

**From:** Clarke, Mike (Appropriations)  
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**Cc:** Eckert, Josephine (Appropriations)  
**Subject:** DOT QFRs re: May 15th Secretary Duffy Hearing  
**Attachments:** DOT QFRs - Republican Submission.docx, DOT QFRs - Democrat Submission.docx  
**Importance:** High

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Good afternoon,

Please find attached the Questions for the Record from the May 15th hearing of the U.S Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies, titled “A Review of the President’s Fiscal Year 2026 Budget Request for the Department of Transportation.”

The Subcommittee requests responses to these questions within 30 business days, or no later than Monday, July 14th.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Thanks as always,

Mike

**Mike Clarke**

Majority Clerk

U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations

Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing

and Urban Development, and Related Agencies

(b)(6) (Direct)

**U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations  
Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies  
May 15, 2025**

**Questions for the Record Submitted to  
Secretary Sean Duffy, Department of Transportation  
from Chair Cindy Hyde-Smith**

**Question 1:** Mr. Secretary, many of my constituents are concerned about commercial truck drivers who lack English language proficiency. As a matter of safety, existing regulations state that commercial drivers must be able to speak, read, and write the English language sufficiently: to converse with the general public; to understand highway traffic signs and signals; to respond to official inquiries; and to make entries on reports and records. Unfortunately, previous Administrations have sought to minimize or ignore this law, which has likely contributed to unsafe roadway conditions for the traveling public. I applaud President Trump's recent Executive Order to enforce English proficiency requirements for commercial drivers, repeal previous regulations that diluted these standards, and strengthen enforcement of existing laws.

- Mr. Secretary, how do you propose to enforce this existing common-sense law with the resources requested in your budget, how will that improve public safety?

**Question 2:** Mr. Secretary, as you know, the trucking industry has estimated that the United States needs more than 80,000 additional drivers to meet the current demand. Achieving that goal requires world-class commercial driving schools that properly train the workforce. The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration is responsible for maintaining a registry of approved commercial driving schools. The purpose of the registry is simple: schools in good standing remain on the list while bad actors get removed. Unfortunately, I have heard from my constituents that the registry isn't doing its job, allowing unqualified schools to keep operating, misleading students, and compromising road safety.

- How does the budget request support DOT efforts to effectively maintain the registry and remove bad actors?

**Question 3:** Under the Biden Administration, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration has taken requirements in the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act and expanded them beyond the Congressional intent. An example of this is the significant emphasis being placed on equity and public participation and engagement in through the highway safety grant program. While it's important to involve communities in safety planning, the regulations established by the Biden Administration have gone well beyond statute and placed a significant burden on states. The requirements are diverting resources from the implementation of safety programs.

- How will you work with the states to find ways to reduce administrative red tape so that more of the money intended for safety programs can be put to work improving safety on our roadways?

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**Question 4:** Under the Biden Administration, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration has taken requirements in the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act and expanded them beyond the Congressional intent. An example of this is the regulatory requirements that were put in place that require law enforcement agencies that are partnering with states to conduct traffic enforcement, to conduct community collaboration efforts and collect demographic data on traffic stops. Burdensome regulations like these have diverted resources from the underlying safety mission and created roadblocks for law enforcement to conduct traffic enforcement to stop unsafe driving behavior.

- How will you work to streamline the requirements to remove these barriers?

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**Questions for the Record Submitted to  
Secretary Sean Duffy, Department of Transportation  
from Senator John Hoeven**

**Question 1:** As you know, the FAA has awarded the Hector International Airport nearly \$40 million for its Terminal Expansion Project through the Airport Infrastructure Grant (AIG) program. This past March was the 12<sup>th</sup> consecutive month of all-time high passenger activity at the airport. There is still much work to be done and another \$31 million in federal funding is needed to complete the project. With increasing demand for travel options created by continuous growth in the area, it's vital that North Dakotans are able to travel safely and efficiently throughout the country.

- Will you work with us to advance this project?

