

Pete Buttigieg

U.S. Secretary of Transportation

Blair W. Effron

Cofounder, Centerview Partners;

Vice Chairman, Board of Directors, Council on Foreign Relations

Presiding

Washington Meetings

A Conversation With Secretary of Transportation Pete Buttigieg

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Pete Buttigieg

Pete Buttigieg serves as the nineteenth secretary of transportation, having been sworn in on February 3, 2021. His focus as secretary is to deliver the world's leading transportation system for the American people and economy. He has worked to achieve organizational excellence in the department's operations, and to focus the department on five policy goals: safety, jobs, equity, climate, and innovation. In his first year at the department, he prioritized supporting the development and passage of President Biden's signature Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. Since the law's passage, Buttigieg and his team have focused on effectively delivering the investments provided by this legislation, enabling the most significant improvements in U.S. transportation infrastructure in over half a century. Buttigieg has also focused on intervening to support American supply chains dealing with shockwaves from the pandemic, including measures to help cut in half the long-dwelling container congestion at America's largest ports. Other major initiatives in his early tenure have included a comprehensive national roadway safety strategy to reduce deaths and serious injuries; delivery of emergency COVID-19 relief funds to transit agencies across America; and awards of over \$9.5 billion in discretionary funding to enhance transportation through over 800 projects in communities across America. The first openly gay person confirmed to serve in a president's cabinet, secretary Buttigieg previously served two terms as mayor of his hometown, South Bend, Indiana, where he worked across the aisle to transform the city's future. Household income grew, poverty fell, and unemployment was cut in half. His work on transportation as mayor was nationally recognized, including an award for innovative streetscape design from the U.S. Department of Transportation where he now serves. He also served for seven years as an officer in the U.S. Navy Reserve, taking a leave of absence from the mayor's office for a deployment to Afghanistan in 2014. Buttigieg is a graduate of Harvard University and Oxford, where he was a Rhodes Scholar and completed a degree in philosophy, politics, and economics.

Blair W. Efron—*presiding*

Blair W. Efron is cofounder of Centerview Partners, a leading independent investment banking and advisory firm with offices in New York, London, Los Angeles, Palo Alto, Paris, and San Francisco. The firm has over five hundred professionals and provides assistance on mergers and acquisitions, financial restructurings, general advisory, valuation, and capital structure to companies, institutions, and governments. Since its founding in 2006, the firm has advised in over \$3 trillion in transactions and ranks among the most active banking firms globally in strategic advisory. The firm works with public and private companies across a range of sectors including the consumer, energy, financial, general industrial, health care, media, retail, technology, and telecommunications industries. Efron serves on the boards of trustees of Lincoln Center, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New Visions for Public Schools, the Partnership for New York City, and Princeton University. He also sits on the advisory board of the Hamilton Project, an economic policy initiative affiliated with the Brookings Institution, and is Vice Chairman of the Council on Foreign Relations. Efron holds a BA from Princeton University and an MBA from Columbia Business School.

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