

Ray LaHood

Secretary of Transportation



Ray LaHood became the 16th Secretary of Transportation on January 23, 2009.

In nominating him, President-elect Obama said, “Few understand our infrastructure challenge better than the outstanding public servant that I’m asking to lead the Department of Transportation.”

Secretary LaHood’s primary goals in implementing President Obama’s priorities for transportation include safety across all modes, restoring economic health and creating jobs, sustainability – shaping the economy of the coming decades by building new transportation infrastructure, and assuring that transportation policies focus on people who use the transportation system and their communities.

As Secretary of Transportation, LaHood leads an agency with more than 55,000 employees and a \$70 billion budget that oversees air, maritime and surface transportation missions.

Secretary LaHood said he would bring President-elect Obama’s priorities to the Department and see them effectively implemented with a commitment to fairness across regional and party lines and between people who come to the issues with different perspectives.

Before becoming Secretary of Transportation, LaHood served for 14 years in the U.S. House of Representatives from the 18th District of Illinois (from 1995-2009). During that time he served on the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee and, after that, on the House Appropriations Committee. Prior to his election to the House, he served as Chief of Staff to U.S. Congressman Robert Michel, whom he succeeded in representing the 18th District, and as District Administrative Assistant to Congressman Thomas Railsback. He also served in the Illinois State Legislature.

Before his career in government, Secretary LaHood was a junior high school teacher, having received his degree from Bradley University in Peoria, Illinois. He was also director of the Rock Island County Youth Services Bureau and Chief planner for the Bi-States Metropolitan Planning Commission in Illinois.

LaHood and his wife, Kathy, have four children (Darin, Amy, Sam, and Sara) and nine grandchildren.