**Question 2:** As I'm sure you'll agree, it is of critical importance to make sure pilots and air traffic controllers have access to the mental health services they need, both for their own well-being and to ensure the safety of our skies for the American public. According to a survey conducted by Pilot Mental Health Campaign, 12.6 percent of pilots met the depression threshold, 4.1 percent reported suicidal thoughts, 78.6 percent felt worried about seeking health care, and 56 percent exhibited some form of "health care avoidant behavior." I will soon introduce legislation that would increase transparency, authorize funds to address the Federal Air Surgeon shortage and bring FAA regulations relating to mental health treatment and medication up to date to match current research and best practices.

- Can I have your commitment to work with us to address this important issue?

**Question 3:** Development of key infrastructure in tribal and rural communities plays a key role in providing access to health care, medical supplies, economic development, and commerce. Department of Transportation (DOT) grants like Strengthening Mobility and Revolutionizing Transportation, or SMART, have an important role supporting innovation in these communities. The SMART program is currently funding joint research by the University of North Dakota and Nueta Hidatsa Sahnish College's *MHA Nation Drone Project*. Under the *MHA Nation Drone Project*, both schools were able to successfully complete a series of proof-of-concept flights transporting medical supplies across Lake Sakakawea between Elbowoods Memorial Health Center in New Town, N.D., and Twin Buttes, N.D. Typically, people living in New Town would have to make a nearly two-hour drive to the health center to receive medication; however, the drone flights successfully demonstrated that medication can be delivered to remote communities in about 25 minutes. In addition to technological infrastructure, DOT also funds critical traditional infrastructure like roads, bridges, and airports. In North Dakota, the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe is administering a DOT planning grant for a proposed bridge over the Missouri River and celebrating the expansion of the Standing Rock Airport in Fort Yates.

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- Can you discuss how the department is supporting these types of innovative and important infrastructure projects through the FY26 budget?

**Question 4:** One of the FAA's most successful government/industry partnerships is the contract tower program. 265 smaller airports participate in this important air traffic safety program, including in Minot International Airport in North Dakota. These towers support Department of Defense flight training operations and military readiness, rural air service, general aviation, and flight schools all across the country. It's also important to note that contract towers account for approximately 30 percent of all tower operations in the nation, and that about 70 percent of contract controllers are veterans. The program also continues to get high marks from the DOT Inspector General.

- Will contract towers remain a high priority for the administration?

Staffing shortages continue to be a challenge throughout the industry, including contract towers.

- What measures can DOT/FAA and the industry undertake collaboratively to address staffing challenges at these towers?

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**Questions for the Record Submitted to  
Secretary Sean Duffy, Department of Transportation  
from Vice Chair Patty Murray**

**Question 1:** Secretary Duffy, in your written testimony you claim to have saved taxpayers \$9.5 billion in President Trump's first 100 days. This Committee asked your staff for the details on these supposed savings more than two weeks ago, but has received no response. I'm deeply concerned by the lack of transparency and accountability on what you are cutting and how it is impacting the communities in our states.

- Please provide the full details in writing to the Committee on what makes up the \$9.5 billion in cuts?

**Question 2:** Secretary Duffy, in your testimony you spoke of approving 405 grants totaling \$4.9 billion in President Trump's first 100 days. I understand that as part of these approvals your Department has re-evaluated each grant award announced under the previous Administration, and in some cases "de-scoped" the grant award, meaning you removed previously eligible activities that the recipient intended to use the funding for. If you are removing parts of a project, that leads me to assume you are also reducing the amount of funding a city, State, Tribe, or another entity was previously awarded. This Committee has asked your staff repeatedly for the details on the Department's "de-scoping", but again has received no response.

- Please provide a list of all competitive grant awards that were announced under the prior Administration but not yet obligated by January 20, 2025 that includes the following information for each award:
  - Modal administration,
  - Competitive grant program,
  - Project name,
  - Recipient name,
  - Amount originally awarded,
  - Amount approved for obligation,
  - If/how the scope of work has changed compared to the original announced award,  
and
  - Rationale for changing the scope of work.
- This detailed list should cover all competitive grants approved for obligation by the Department between January 20, 2025 and the date of receipt of this question.

