

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-2102

One Bowdoin Square
Tenth Floor
Boston, MA 02114

January 14, 2011

Victor M. Mendez,
Federal Highway Administrator
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE
Washington, DC 20590

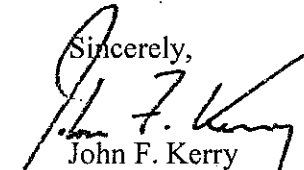
Dear Administrator Mendez:

I am writing in support of a waiver sought by the Brookline Board of Selectmen in regards to historic cast aluminum street signs. It is my understanding that the Federal Highway Administration has issued new requirements, through the Manual of Uniform Highway Control Devices, to replace street name signs with newer, standard green and white signage with larger printing.

For those who live in and travel through Brookline, the distinctive white metal street signs are in many ways landmarks that distinguish Brookline streets from the neighboring communities and recall the history of the Town. The historic white signs date back to World War II, when they replaced wooden street signs. The only other set of cast metal signs in the country is located in Lower Marion Township, Pennsylvania. Brookline's historic signs have been deemed eligible for listing in the National and State Registers of Historic Places by the Massachusetts Historical Commission. The Massachusetts Highway Division has previously given permission to the Town of Brookline to keep their beloved cast aluminum signs intact as long as no federally funded project or state highway was involved. Approximately 500 of the historic signs have been retained, with most of those signs located in the Town's National Register and Local Historic Districts.

Brookline is faced with a unique circumstance as an urban environment that demands modernization, while also realizing the need to maintain their strong place in the history of our Commonwealth and our nation. I respectfully request that the Federal Highway Administration recognize the importance of Brookline's historically significant street name signs. I thank you for giving this matter your most serious consideration.

Sincerely,



John F. Kerry
United States Senator

cc: Rick Marquis, Acting FHWA Division Administrator
cc: MA Dept of Transportation – Highway Division