

Comments from Missouri House of Representatives Speaker Elijah Haahr to the  
United States Department of Transportation, Office of the Secretary

Docket No. DOT-OST-2019-0165

Request for Comments on Non-Traditional and Emerging Transportation Technology – NETT Council

January 10, 2020

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The development of safe, efficient, reliable, and time-saving transportation systems that utilize emerging technologies is very important to me. I believe the development of hyperloop technology will dramatically impact our infrastructure and the role each mode of transportation plays in our economy. It is because of this belief that I want to voice my support for the NETT Council's work to focus on providing regulatory clarity in the development of the hyperloop. As the state of Missouri is coming together with private entities to build a hyperloop, the NETT Council should consider hyperloop's game-changing technology.

Having commissioned a Blue Ribbon Panel to study the hyperloop in Missouri, it was clear to the panel that the biggest hurdle at this point in time is the need for the USDOT to provide regulatory clarity for hyperloop transportation systems that ensures safety throughout the development, construction, and operational aspects of this technology. Hyperloop technology progress is moving rapidly into an operational phase and it is important that the regulatory environment exists to support operational intent. Regulating as a transit system is a likely course that will ensure technical and safety focus under a performance-based approach.

Hyperloop is one of the leading near-term transportation innovations that deserves to be emphasized by the USDOT. Public entities like the State of Missouri and private entities are ready to work with the NETT Council to ensure hyperloop development is done safely, quickly, and at-scale under a clear regulatory framework throughout the United States.

We encourage the NETT Council to advise public and private entities about the important safety regulatory authority that the federal government will provide to avoid confusion and overlap in federal, state, and local governing body activities. This will allow Missouri to focus on developing its regulatory framework that is supportive of, but not in conflict with, federal measures.

Clear direction regarding the laws and regulations that will govern hyperloop transportation systems is necessary to allow continued technology development and safe operation of the required systems. Therefore, I ask the NETT Council to as soon as possible to provide direction on how best the USDOT can begin establishing regulatory guidelines for the development of the hyperloop.

It is important to us that the United States seize the opportunity to lead the world in developing advanced transportation systems. Hyperloop technologies are among the front runners in this category and it is an important step to coordinate and communicate safety regulations. Doing so will demonstrate to a global industry that is receiving tremendous attention from across the world that the United States is the right place to develop, test, certify, and operate this transformational technology.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments and I look forward to leading Missouri in its work with the USDOT and the NETT Council in the important effort of developing safe hyperloop transportation technology.