

# Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, & Urban Affairs

Mike Crapo (R-ID), Ranking Member



Thursday, November 13, 2014 at 11:00AM

## Statement of Ranking Member Crapo on:

*“Nominations of Ms. Lourdes Maria Castro Ramirez, of California, to be an Assistant Secretary of Housing and Urban Development; and Ms. Therese W. McMillan, of California, to be Federal Transit Administrator, U.S. Department of Transportation”*

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Today the Committee is considering two important nominations for two different organizations: Acting Administrator Therese W. McMillan, to be Federal Transit Administrator (FTA) for the U.S. Department of Transportation, and Ms. Lourdes Maria Castro Ramirez, to be an Assistant Secretary of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Since the Chairman has been very thorough in his explanation of our nominees, I'll be brief.

Ms. McMillan brings 30 years of transportation experience to the role of Federal Transit Administrator, including 5 years at the agency prior to this nomination. If confirmed as FTA Administrator, Ms. McMillan will lead a staff of more than 500 employees in Washington, D.C., oversee 10 regional offices and manage an annual budget of approximately \$10 billion.

In October 2013, as part of its implementation of MAP-21, the FTA released an Advanced Notice of Proposed Rulemaking in the areas of Safety and Transit Asset Management. This Notice is of great interest to myself and several other members of this Committee who have all raised concerns with the potential outcome being overly prescriptive. At the March 2014 Transit Hearing, we heard from private sector witnesses who also shared our concern that, if done improperly, some small systems could be subject to overly burdensome regulations that are inappropriate to their size. Today, I would like to hear how Ms. McMillan would proceed with the implementation of MAP-21 while balancing the needs of all systems, both large and small.

Our other nominee today is Ms. Castro-Ramirez. Currently, Ms. Castro-Ramirez serves as the President and Chief Executive Officer for the San Antonio Housing

Authority. She brings approximately 15 years working with Housing Authorities in California and Texas. If confirmed, Ms. Castro Ramirez will oversee the nation's public housing and rental assistance programs that assist approximately 3.2 million low-income families across the U.S. Also, she would be responsible for the Department's Native American and Native Hawaiian programs, which serve 562 federally recognized tribes. While Ms. Castro Ramirez has public housing experience from previous positions, Indian Housing is a big part of this job and incredibly important in Idaho, so I appreciate her willingness to learn the latter in her new capacity as well.

Although it is not the topic of today's hearing, I must take this opportunity to express frustration with how HUD has handled a situation that is affecting many constituents in Idaho. Last month, HUD released guidelines related to Recreational Vehicles that they termed a "reiteration." Because HUD termed it a reiteration, these guidelines went through without the benefit of any public comment or input. Consequently, the new guidelines for what defines a recreational vehicle could have serious negative implications for RV owners, dealers and manufactures.

The lack of due process and public input also comes at an economic cost to many small business men and women who make their livings owning and operating campgrounds. It is now incumbent upon HUD to fix this situation and mitigate the real consequences that have been created. I look forward to hearing from each of our nominees on these important issues and more, and working with Chairman Johnson regarding these nominations.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.