Opening Remarks

By: Teresa Adams, Summit co-chair,
Director, National Center for Freight and Infrastructure Research and Education

Good morning.
Welcome to the National Transportation Workforce Summit.

This Summit brings together many of the conversations, activities, and programs for developing the transportation workforce. If you had a chance to look at the program you will see that all modes of transportation and all training and education sources are represented. The theme for the summit is "pathways to the future". The summit sessions follow the career development pathway, which is "career awareness" followed by "career preparation" followed by continued "education and training".

We named this event a "summit", not a conference, because we want to encourage you to participation in an important dialog. Our goal for this summit to prepare an action plan for coordinating the many workforce development activities of industry, federal and state agencies, education institutions, professional organizations, and labor management organizations. That action plan would be a structure for linking workforce needs to workforce development policies and programs.

The concept for a national summit had been discussed for several years. Regional summits were sponsored by various university transportation centers around the country. This national summit builds on the regional events. This national summit was initiated by the Council of University Transportation Centers in cooperation with the US Department of Transportation. The US departments of Education and Labor along with industry organizations and the National science foundation have been instrumental in developing the program. The full list of sponsoring organizations is shown on the screens and included in your program as is the list of the many planning and steering committee volunteers who worked many hours over the last 15 months to organize this event.

Let me tell you a little about the process. Throughout the summit we will break into smaller working groups to develop our Strategic Framework and action plan. During these breakout sessions we will:

- Describe significant workforce challenges;
- Craft strategic goals and outcomes to address those challenges;
- Define the action strategies to achieve those outcomes; and
- Identify who will implement the strategies and how the results will be measured

Many examples of today's broad range of transportation workforce development efforts are on display through the Showcase Exhibits. We encourage you to visit both Showcase rooms. Much of the background for the Summit dialog has been captured in the series of papers that were submitted for the Summit. These papers are on your USB drive and the conference website. We can use the papers to inform our deliberations. In addition, we will have a "Meet and Greet" the authors in the Showcase area.

The first session of this workforce summit is a discussion among workforce development leaders at the US Departments of Transportation, Education and Labor. We have a unique opportunity to hear about the priorities, issues and activities within and across the agencies to develop the transportation workforce for today and in the future.

The final session of out Summit on Thursday will be open to the public. During this session, we will engage you in an interactive forum that seeks to clarify, enhance, and prioritize the Summit recommendations so that the strategic framework can emerge along with key administrative and legislative actions required at federal and state levels to institutionalize effective workforce policies and programs.

On behalf of the Summit Sponsors and members of the Planning and Steering Committees, my co-chair, Dr. John Collura, I am pleased you could join us and look forward to your participation over the next 2 and 1/2 days. We hope you will make connections that will enhance your workforce development endeavors.

Thank you.

Plenary Session 1. Workforce Development Leadership: Coordination, Communication,Collaboration

The discussion participants are seated here in our living room setting.

Our first guest is Ms. Polly Trottenberg, who is currently the Acting under Secretary for Transportation Policy at the US Department of Transportation. Under Secretary Trottenberg leads the Department of Transportation's policy initiatives including surface transportation reauthorization, livability, high-speed rail, the TIGER discretionary grant program, and freight policy development. Please join me in welcoming Secretary Trottenberg.

Seated next to Secretary Tottenberg is Dr. Brenda Dann-Messier, who is the Assistant Secretary for Vocational and Adult Education at the US Department of Education. Dr. Dann-Messier is the first assistant secretary for the office of Vocational and Adult Education who is also an adult educator. Assistant Secretary Dann-Messier leads the Department of Education's efforts in adult education and career and technical education as well as efforts supporting community colleges and correctional education. Please join me in welcoming Secretary Dann-Messier.

Seated on the other side of Secretary Dann-Messier is Ms. Jane Oates, who is the Assistant Secretary of Employment and Training Administration at the US Department of Labor. Assistant Secretary Oates leads the Department of Labor's efforts in working with states, municipalities, labor management organizations, employers, educational institutions and other partners to design and deliver training and employment programs and to assist workers in gaining the skills and credentials needed to enter careers that pay family supporting wages and offer opportunities for advancement. Please join me in welcoming Secretary Oates.

Now is the time to hear from the workforce development leaders at the Departments of Transportation, Education and Labor. Secretary Trottenberg, would you begin this important cross agency discussion?

(Teresa leaves the stage and returns when the discussion is done)

Secretaries Trottenberg, Dann-Messier, and Oates, thank you for joining us this morning. We will use what we heard to establish the context and vision for our discussions over the next 2 days of this summit. Please join me in thanking Secretaries Trottenberg, Dann-Messier, and Oates.

Now is time for a short break. Coffee is in the hall outside this ballroom. The restrooms are to the right as exit. Please return at 9:15. We will begin the next session promptly.