**Question 3:** Each year when the Committee writes our appropriations bill we re-examine the staffing needs at each modal administration. We work to understand the needs and to provide sufficient funding to support critical safety missions and the day-to-day operations of the Department through specific salaries and expenses directed in our appropriations bill. However,

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to do this, we need cooperation from the Department on current staffing levels, as well as transparency on the needs. While I was heartened to hear your response to my colleague that you would hire more staff if you find a need, I'm concerned we do not know that the gaps are as a result of two rounds of the deferred resignation program, firing probationary employees, and more. This Committee has asked your staff numerous times for staffing details and to date you have only provided extremely high-level figures that provide no insight into how it is affecting one office or another, headquarters, or regional and local offices.

- Please provide the total number of people employed by the Department of Transportation as of the last pay period under the prior Administration and as of the date of receipt of this question. Please also break this total number of staff down by modal administration, office, headquarters, and regional/local offices.

**Question 4:** The FY 2025 Full-Year Continuing Appropriations and Extensions Act (Public Law 119-4) provides \$280 million for the FAA's Research, Engineering, and Development (RED) account. Funds within the RED account are authorized to be eligible for research to reduce noise and emissions from aircraft, and improve the efficiency of engines.

- Within the RED account, how much fund will you allocate for the FAA's Aviation Sustainability Center of Excellence on Sustainable Aviation Fuels (ASCENT) and the Center of Excellence for Joint Advanced Materials and Structures (JAMS)?

**Question 5:** Enforcement of pipeline safety rules has dropped to unprecedented lows under this Administration. Since January 20, 2025, according to PHMSA's Enforcement Transparency webpage, PHMSA has only initiated five cases against potential violators, which is a more than 90 percent drop from both the 91 cases PHMSA opened during the same period of time under the Biden Administration and the 68 cases PHMSA opened during the same period of time under the first Trump Administration. Meanwhile, the last two years have been the deadliest two-year period for pipelines in nearly 15 years.

- How does the Department explain the sudden drop in cases initiated by PHMSA?
- On January 23, 2025, PHMSA's Notice of Proposed Rulemaking on requirements for carbon dioxide and hazardous liquid pipelines was withdrawn as a result of President Trump's Presidential Memorandum titled "Regulatory Freeze Pending Review". What is the Department's plan to reissue this proposed rulemaking?

**Question 6:** On January 20, 2025, President Trump issued a Presidential Memorandum titled "Regulatory Freeze Pending Review" which directed agencies to immediately withdraw rules that had been sent to the Office of the Federal Register but not published in the Federal Register

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and to consider postponing rules that had been published in the Federal Register or issued in any manner but had not taken effect.

- Please list all DOT rulemakings impacted by this Presidential Memorandum, and their status as of the date of receipt of this question.

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**Questions for the Record Submitted to  
Secretary Sean Duffy, Department of Transportation  
from Ranking Member Kirsten Gillibrand**

**Question 1:** On May 2, 2025, the Department of Transportation terminated the five-year UTC grant agreements for seven UTCs. This included UTCs led by the University of California, Davis, the City College of New York, the University of Southern California, New York University, San Jose State University, the University of New Orleans, and Johns Hopkins University. The Department has claimed these UTCs were terminated because the awards no longer effectuate the program goals or agency priorities.

- Please provide a list of all research conducted by each of the seven UTCs, and identify which research activities were found to no longer effectuate the program goals or agency priorities.
- What does the Department intend to do with the remaining funds for these seven UTCs?
- Will these seven UTCs be given the opportunity to re-apply under a new NOFO?

**Question 2:** The Department recently released an Air Traffic Control modernization plan, which is particularly important for the congested airspace around JFK, LaGuardia, and Newark.

- How much funding are you requesting for this Modernization Plan?
- Why was the Modernization Plan not included in the FY 2026 skinny budget?
- What is the FAA doing to improve the telecommunications infrastructure at these airports which has caused tremendous delays in recent weeks?
- What other specific improvements does the Air Traffic Control Modernization Plan envision to reduce flight cancellations and delays for New Yorkers?

