



THE SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION
WASHINGTON, DC 20590

March 6, 2025

The Honorable Muriel E. Bowser
Mayor of the District of Columbia
Washington, DC 20004

Dear Mayor Bowser:

I am writing to request your assistance in making Washington, D.C. safe and beautiful once again and restoring our pride in our Nation's Capital with a focus on safe travel within the District's transportation system. The U.S. Department of Transportation has strong partnerships with state transportation departments across the country, including the District Department of Transportation (DDOT), to implement projects and achieve important national priorities, most notably, safety. I would like to further our strong partnership with you and DDOT to improve and ensure the safety of all people traveling the roadways throughout the Nation's Capital.

I am concerned that some of DDOT's practices are not aligned with the goals of safe and efficient operation for all road users. For example, the application of murals or other forms of artwork within the traveled way can distract from the critical task of safe travel for everyone, including motorists, bicyclists, and pedestrians; interfere with traffic control devices; and raise compliance concerns. These practices provide no demonstrated safety or operational purpose, adversely impact the effectiveness of other traffic control devices, and were installed intentionally to draw attention to their message rather than to promote the safety and mobility of road users and efficient use of the roadway in accordance with statute and regulation.

Any public roadway should use all real property and its associated right-of-way exclusively for the safe mobility of road users and efficient utilization of the roadway. This focus on safety includes traffic control devices—traffic signs, signals, and pavement markings—used to warn or guide pedestrian and vehicular traffic. This allows road users to instantly recognize and react to traffic control devices in a safe, predictable manner, which benefits all road users. Representative Eleanor Holmes Norton's office recently contacted the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) about pedestrian safety in the District, further underscoring my concerns.

I request that you direct the DDOT Director to submit a written report to me within 30 days that identifies all potential areas of roadway non-compliance, locations of elevated risk impacting safety for the traveling public, and any proposed plans that may need to be reviewed as a result of these concerns. With these shared goals, please outline any steps that you plan to take as Mayor to ensure compliance with various Federal safety standards and returning to the safe and efficient operation of public roadways and the associated rights-of-way.

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Please coordinate any questions you may have with Mr. Lamin Williams, FHWA's District of Columbia Division Administrator.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'S.P. Duffy', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Sean P. Duffy