On January 16, 2018, the Board of Directors selected Brian P. Kelly as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the California High-Speed Rail Authority. He comes to the Authority with a wealth of experience in transportation. Kelly served as the first secretary of the new California State Transportation Agency (CalSTA), an agency created in 2013, which focused solely on transportation. At CalSTA, Kelly oversaw eight departments, boards and commissions, 38,000 employees and a budget of $18.1 billion – one of the largest portfolios in the State of California.

At CalSTA, he was responsible for a variety of complex transportation issues which directly impacted almost every Californian, the state’s economy, public safety, highway construction and maintenance, and public transit. During his tenure, his many accomplishments included passing Senate Bill 1 (SB 1), the single largest investment in California’s transportation infrastructure, moving forward the nation’s first state rulemaking to allow the test and deployment of autonomous vehicles, and breaking ground on the first high-speed rail system in the nation in California’s Central Valley.

Prior to that, Kelly had spent almost two decades at the center of major transportation policy decisions in the state of California by serving four successive Senate President pro Tempores. He was executive staff director for Senate President pro Tempore Darrell Steinberg from 2008 to 2012. He was executive principal consultant for Senate President pro Tempore Don Perata from 2004 to 2008, principal consultant for Senate President pro Tempore John Burton from 1998 to 2004, and assistant consultant for Senate President pro Tempore Bill Lockyer from 1995 to 1998.