped by 35% since peaking in early February; employment for trucking rose in 2021 to its highest level since 1990; and grocery and drug stores have products in stock at almost the exact level as before the pandemic. We will continue to address issues wherever they arise – whether that's longer dwell times on U.S. freight rail, or the COVID-driven stops and starts in China, which we are monitoring closely.

Across our transportation systems, there is still much more to do to achieve our goals, from lowering costs to giving people back time in their day. In Fiscal Year 2023, we are now poised to build on early progress with a President's budget for the Department of Transportation that totals \$142 billion, including \$36.8 billion in advance appropriations provided by BIL in that year.

Let me give you a few highlights:

- Safety remains our top priority, and the budget includes funding to help address the crisis of deaths on America's roadways, as outlined in our National Roadway Safety Strategy. That includes \$3 billion for the Highway Safety Improvement Program.
- With \$4 billion for RAISE and the new Mega program, we will rebuild century old infrastructure and lay the groundwork for America to compete and win in decades ahead.
- With \$23.6 billion for the Federal Aviation Administration, we will further enhance aviation safety, combat the effects of aviation on the climate, and improve airport infrastructure.
- With \$4.45 billion in Capital Investment Grants, we will advance 15 major transit projects that shorten commutes, increase access to jobs, and reduce congestion on the road for millions of Americans.
- We will invest \$17.9 billion to reverse decades of underinvestment in intercity passenger rail and make fast, reliable train service available to more people.
- We will provide \$1 billion to build out a nationwide network of electric vehicle chargers, so that Americans in every part of the country have access to the lower monthly costs of electric vehicles. We will also begin implementing our ambitious new fuel efficiency

standards, which are projected to save the typical household hundreds of dollars in gas costs and prevent 2.5 billion metric tons of carbon dioxide from reaching our atmosphere.

- And to keep making progress on supply chains to help move goods faster and fight inflation, we will invest a total of \$680 million to modernize ports, \$3 billion to improve the roadways that carry the majority of America's freight, and a total of \$1.5 billion for CRISI grants to improve freight rail.

That's just a sample of the improvements the American people will experience when they drive, fly, ride – and shop, as enhancing our transportation systems directly helps lower the transportation costs of goods and services.

We understand that the tremendous opportunity we've been given to help modernize our country's infrastructure comes with a profound responsibility to use taxpayer dollars efficiently and wisely--and to make resources more accessible to state and local governments so they can build good projects.

This type of infrastructure transformation only happens at most once every generation, and it only happens if we work together. So I want to again thank you for demonstrating that democracies can deliver a better future for the people they represent--and for your work to ensure that the United States remains the global economic leader.

I look forward to taking your questions.