**Question 3:** On May 20, 2025, the FAA issued an interim order reducing flight arrivals and departures at Newark Liberty International Airport (EWR). The FAA proposed a limit of 28 arrivals and 28 departures per hour (total 56 operations per hour) during the ongoing construction period. The construction period is defined as the daily closure of Runway 4L/22R until June 15, 2025, and weekends from September 1, 2025, through December 31, 2025 from Friday at 11:00 p.m. through 5:00 a.m. on Sunday. Outside of the construction period, through the end of Summer 2025 scheduling season ending October 25, 2025, FAA proposes limit of 34 arrivals and 34 departures per hour (total 68 operations per hour).

- What information or analysis did the FAA use to determine the limit of 56 total operations per hour during the construction period and 68 total operations per hour outside of the construction period?
- What stakeholders did the FAA speak with during the delay reduction meetings?

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- Will you commit to providing the House and Senate Committees on Appropriations monthly briefings on the impact of these delay reductions on flight cancellations and delays as well as level of service and number of communities served by flights to EWR?

**Question 4:** The FY 2026 skinny budget makes no mention of funding for Amtrak, yet Amtrak funding has been a priority for members on both sides of the aisle. In New York, the Northeast Corridor and our State-Supported Routes are extremely important.

- Will you support the funding levels necessary to ensure Amtrak can operate all existing service lines on both the Northeast Corridor and National Network and not cut any service?
- In response to my colleague's earlier question on Amtrak, you contemplated how we could make the Northeast Corridor "faster" and pointed out that "the rest of the world has high-speed rail". In order to increase the speed of trains along the Northeast Corridor, significant investments in replacing infrastructure are required along with coordination between Amtrak, DOT, states, and commuter rail lines that also operate on the track. This work is underway thanks to the historic rail investments provided by Congress in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. Will you commit to DOT continuing the investments and coordinated support necessary to bring faster, more reliant Amtrak service to the Northeast Corridor?

**Question 5:** Building infrastructure in America already costs more than any other country. I am concerned by President Trump's reckless tariff policies and the impact it will have on construction materials and parts, which will only make this problem worse.

- Mr. Secretary, will the Administration's tariff policy make transportation projects more expensive or less expensive?

**Question 6:** I am glad to see you rightly focused on air traffic controller hiring, and I am optimistic the improvements to the training academy will help flight delays in New York. However, hundreds of air traffic controllers are raising red flags about a provision in the House reconciliation bill, which could force them to retire early. House Republicans have voted to gut the supplemental annuity in the Federal Employees Retirement System for air traffic controllers who are eligible to retire but cannot collect Social Security. Controllers are already overstressed and they shouldn't have to worry about losing out on their pensions.

- Mr. Secretary, will you work to defeat this ill-conceived proposal to eliminate the supplemental annuity for air traffic controllers?

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**Question 7:** According to the DOGE website, the Department has terminated or cancelled at least 26 leases for office space across 20 states and Puerto Rico that was used by the Federal Highway Administration, Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, Federal Transit Administration, Federal Railroad Administration, Maritime Administration, and Pipelines and Hazardous Safety Administration.

- Please provide a detailed list of all leases that have been terminated or cancelled by the Department between January 20, 2025 and the date of receipt of this question. This list should include:
  - the modal administration;
  - the location (including address) of the leased building or office space;
  - the date on which the existing lease was to expire prior to the termination or cancellation;
  - the date on which the existing lease will end as a result of the termination or cancellation (i.e. when it will no longer be used by the Department);
  - the amount of any early termination or cancellation fees;
  - the number of staff whose duty station was the leased building or office space as of January 20, 2025;
  - where the staff whose duty station was the leased building or office space will report to following the termination or cancellation;
  - and whether the Department will consolidate or co-locate the staff whose duty station was the leased building or office space in building or office space currently leased or owned by other modal administrations.

