



Larry Hogan  
Governor  
Boyd K. Rutherford  
Lt. Governor  
Gregory Slater  
Secretary

February 10, 2021

The Honorable Delores G. Kelley  
Chair, Senate Finance Committee  
3 East Miller Senate Office Building  
Annapolis MD 21401

**Re: Letter of Information – Senate Bill 213 – State Highways – Designations – President Barack Obama Highway**

Dear Chair Kelley and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) takes no position on Senate Bill 213 but offers the following information for the Committee’s consideration.

Senate Bill 213 proposes requiring the MDOT State Highway Administration (SHA) to designate MD 210 as the President Barack Obama Highway. MD 210, known as Indian Head Highway, runs 20.86 miles from Potomac Avenue in the town of Indian Head, Maryland to the District of Columbia boundary in Forest Heights, Maryland. The road was named for the town of Indian Head, Maryland and is alternately a four and six lane divided highway along its length.

While Senate Bill 213 does not clarify the exact meaning of “designate,” the potential renaming of a State highway or any public road poses challenges and costs including the following: difficulty in locating an emergency 911 services call based on an older road name, upgrading emergency and other government mapping systems, updating directional and other signage both along the highway and off-site, and confusion and potential costs with legal or real estate documents that reference a road name that may no longer exist. For these reasons, a dedication of a roadway or facility is preferable as it provides the visible honoring of an individual or entity by way of appropriate signage and avoids the previously enumerated concerns of a renaming.

MDOT has previously established policy and procedures by which roadways can be dedicated or named. The Maryland Transportation Commission (MTC) may be petitioned to recommend that a Maryland roadway or state-owned transportation facility be dedicated in honor of an individual or entity. This recommendation is then submitted to the Secretary of Transportation for a decision.

The Maryland Department of Transportation respectfully requests the Committee carefully consider this information when deliberating Senate Bill 213.

Respectfully submitted,

Heather Murphy  
Director of Planning and Capital Programming  
Maryland Department of Transportation  
410-865-1275

Melissa Einhorn  
State Legislative Officer  
Maryland Department of Transportation  
410-841-1102