

March 11, 2022

The Honorable Kumar P. Barve
Chairman, House Environment and Transportation Committee
251 House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: Letter of Information – House Bill 1433 – State Highways – Designations – Piscataway Highway

Dear Chairman Barve and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) takes no position on House Bill 1433 but offers the following information for the Committee's consideration.

House Bill 1433 proposes requiring the MDOT State Highway Administration (SHA) to designate MD 210 as the Piscataway 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, where the highway begins at the Indian Head Naval Support Facility.

The MDOT has an established policy and procedure for roadway dedication or naming. Upon receipt of a dedication, naming or renaming request, the Maryland Department of Transportation gathers the appropriate information to present to the Maryland Transportation Commission (MTC). Such requests should include statements of support from local elected officials and state legislators, as well as statements showing broad community support. Upon review, the MTC then submits the request to the Secretary of Transportation for a decision.

House Bill 1433 does not clarify the exact meaning of "designate," but the potential renaming of a State highway or any public road poses challenges and costs including: reprinting of maps, replacing signs along and beyond the immediate highway area, changing mailing addresses, difficulty in locating an emergency 911 services call based on an older road name, upgrading emergency and other government mapping systems, and confusion and potential costs with legal or real estate documents that reference a road name that no longer exists. For these reasons, the MDOT SHA recommends the dedication process for a roadway or facility, as it visibly honors the requested individual, group, or entity with the appropriate signage and avoids the concerns enumerated above.

The Maryland Department of Transportation respectfully requests the Committee consider this information when deliberating House Bill 1433.

Respectfully submitted,

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

Pilar Helm
Director of Government Affairs
Maryland Department of Transportation
410-865-1090