



U.S. Department of
Transportation

News:

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs
Washington, D.C. 20590

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Friday, August 20, 1993

FTA 14-93
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**PENNSYLVANIA STATE LEGISLATOR
SWORN IN AS ADMINISTRATOR OF
FEDERAL TRANSIT AGENCY**

Secretary of Transportation Federico Peña today announced that veteran Pennsylvania lawmaker Gordon J. Linton has been sworn in as Administrator of the Federal Transit Administration (FTA).

Linton becomes the 13th person to head the agency responsible for the federal government's transit assistance programs.

When nominated by President Clinton, Linton was in his sixth term as a state representative for the northwest section of Philadelphia. He was vice-chairman of the Pennsylvania House Appropriations Committee and had previously been chairman of the Transportation Committee's Subcommittee on Public Transportation and of the Legislative Black Caucus. He also served as a member of the Board of Directors for the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA), the nation's fourth largest transit system.

"Gordon brings to the position a background rich in public policy and transportation experience," Secretary Peña said. "As a member of the Pennsylvania house, he earned a reputation as both a transit advocate and an effective coalition builder, qualities essential to the success of any FTA administrator."

While in the legislature, Linton forged a partnership between highway and transit interest groups and legislators on his way to winning passage of the state's first dedicated funding for mass transit. He was also instrumental in gaining passage of an increase in Pennsylvania's gas tax to meet expanding highway needs in the state.

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"His ability to break down the walls that often divide transit and highway interests will be invaluable to him in his new post," Secretary Peña said. "This administration is convinced that addressing the needs of our transportation system as a whole is the most effective way to strengthen the economy, create jobs, and improve mobility."

Linton, too, acknowledged the economic contribution of mass transit, but said he plans to emphasize its importance to people.

"We can't truthfully call ourselves a land of opportunity if too many of our people lack the mobility they need to participate in that opportunity," Linton said. "The fact is the ability to move people, as well as goods, is a key to the health of our national spirit as well as our economy."

The new administrator added that our ability to promote the increased use of mass transit may also determine our success in improving air quality and reducing traffic congestion. "We will only have ourselves to blame if we fail to make mass transit more attractive, reliable and cost-efficient," he said.

Linton has also been National Legislative Director of the Conference of Minority Transportation Officials and served as co-chair of Philadelphia Mayor Edward Rendell's Transition Transportation Group.

From 1980 to 1982, he was Eastern Regional Administrator for the Bureau of Public Assistance Audits in the Office of the Pennsylvania Auditor General.

Linton holds a master's degree in counseling psychology from Antioch University and a bachelor's degree in economics from Lincoln University.

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Federal Transit
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