



U.S. Department of Transportation  
**Office of Inspector General**

July 2, 2024

The Honorable Joni K. Ernst  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Ted Cruz  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senators Ernst and Cruz,

Thank you for your June 18, 2024, letter requesting that the Office of Inspector General (OIG) review the U.S. Department of Transportation's (DOT) telework and remote work policies.

As you noted in your letter, at the time of our last correspondence on these matters in September 2023, DOT had not yet completed the rollout and implementation of its current in-office requirements and remote work policies—which the Department has revised multiple times in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic. DOT's current requirements went into effect fully in December 2023, and we concur that the passage of time is a relevant consideration. As such, in accordance with your request, we plan to announce this summer an audit of DOT's oversight of its in-office, telework, and remote work policies. Per our standard audit practice, we will inform your offices upon announcing our audit, and our audit announcement will be published on OIG's website at that time.

We also appreciate your notice of our investigation of a Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) employee, who recently pleaded guilty to the theft of more than \$120,000 in taxpayer funds via payroll fraud. We take seriously our obligation to investigate and pursue wrongdoers within DOT. Employee integrity matters are among our core investigative priorities, and we review all allegations addressing violations involving DOT employees, such as time and attendance fraud, misuse of Government property or funds, conflicts of interest, ethics violations, and other prohibited actions. In your letter, you referenced your receipt of additional whistleblower reports related to these topics. As always, we encourage all whistleblowers and/or anyone knowledgeable of potential fraud, waste, or abuse to submit reports to our OIG Hotline by visiting [www.oig.dot.gov/hotline](http://www.oig.dot.gov/hotline), emailing [hotline@oig.dot.gov](mailto:hotline@oig.dot.gov), or calling (800) 424-9071.

In your letter, you also expressed interest in our work regarding DOT's oversight of the \$10.9 billion awarded for Hurricane Sandy-related recovery, relief, and resiliency programs. Since March 2013, we have conducted 8 Hurricane Sandy-related audits, identifying about \$1 billion in monetary findings and issuing 42 recommendations that have improved the Department's processes for awarding and overseeing these and other funds. Our latest audit in this series, announced in May 2024, will examine the status of the \$3.8 billion in funds that DOT had obligated but not yet expended at that time.

As always, we appreciate your interest and attention to our oversight mission as well as our shared commitment to enhancing DOT's programs and operations and detecting and

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preventing fraud, waste, and abuse. If you have any questions, please contact me or Nathan Richmond, Deputy Assistant Inspector General for Government and Public Affairs.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Eric J. Soskin". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Eric" being the most prominent.

Eric J. Soskin  
Inspector General

cc: The Honorable Robert C. Erickson  
Deputy Inspector General  
General Services Administration