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RECONNECTING AMERICA WELCOMES NEW POLICY DIRECTOR AND DEPUTY POLICY DIRECTOR TO WASHINGTON, DC, STAFF

Reconnecting America today announced the hiring of Sarah A. Kline as the new policy director and Darnell Chadwick Grisby as deputy policy director.

Kline, previously the director of policy and government relations for the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority, has been hired to replace Mariia Zimmerman, who left Reconnecting America to take a position as Deputy Director for Sustainable Communities in the US Department of Housing and Urban Development's Office of Sustainable Housing and Communities (OSHC).

"Sarah comes to us with a wealth of experience in transportation issues and strong recommendations from Capitol Hill," said Reconnecting America CEO John Robert Smith. "We are pleased to hire someone of her caliber for this important role as we work toward the authorization of the federal transportation bill and in supporting the important goals of the federal interagency partnership for sustainability in fostering better integration between housing, transportation and environmental goals. Sarah's background is well-suited to helping Reconnecting America play an effective role in fostering healthy and prosperous communities that serve people of all incomes."



Sarah A. Kline

A lawyer by profession, Kline worked from 2000-2008 as counsel to Sen. Paul Sarbanes (D-MD) and Sen. Christopher Dodd (D-CT) on the U.S. Senate

Committee on Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs, developing transit policy positions for the committee.

Kline negotiated transit legislation, including transit provisions of SAFETEA-LU and transit security provisions of the 9/11 Act. She is known for being especially talented at identifying the points of consensus in sensitive negotiations and forging compromises.

“Sarah Kline was an outstanding member of the staff of the Senate Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs Committee,” said Sen. Sarbanes. “She was one of the most knowledgeable and effective persons on transportation issues on Capitol Hill. Sarah is a superb choice to help reconnect America.”

Kline graduated magna cum laude with a degree in history from Harvard University and received her law degree from Stanford Law School.

Grisby has joined Kline in the Washington office of Reconnecting America in the new role of deputy policy director, where he plays a key role in the organization’s work in transit-oriented development and transportation equity.

"Darnell has worked on transportation issues on the state level and has a strong background in housing, both of which are key for our work in transit-oriented development," said Smith. "Now more than ever in our current economic situation, federal, state and local governments are working together to promote fair and equitable development with housing and transit opportunities for all. This new position on our staff strengthens our policy team at a critical time as we expand our TOD work around the country. Darnell’s experience in California will serve us well as he joins our Washington office."



Darnell Chadwick Grisby

Grisby, who most recently worked as a legislative advocate in Sacramento, California, has extensive experience in local and state legislative policy development.

Grisby holds a master's degree in public policy from Harvard and was valedictorian at UCLA, where he earned a degree in political science. One of his professors at UCLA was Michael Dukakis.

“Darnell was my student at UCLA as an undergraduate, and even then it was clear that he had a ton of ability. In fact, he did his major policy paper on the Los Angeles transit system, and it was a first rate piece of work. He will be a great

addition to the staff and to the cause of a national rail passenger system,” said Dukakis.

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Reconnecting America is a national nonprofit that is helping to transform promising ideas into thriving communities – where transportation choices make it easy to get from place to place, where businesses flourish, and where people from all walks of life can afford to live, work and visit. Reconnecting America is the managing partner of the Center for Transit-Oriented Development, the only national nonprofit effort funded by Congress to promote best practices in transit-oriented development. Reconnecting America is also a founding partner of Transportation for America, a broad coalition of housing, environmental, equal opportunity, public health, urban planning, transportation and other organizations focused on creating a 21st century national transportation program. For more information visit our website, www.reconnectingamerica.org.