

115TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 539

To designate the area between the intersections of 16th Street, Northwest and Fuller Street, Northwest and 16th Street, Northwest and Euclid Street, Northwest in Washington, District of Columbia, as “Oswaldo Payá Way”.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MARCH 7, 2017

Mr. CRUZ (for himself, Mr. RUBIO, and Mr. MENENDEZ) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

A BILL

To designate the area between the intersections of 16th Street, Northwest and Fuller Street, Northwest and 16th Street, Northwest and Euclid Street, Northwest in Washington, District of Columbia, as “Oswaldo Payá Way”.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. FINDINGS.**

4 Congress finds that—

5 (1) Fidel Castro or Raul Castro has been the
6 autocratic ruler of Cuba for 58 years;

1 (2) Fidel Castro and Raul Castro have relent-
2 lessly and consistently oppressed any efforts to bring
3 democratic freedoms and human rights to the people
4 of Cuba during that 58-year period;

5 (3) Oswaldo Payá was a Cuban political dis-
6 sident dedicated to promoting democratic freedoms
7 and human rights in Cuba;

8 (4) the Communist Party of Cuba has always
9 viewed that commitment to freedom as a threat to
10 the existence of the Communist Party of Cuba;

11 (5) on July 22, 2012, a violent car crash, wide-
12 ly believed to have been carried out by the Castro re-
13 gime, took the lives of Oswaldo Payá and Harold
14 Cepero, another dissident;

15 (6) the official investigation into the crash has
16 been demonstrated to be compromised, and the Cas-
17 tro regime has offered no plausible evidence of the
18 innocence of the Castro regime in the crash, leaving
19 the circumstances of the death of Oswaldo Payá un-
20 known;

21 (7) opposition by Oswaldo Payá to the Com-
22 munist Party of Cuba began at a young age, when
23 he refused to become a member of the Young Com-
24 munist League as a primary school student, and
25 continued through high school, when he publicly

1 criticized the invasion of Czechoslovakia by the So-
2 viet Union;

3 (8) the Communist Party of Cuba responded to
4 the opposition by Oswaldo Payá to the invasion of
5 Czechoslovakia by the Soviet Union by sending
6 Oswaldo Payá to a labor camp for 3 years;

7 (9) Oswaldo Payá forewent a chance to escape
8 Cuba in the 1980 Mariel boatlift, deciding instead to
9 continue the fight for democracy in Cuba, saying,
10 “This is what I am supposed to be, this is what I
11 have to do.”;

12 (10) by creating the Varela Project in 1998,
13 Oswaldo Payá demonstrated his staunch commit-
14 ment to peacefully advocating for freedom of speech
15 and freedom of assembly for his fellow Cubans;

16 (11) in recognition of his determination for po-
17 litical reforms through peaceful protests, Oswaldo
18 Payá was awarded the Sakharov Prize for Freedom
19 of Thought by the European Parliament in 2002
20 and the W. Averell Harriman Democracy Award
21 from the National Democratic Institute for Inter-
22 national Affairs in 2003 and was nominated for the
23 Nobel Peace Prize by former Czech President Václav
24 Havel in 2005; and

1 (12) renaming the street in front of the Em-
 2 bassy of Cuba in the District of Columbia after
 3 Oswaldo Payá serves as an expression of solidarity
 4 between the people of the United States and the peo-
 5 ple of the Cuba, who are engaged in a long, non-
 6 violent struggle for fundamental human rights.

7 **SEC. 2. DESIGNATION OF OSWALDO PAYÁ WAY.**

8 (a) DESIGNATION OF WAY.—

9 (1) IN GENERAL.—The area between the inter-
 10 sections of 16th Street, Northwest and Fuller
 11 Street, Northwest and 16th Street, Northwest and
 12 Euclid Street, Northwest in Washington, District of
 13 Columbia, shall be known and designated as
 14 “Oswaldo Payá Way”.

15 (2) REFERENCES.—Any reference in a law,
 16 map, regulation, document, paper, or other record of
 17 the United States to the area referred to in para-
 18 graph (1) shall be deemed to be a reference to
 19 Oswaldo Payá Way.

20 (b) DESIGNATION OF ADDRESS.—

21 (1) DESIGNATION.—The address of 2630 16th
 22 Street, Northwest, Washington, District of Colum-
 23 bia, shall be redesignated as 2630 Oswaldo Payá
 24 Way.

1 (2) REFERENCES.—Any reference in a law,
 2 map, regulation, document, paper, or other record of
 3 the United States to the address referred to in para-
 4 graph (1) shall be deemed to be a reference to 2630
 5 Oswaldo Payá Way.

6 (c) SIGNS.—The Administrator of General Services
 7 shall construct street signs that shall—

8 (1) contain the phrase “Oswaldo Payá Way”;

9 (2) be similar in design to the signs used by
 10 Washington, District of Columbia, to designate the
 11 location of Metro stations; and

12 (3) be placed on—

13 (A) the parcel of Federal property that is
 14 closest to Oswaldo Payá Way; and

15 (B) the intersections of 16th Street,
 16 Northwest and Fuller Street, Northwest and
 17 16th Street, Northwest and Euclid Street,
 18 Northwest in Washington, District of Columbia.

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