

Secretary Norman Y. Mineta

Former U.S. Secretary of Transportation and Secretary of Commerce



Norman Y. Mineta was raised in San Jose, California. He graduated from the University of California, Berkeley. From 1962 to 1964, he served on San Jose's human relations commission, and from 1966 to 1967, he sat on the board of directors of the city's housing authority. That year he jumped to the city council, where he also served as Vice Mayor from 1968 to 1971. In 1971, he was elected Mayor of San Jose. Mayor Mineta led development of smart growth and the Silicon Valley.

He called for greater transparency and accountability. He worked with the federal government to bring billions in tax revenue back to cities.

In 1974, he became the Representative of California's 13th District. In his first term, Congressman Mineta was placed on the Public Works and Transportation Committee. He held the seat for his entire career; and served as Chairman during the 103rd Congress (1993–1995). He was a leader on the Civil Liberties Act of 1988, the American Disabilities Act of 1990 and the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991. Over a 20-year career in the House, Congressman Mineta worked to make the federal lawmaking process more accountable and led efforts to reform the federal budget process and the nation's transportation system.

Congressman Mineta retired from the House of Representatives on October 10, 1995. In 2000, President Bill Clinton named him Commerce Secretary. After two years in the Clinton administration, Secretary Mineta joined the George W. Bush administration as Transportation Secretary and served again as a leader in transportation from 2001 until 2006. "There are no Democratic or Republican highways," Mineta liked to say, "no such thing as Republican or Democratic traffic congestion."⁷⁷ Shortly after Mineta stepped down, President Bush awarded him the Presidential Medal of Freedom for his years of public service.