**Question 8:** According to the DOGE website, the Department has terminated or cancelled countless contracts. In response to previous inquiries from this Committee, your staff shared the following on March 4, 2025: “DOT is reviewing existing contracts to identify opportunities for achieving efficiencies and ensuring that spending is alignment with Administration priorities.”

- Please provide a detailed list of all contracts that have been terminated or cancelled by the Department between January 20, 2025 and the date of receipt of this question. This list should include the modal administration, source of funding for the contract, the purpose of the contract, and the rationale for why the contract was no longer necessary.

**Question 9:**

- Please provide a list of all advisory committees, panels, task forces, and commissions that were funded and operational in fiscal year 2024.
  - Indicate those that are mandated by law and those that are discretionary;
  - the funding level of each; and
  - the expiration date of the most recent charter.
- Also list each advisory committee, panel, task force, and commission that have been terminated or cancelled by the Department between January 20, 2025 and the date of

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receipt of this question, as well as those the Department proposes to operate in fiscal year 2026, with the proposed budget for each.

**Question 10:**

- Please provide an update on any plans or planning the Department has to reorganize the Department or its modal administrations.

**Question 11:**

- Please provide a list of all political and Presidential appointees employed by the Department as of the date of receipt of this question.
  - This list should include the name and title for each political and Presidential appointee and the modal administration in which such staff is employed.
- If the total number is less than the 125 political and Presidential appointees allowed under section 183 of the Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2024 (Public Law 118-42), which remains in effect under the Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2025 (Public Law 118-158), please provide the total number of political and Presidential appointees expected by September 30, 2025 based upon vacancies, hiring plans, pending appointments by the President, and pending confirmations by the U.S. Senate.

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**Questions for the Record Submitted to  
Secretary Sean Duffy, Department of Transportation  
from Senator Jack Reed**

**Question 1:** The tragic collision at National Airport on January 29th caused the death of 67 people, including two Rhode Islanders, Christine Lane and her son, Spencer. I've met with Doug Lane, Christine's husband and Spencer's dad. I've also met with Tim and Sherri Lilley, whose son Sam was killed in the collision. Mr. Lane and the Lilley family have joined the families of other American Eagle Flight 5342 passengers to an advocate for safety reforms following this tragedy. I know you've also spent time meeting with these families and heard their stories.

One of the items that Mr. Lane and this group of families are calling for is an independent review of operations at National Airport.

- Have you taken steps to initiate this a review?

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**Questions for the Record Submitted to  
Secretary Sean Duffy, Department of Transportation  
from Senator Schatz**

**Question 1:** You published a plan to modernize our nation's air traffic control (ATC) system.

- Please provide detailed requests for funding required to implement your plan over the project's proposed time frame.

**Question 2:** President Trump stated that the entire ATC modernization project will be executed under "one big, beautiful contract". Your modernization plan calls for improvements to telecommunications systems, air traffic management software, tower facilities, and much more. These diverse upgrades are not best served by one contract.

- Do you intend to execute a single contract for this modernization project? Do you commit to executing a fair, open, and ethical bid process for the contracts issued in implementing this modernization project?

**Question 3:** Over 4,000 DOT employees accepted deferred resignation program offers and you have stated intent to execute a mass layoff later this month. In your appearance before the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, you stated that the pace of executing grant agreements must quicken.

- How do you plan to accomplish this while simultaneously cutting department capacity?

**Question 4:** Deputy Secretary Bradbury made a personal commitment in his confirmation hearing to maintain the Office of Tribal Government Affairs at DOT, which is the central body responsible for fostering government-to-government relations between the agency and Tribes and supports Tribal self-governance. It was funded at \$1.53 million in FY24.

- Will the President's Budget Request maintain and fund this office at DOT?

**Question 5:** Tribal governments rely heavily on consistent and predictable transportation funding, particularly from the Tribal Transportation Program and the Rural and Tribal Assistance Pilot Program.

- Can you commit today that the Department will not reduce or redirect funding for Tribal transportation without prior Tribal consultation, and can you detail how your Department intends to protect Tribal transportation programs in your FY26 budget request?

