

TRANSPORTATION

Trump taps former lawmaker and reality TV star for Transportation

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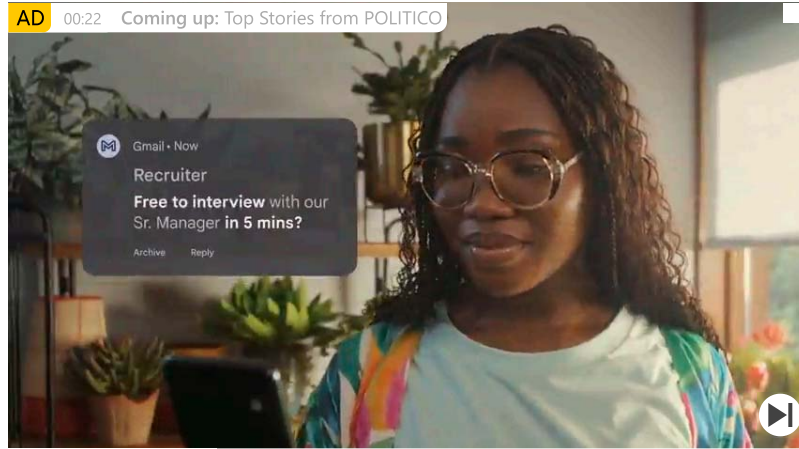
President-elect Donald Trump expressed faith in former Rep. Sean Duffy's (R-Wis.) ability to rebuild the country's infrastructure. | Jacquelyn Martin/AP

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President-elect Donald Trump plans to nominate former lawmaker and Fox News contributor Sean Duffy, who also had a turn on MTV's "Real World," to be the next secretary of Transportation.

In an announcement posted to Truth Social, Trump applauded Duffy's congressional relationships and expressed faith in his ability to rebuild the country's infrastructure, adding that he will "greatly elevate the Travel Experience for all Americans!"



If he's confirmed, Duffy will take the helm of an agency that oversees the safety of Americans on roads, rails, buses, airplanes and hazardous materials transportation. Duffy inherits a department in the middle of dealing with a rash of near-collisions on runways across the country, aging aviation equipment and an overworked cadre of air traffic controllers.

He also would take the reins in the middle of rolling out the billions in spending made available by the 2021 infrastructure law, which Republicans on Capitol Hill have threatened to try to gut.

Duffy's name had surfaced as a potential pick over the weekend. He ultimately got the nod despite having criticized Trump in the past — he told Fox News in 2017 that a debt ceiling deal [Trump struck with Democrats](#) was a “bad,” “foolish” deal that [“missed the target.”](#)

Duffy currently serves as a co-host of “The Bottom Line,” which airs on Fox Business.

He has also disparaged electric vehicles on Fox News, potentially putting him at odds with Elon Musk, who has had Trump's ear in recent weeks. In a segment last year, Duffy criticized EV trucks as not suitable for rural driving, quoting an unnamed Ford EV truck owner who called the vehicles “the biggest scam of modern times.”

Regardless, in announcing his plans to nominate Duffy, Trump praised his time in Congress as a stint where he “was a respected voice and communicator in the Republican Conference” who worked in a bipartisan manner to “build the largest road and bridge project in Minnesota History.”

Duffy was elected to Congress in 2010, where he served on the House Financial Services Committee, the Budget Committee and the Joint Economic Committee. His resume on transportation from his time in Congress is light, having introduced just four bills that were referred to the Transportation Committee, according to a POLITICO review of his record.

Three of them, related to waiving certain truck size limits on a Wisconsin interstate, fines for blocked grade crossings and seeking to penalize EPA for not satisfying various regulatory requirements, did not make it out of

committee. Another bill concerning a national lakeshore in Wisconsin stalled in the Senate.

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Two transportation bills he co-sponsored became law — one was the tax title for a recurring surface transportation bill, and another was a measure to carve out an exemption to exempt commercial truck drivers delivering critical heating fuels during a shortage from rules restricting how long they can drive.

Since leaving Congress in 2019, [Duffy joined Republican-leaning lobbying firm BGR Group](#) as senior counsel. BGR has represented corporate clients like Comcast and Pfizer, as well as the governments of Bahrain, Bangladesh, India and South Korea. The majority of interests Duffy has represented for BGR are from the investment, securities, transportation and finance sectors, [according to OpenSecrets](#).

Rep. Garret Graves (R-La.), who was in the running for the job, said he congratulated Duffy on the selection and had been texting with him.

“Sean’s a great guy. He’s a friend,” Graves said. When asked if it was a good pick Graves said, “It’s crystal clear to me that the president’s got a type.”

Duffy also beat out Rep. Sam Graves (R-Mo), the current chair of the House Transportation Committee.

Prior to his election to Congress, Duffy was on the popular MTV reality TV show “The Real World,” where a focal point was his experience with lumberjack games. He went on to become a district attorney in Ashland, Wisconsin.

