



UCLA Environmental Law  
Professor Ann Carlson (Credit:  
UCLA School of Law

President Joe Biden has appointed UCLA environmental law professor-and frequent Legal Planet contributor-**Ann Carlson** to serve as General Counsel of the National Highway and Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). NHTSA, part of the U.S. Department of Administration (USDOT), plays a key regulatory role in charting federal transportation policy.

Professor Carlson has anchored UCLA School of Law's environmental law program for a number of years. She is particularly noted for her teaching and scholarship in the subject areas of air pollution and climate change law and policy.

That deep expertise will come in handy as Professor Carlson helps lead NHTSA and DOT in such key initiatives as setting national vehicle mileage and automobile safety standards. Additionally, those federal agencies will be major contributors to the Biden Administration's holistic approach to fashioning national climate change policy.

Recently [the New York Times reported](#) on numerous challenges and setbacks NHTSA has experienced under previous presidential administrations. Professor Carlson's to-do list as NHTSA's top lawyer will doubtless include confronting (and hopefully helping to solve) many of those issues.

UCLA Law's and Legal Planet's (temporary) loss of Professor Carlson is the Biden

Administration's and NHTSA's indisputable gain. Congratulations, Ann. Now, go do good and great things in Washington, D.C.!

(Professor Carlson is not the only prominent environmental law professor to assume a key role in the Biden Administration. Georgetown University Law Center Professor **Vicki Arroyo**, who teaches environmental law and leads Georgetown Law's Climate Center, has been selected by President Biden to serve as the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Associate Administrator for Policy. Hearty congratulations to Professor Arroyo as well.)