

Statement of Ranking Member Thomas R. Carper

“Nomination of Peter V. Neffenger to be Assistant Secretary (Transportation Security Administration), U.S. Department of Homeland Security and David S. Shapira to be a Governor, United States Postal Service Board of Governors”

June 10, 2015

As prepared for delivery:

I thank the Chairman for scheduling this confirmation hearing for two important nominees.

The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) has been without a Senate-confirmed leader since the highly-regarded John Pistole departed the agency at the end of last year.

As we have learned from press reports, as well as from numerous briefings, and our hearing yesterday, TSA faces serious challenges that demand strong, permanent, Senate-confirmed leadership. Thankfully, the President has nominated in Vice Admiral Peter Neffenger – someone whom I believe can provide TSA with the kind of leader it needs right now.

Admiral Neffenger has served as a commissioned officer in the Coast Guard since 1982, assuming the position of Vice Commandant in May 2014. Throughout his thirty-four year career in the Coast Guard, Admiral Neffenger has displayed exceptional leadership skills and the will to confront difficult challenges head-on. In fact, Admiral Neffenger is no stranger to crisis, having served as the Deputy National Incident Commander for the Deepwater Horizon oil spill.

As DHS Inspector General John Roth said to this Committee yesterday, what TSA needs is someone willing to acknowledge and confront the many challenges facing the agency. And, I would add that the agency also needs someone who will strive for perfection, while addressing the competing priorities of security and expedited travel.

I had the opportunity to meet with Admiral Neffenger recently to discuss his desire to lead TSA and his vision for the agency. I came away from our meeting confident that he is the right person for the job.

Following our discussion with Admiral Neffenger, we'll consider our second nominee today, David Shapira, to serve as a Governor on the Postal Service's Board of Governors. We're considering this nomination at what is a very challenging time for the Postal Service. But as Albert Einstein said, 'in adversity, lies opportunity.'

The Postal Service operates at the center of a massive printing, delivery, and logistics industry that employs millions of people. Even as First Class mail is lost to other forms of communication, the future is promising for the Postal Service in a number of other ways. Advertising mail is still a popular and effective option for mailers. Millions of people still look forward to receiving a wide range of magazines in the mail every week. E-commerce and package delivery are booming, making the Postal Service a vital partner for businesses large and small. Even the Postal Service's traditional competitors rely on it to carry items the last mile to rural communities around the country.

I look forward to talking to Mr. Shapira today about what he thinks needs to be done to address the ongoing challenges facing the Postal Service and to hear about the skills and experience that he will bring to the Board. As a leader of a \$10 billion company with nearly 40,000 employees, Mr. Shapira will bring a unique business perspective to the Board of Governors that is very much needed.

If confirmed, Mr. Shapira and the four other Board nominees pending before the Senate would double the size of the current Board. I see a real opportunity here with this new injection of talent to make significant progress towards strengthening our Postal Service.

In closing, I would like to thank both of our nominees today for agreeing to take on the positions for which they have been nominated. I would also like to thank their families for all of their support. Both Admiral Neffenger and Mr. Shapira are exceptionally qualified and I urge my colleagues to support their nominations.