
Transportation Committee

HJM 4000

Brief Description: Extending the naming of Martin Luther King, Jr. Way.

Sponsors: Representatives Gregerson, Obras, Street, Ormsby and Hill.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requests the Washington State Transportation Commission to commence proceedings to extend the naming of a portion of State Route 900 in King County as the "Martin Luther King Jr. Way" as a memorial to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Hearing Date: 1/23/25

Staff: Christine Thomas (786-7142)

Background:

State Highway Facility Naming.

The Washington State Transportation Commission (Commission) is responsible for naming state transportation facilities, including state highways, bridges, rest areas, and other state highway facilities. The Commission's policy states, "A naming is done in a thorough and deliberative manner to honor and institute an enduring memory of a person or group of people who have contributed significantly to the well-being of the state or nation, and with the widespread support of the people from the area in which the facility is located."

For the Commission to consider a proposal, the requesting entity must provide sufficient evidence indicating community support and acceptance of the proposal. This evidence can include a letter of support from the state or federal legislator representing the area encompassing the facility to be renamed. Other evidence that can provide proof of community support includes

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a resolution passed by other elected bodies in the impacted area, support from the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT), and supportive action from a local organization such as a chamber of commerce.

Upon passage of a joint memorial requesting the naming of a facility, the Commission holds a public hearing prior to taking action. After the Commission takes final action in naming a state transportation facility, the WSDOT designs and installs the appropriate signs.

Martin Luther King Jr. Way.

Martin Luther King Jr., was born January 15, 1929, and was an American Baptist minister, social activist, political philosopher, and a leader in the civil rights movement in the United States from 1955 until his death by assassination in 1968. In 1986, the Commission approved the renaming of State Route (SR) 900 between the southerly city limits of Seattle to the westerly city limits of Renton as "Martin Luther King Jr. Way."

Summary of Bill:

The memorialists request that the Commission commence proceedings to extend the naming of Martin Luther King Jr. Way, as a memorial to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., along SR 900 from the westerly city limits of Renton to the junction with SR 515, and then continuing the entirety of SR 515 between the junction with SR 900 and the junction with SR 516.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.