

February 16, 2023

President Joe Biden
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

I write to urge you to request the immediate resignation of U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) Secretary Buttigieg, who has repeatedly demonstrated a gross level of incompetence and apathy that is detrimental to the safety and prosperity of the American people.

For two years, Secretary Buttigieg downplayed and ignored crisis after crisis, while prioritizing topics of little relevance to our nation's transportation system. It is painfully clear to the American people that Secretary Buttigieg has little regard for the duties of the Secretary of Transportation.

At no time has that been more apparent than the past two weeks. Secretary Buttigieg refused to acknowledge the disaster in East Palestine, Ohio, until his intentional ignorance was no longer tenable. Even after acknowledging the tragedy, he continues to deflect any accountability for the safety of our nation's rail system. The circumstances leading up to the derailment point to a clear lack of oversight and demand engagement by our nation's top transportation official.

Unfortunately, this is part of a two-year long pattern. During historic maritime and surface transportation disruptions in 2021, Secretary Buttigieg was completely absent. Amidst an impending possible rail strike last year, Secretary Buttigieg left the country to vacation in Portuguese wine country. Near misses in commercial aviation, as well as recent system failures, including the one that shutdown air travel in Florida in January, indicate that serious and persistent problems across the DOT are not being sufficiently remedied. I do not have confidence that Secretary Buttigieg is capable of keeping the American people safe.

Secretary Buttigieg is also alleged to have abused taxpayer dollars by chartering private jets that are costlier than allowed in federal employee travel regulations, including for international travel. Similar instances in previous administrations have led to resignations. Secretary Buttigieg is also alleged to have used government aircraft for travel that may be political in nature. The American people deserve to know that their tax dollars are not being abused for personal or political purposes by government officials, and that public officials are being held to the same standards regardless of their political affiliation.

For two years, the transparency and accountability that you promised to obsessively uphold during your inauguration has been nowhere to be found. The incompetence and failure within your administration cannot continue to be ignored when Americans' health and safety are at risk. I hope you will change course in order to uphold your so-far-unmet promise to the American people by requesting the immediate resignation of Secretary Buttigieg.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'M. Rubio', is centered on the page.

Marco Rubio
U.S. Senator