

## **Interview with Gregory Slater, Secretary Maryland Department of Transportation**

### **1. In managing MDOT and the various modes what keeps you up at nights?**

*That's a complex question for me, I'm really bad at slowing down and turning it off, what really keeps me up is a continuous drive to do more and to constantly learn.*

*We have a tremendous team at MDOT at all levels, these are some of the hardest working women and men that I have ever been around. As someone that started at ground level and worked my way all the way to Secretary over the course of 20 plus years, leading them is one of the greatest privileges of my career. I am driven first by people, by service, by solving issues, by making progress, and making a difference each and every day. I have always found that when you start with a genuine care for people, it truly drives the way you deliver. A genuine care for everyone on our team, for all our partners, consultants and contractor's success; for the people we all serve. Working in partnership with each and every stakeholder ensures that we are successful as an industry, by having all voices at the table and developing solutions together. One of the things keeping me up at night is that our children have the same great transportation industry serving them that we do, investing in that next generation is crucial.*

*What does the MDOT of tomorrow look like? What does the transportation system for our next generation look like? These questions have to guide the foundation of what we build today and the department that I have the honor of leading. This means making sure MDOT is a great place to work, helping our employees grow and thrive and investing in that next generation of our industry so we are prepared to serve the citizens of Maryland for decades to come*

*In transportation, we serve everyone. Everyone travels in some way. As with any successful public or private sector entity, we have to listen to their needs, listen to what is important to them and develop solutions and programs to meet those needs to the absolute best of our ability and to make the most out of every tax dollar entrusted to us. Another thing I stay up at night thinking about is getting the most out of every tax dollar and always thinking about voices we may not have heard along the way.*

*These are simply a few examples of what keeps me up at night, I'm known to email myself in the middle of the night when I have a thought or idea. What occupies me day and night is the safety of our workforce and the travelers on our system.*

### **2. Have there been any role models in your career, if so, who and why?**

*I have had the great privilege of working with so many wonderful leaders, it would be hard to name them all and I'd surely leave someone out by mistake. I take little parts of each of them into what I do every day. That being said, I am the true mix of my parents and upbringing. My father is very technical, and my mother is very creative. By working with good mentors around me, I learned very early in my*

*career that I thought differently than others. That combined with having good self-awareness of what my strengths and weakness are, is what I needed to navigate throughout my career growth. Through the people around me, I've learned to ask a lot of questions, listen to everything from every perspective, focus on the goals ahead and never stop. Just pause! I learned this from a lot of the great leaders and role models over the last 20+ years I have had the privilege of working for, around and with; but the most important advice I ever received was to be myself.*

- 3. Due to COVID-19 storming upon us and Maryland's budget being blown to cover unanticipated expenses, will projects and upgrades to roads, bridge projects, etc. be affected?**

*We will certainly have budget challenges, but the safety of Marylanders has to come first. We have not made any firm determinations yet, but we are starting to understand the financial magnitude of the current fiscal year that ends in June, and next fiscal year. Much of this will be determined by how quickly Maryland recovers, gradual vs jumping right back to pre-COVID-19 levels. The federal government has already provided some relief for transit and aviation, and we are extremely hopeful they will not only address other transportation areas, but also think about infrastructure as an economic stimulus. If they do, MDOT will be ready to get projects out on the street quickly to deliver for Maryland. I'm sure our industry partners will be ready too!*

- 4. What's your favorite Leisure activity?**

*I love being outside on the water somewhere. Normally any water, but nothing relaxes me like the ocean and bay.*

***I would like to sincerely thank Gregory Slater, Secretary, Maryland Department of Transportation, for taking the time from your busy schedule to answer our questions, we are truly grateful for your leadership and congratulations on being the:***

***" 2020 Best Government Administrator of the Year for Minority Business Enterprise."***

***Wayne R. Frazier, Sr., President, Md. Washington Minority Companies Association***