

*NBC Nightly News with Hallie Jackson*

05/10/26

6:31:33 p.m. [TEASE]

11 seconds

[ON-SCREEN HEADLINE: Developing Now; Transportation Secretary Under Fire]

HALLIE JACKSON: How a new road trip reality show is putting a controversial spotlight on the transportation secretary. What the former *Real World* star is saying about who paid for it and how he found the time to do it.

(...)

6:44:23 p.m. [TEASE]

6 seconds

[ON-SCREEN HEADLINE: Coming Up; Reality Show Controversy]

JACKSON: Plus the reality TV controversy over one new show's star: the transportation secretary.

(...)

6:47:21 p.m.

1 minute and 58 seconds

[ON-SCREEN HEADLINE: Developing Now; Transportation Secretary Under Fire]

JACKSON: Also tonight, the new controversy over a road tripping reality show featuring a former reality star: the transportation secretary, who's been filming the new series with his family over the course of the last seven months. Julie Tsirkin has his response on the questions and the pushback.

RACHEL CAMPOS DUFFY: Families —

[ON-SCREEN HEADLINE: Developing Now; Transportation Sec'y Under Fire Over New Reality Series]

JULIE TSIRKIN: Tonight, Transportation Secretary Sean Duffy going back to his reality TV roots.

TRANSPORTATION SECRETARY SEAN DUFFY: Put your seatbelts on.

TSIRKIN: But this time it's not the *Real World*, the hit 90s show.

DUFFY [on MTV's *Real World*, date N/A]: I'm Sean!

TSIRKIN: But a new five-part docuseries premiering on YouTube in June with Duffy and his family cruising across the country over the last seven months as part of the nation's America 250 celebrations.

CAMPOS-DUFFY: So, we're inviting you along with our family on the Great American Road Trip.

TSIRKIN: But this road trip is facing backlash —

DUFFY: Welcome to Montana.

TSIRKIN: — at a time when many Americans are struggling with high prices at the pump.

DUFFY [on FNC's *Fox & Friends*, 05/08/26]: It fits any budget out to do a road trip.

TSIRKIN: — and amid a number of crises during Duffy's tenure, including record TSA lines and the recent Spirit Airlines shut down. Former Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg calling the show "brutally out of touch." Duffy did conduct official government business paid for by taxpayers in some of the same locations where filming took place. But he's pushing back on critics, arguing production happened "in short...windows — such as weekends and the kids spring break." He said zero tax dollars were spent on his family. The show's nonprofit production company, Great American Road Trip Inc., lists 17 sponsors on its website, including Boeing and United Airlines, which are companies regulated by the Department of Transportation. NBC's parent company Comcast is also a sponsor. Amid questions about a possible conflict of interest, a DOT spokesperson tells NBC News that production company is "an independent organization. How and who they accept donations from is their decision."

PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: What a beautiful family

DUFFY [TO KIDS]: Can you say hi to President Trump?

TSIRKIN: Julie Tsirkin, NBC News, Washington.