

The Hon. Ray LaHood

Ray LaHood is the former US Department of Transportation Secretary.

With a 36-year career in public service, Secretary LaHood has extensive experience on major national policy issues, among them transportation and infrastructure. He served as the 16th Department of Transportation Secretary from 2009 to 2013 and quickly became known as a bipartisan leader and skilled conciliator in a highly partisan environment.

Secretary LaHood's tenure was marked by landmark efforts to improve safety in every mode of transportation, from aviation and rail to pipelines and automobiles. Under his leadership, improvements to America's infrastructure included building or replacing 350,000 miles of highway, repairing 20,000 bridges and renewing or constructing 6,000 miles of rail track. Secretary LaHood also achieved more stringent fuel efficiency requirements from automakers, took steps to address airline pilot fatigue and turned the problem of distracted driving into a national concern. As Secretary of Transportation, he oversaw an agency with more than 55,000 employees and a US\$70 billion budget in charge of air, maritime and surface transportation.

Before heading the US Department of Transportation, Secretary LaHood served from 1995 to 2009 in the US House of Representatives on behalf of the 18th District of Illinois and also served on various House committees, among them the powerful House Appropriations Committee and the House Intelligence Committee. He served as chief of staff to US House Minority Leader Robert Michel from 1982 to 1994. He was director of the Rock Island County Youth Services Bureau from 1972 to 1974; chief planner of the Bi-States Metropolitan Planning Commission from 1974 to 1977; and district administrative assistant for US Congressman Tom Railsback from 1977 to 1982.

He is married to Kathy LaHood, and they have four children and fifteen grandchildren.