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**Question 6:** Executive Order 13175 and the U.S. Department of Transportation's own Tribal Consultation Plan under Departmental Order 5301.1 require that your agency engage in meaningful consultation with Tribal Nations before implementing policies or actions that have direct effects on Tribes.

- Did you comply with DOT's Order 5301.1 before implementing reorganization efforts?
- Will you commit to pausing any programmatic changes that could affect Tribes until full consultation is completed?

**Question 7:** Successful implementation of the Tribal Transportation Self-Governance Program depends on close coordination with the Bureau of Indian Affairs and Tribes. Under recent reorganization efforts and funding reductions, Tribes are concerned about negative impacts to this program and their ability to secure funding agreements and technical support.

- Will you commit to working with this me to implement the Self-Governance Program as Congress intended to avoid service disruptions to Tribes?
- Will you commit to expanding this program to support Tribal self-governance at DOT?

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**Questions for the Record Submitted to  
Secretary Sean Duffy, Department of Transportation  
from Senator Chris Van Hollen**

**Question 1:** Congress will be putting together a new surface reauthorization bill over the next year. I have several priorities for the bill including the Sarah Debbink Langenkamp Active Transportation Safety Act. Sarah was a constituent of mine, and she was killed while riding her bicycle in Bethesda. This is a bipartisan bill that I introduced with Senators Baldwin, Hagerty and Johnson. The bill makes it easier for states and local governments to use Highway Safety Improvement program dollars as a local match for safe bicycling and pedestrian infrastructure.

- Will you support the inclusion of this legislation in the next surface reauthorization bill and once passed, will you commit to implementing the requirements?

**Question 2:** Earlier this month you terminated grants for seven University Transportation Centers over concerns related to advancing a so-called “woke agenda.”

These grants required a dollar-for-dollar match, meaning the universities made significant financial and institutional commitments based on the promise of a five-year federal partnership. I’m concerned not just about the termination itself, but about how it was handled, the justification provided, and what this says about the federal government’s willingness to honor its commitments.

- Given that some of the universities have already revised their work plans and others have expressed a willingness to do so, can you commit today to working with these institutions to reverse the terminations and instead pursue a path that allows these UTCs to fulfill their mission under revised, mutually agreeable terms?

**Question 3:** On March 12, 2025 it was reported that one of your modal agencies, the Federal Railroad Administration, has been meeting with representatives from Elon Musk’s Boring Company about doing work on the Frederick Douglass Tunnel Amtrak project in Baltimore.

This appears to be another example of a clear conflict of interest between the President, his benefactors and the American taxpayers.

- In the interests of transparency, please tell me who else the FRA has been “consulting with” ahead of awarding a new contract for the project?
- Do any of the other firms have a direct line to the President?
- Are any others owned by the same person who already has several billion dollars in other federal contracts? (\$38 billion as of February 2025)

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**Question 4:** During the DOT budget hearing on May 15, 2025 I asked you about re-examining the decision to add the five additional slot pairs that were authorized for DCA in the FAA Reauthorization bill given the recent events and data showing the unacceptable frequency of proximity incidents over the last few years. You responded that you “would welcome the opportunity to engage” with the Committee on these matters.

- Will you commit to reviewing the impacts of these additional flights on overall safety at DCA and, if they are determined to reduce the safety of the flying public, roll back the operation of these additional flights using the current authorities at your disposal and also work with Congress for a more permanent solution to reduce slots to improve safety at the airport?

**Question 5:** On May 22, 2025, the Government Accountability Office released a decision (file # B-337137) finding that the Department of Transportation violated the Impoundment Control Act by delaying expenditures for the National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (NEVI) program, which was passed into law in 2021 as part of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act. The NEVI program supports build out of a national network of fast chargers for electric vehicles, thereby strengthening the ability of the American automobile industry to compete in the rapidly growing electric vehicle market, while bolstering American manufacturing and competitiveness through its Buy America requirements.

- Given GAO’s finding that DOT is illegally withholding NEVI program funding from states, when will DOT comply with the law and release the NEVI program funding that has been authorized and appropriated by Congress?