# POSITION DESCRIPTION

**Assistant Secretary for Governmental Affairs, Department of transportation**

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| **OVERVIEW** |
| Senate Committee | Commerce, Science and Transportation |
| Agency Mission | To ensure a fast, safe, efficient, accessible and convenient transportation system that meets our vital national interests and enhances the quality of life of the American people, today and into the future |
| Position Overview | The Assistant Secretary for Governmental Affairs is the principal advisor to the Secretary, Deputy Secretary and senior staff with respect to legislative affairs, congressional relations and policy matters affecting federal, state and local governments, and public and private interest groups. The office is responsible for coordinating congressional and intergovernmental relations activities involving modal (modes of transportation) offices to ensure the effective and accurate presentation of the department’s views. |
| Compensation | Level IV $155,500 (5 U.S.C. § 5315)[[1]](#endnote-1) |
| Position Reports to | Secretary of the Department of Transportation  |
| **RESPONSIBILITIES** |
| Management Scope | In fiscal 2015, DOT had $75,425 million in outlays and 53,822 total employment. The office provides coordination and oversight for congressional and intergovernmental activities for 10 agencies and the secretary’s office |
| Primary Responsibilities | * Supervises and coordinates all legislative and non-legislative relationships between the department and Congress
* Coordinates the presentation of the department’s legislative and budget programs to Congress, including coordinating and overseeing congressional activities of the agencies within the department
* Monitors and responds to the DOT-related activities of the department’s congressional oversight, authorizing and appropriations committees
* Serves as the principal departmental advocate before Congress for DOT’s legislative initiatives and other legislative matters, ensuring all testimony and responses to congressional inquiries are consistent with the secretary’s and the administration’s views
* Provides advice and support to regional representatives of the Secretary
* Ensures effective communication and coordination with other federal agencies, state and local governments, and national intergovernmental organizations
* Cultivates and enhances relations with national and local organizations, public and private groups, and state organizations to promote DOT policies
* Cooperates with the general counsel, transportation policy and modal offices in developing the department’s position on all relevant legislative matters
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| Strategic Goals and Priorities | [Depends on the policy priorities of the administration] |
| **REQUIREMENTS AND COMPETENCIES** |
| Requirements | * Knowledge/experience in transportation policy
* Strong and effective congressional relationships and understanding of congressional/legislative processes
* Strong and effective state/local relationships and understanding of state transportation challenges
* Effective relationships and respect within the highway, air, transit and other elements of the U.S. transportation industry
* Understanding of politics as well as policy
* Understanding of the authorization process
* Record of working with both Republicans and Democrats
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| Competencies | * Ability to forge strong congressional relationships necessary
* Ability to establish positive relationships with coworkers and external stakeholders
* Strong interpersonal and communication skills
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| **PAST APPOINTEES** |
| Dana Gresham: 2009-2017. Obama-Biden Presidential Transition Team; Congressional Relations staff; Chief of staff for Representative Artur Davis (D-Ala.); Legislative Assistant and Legislative Director for Representative Bud Cramer (D-Ala.); Staff assistant for Representative Eva Clayton (D-N.C.) |
| Roger Karr: 2006-2008. Deputy Chief of Staff for the Department of Transportation; Deputy Assistant Secretary of Transportation for Governmental Affairs; Manager for Regulatory Affairs for the American Association of Airport Executives; Legislative Assistant for American Airlines |
| Sean O’Halleran: 2001-2003. Director of Washington Affairs for Tax and Environment at the Union Pacific Corporation; Senate Appropriations Committee as a member of the professional staff; Personal staff of Senator Mark Hatfield (R-Ore.) |

# Endnotes

This position description was created with the help of Russell Reynolds Associates, a global executive search firm.

1. The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2017 (Public Law 115-31, May 5, 2017), contains a provision that continues the freeze on the payable pay rates for certain senior political officials at 2013 levels during calendar year 2017. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)