

**COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
COMMITTEE REPORT**

1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20004

DRAFT

TO: All Councilmembers

FROM: Chairman Phil Mendelson
Committee of the Whole

DATE: September 20, 2022

SUBJECT: Report on Bill 24-422, the “Torres Strait Way Designation Act of 2022”

The Committee of the Whole, to which Bill 24-422, the “Torres Strait Way Designation Act of 2022” was referred, reports favorably thereon with technical amendments and recommends approval by the Council.

CONTENTS

I.	Background and Need.....	1
II.	Legislative Chronology.....	3
III.	Position of the Executive	3
IV.	Comments of Advisory Neighborhood Commissions	3
V.	Summary of Testimony.....	3
VI.	Impact on Existing Law	4
VII.	Fiscal Impact.....	4
VIII.	Section-by-Section Analysis.....	4
IX.	Committee Action.....	4
X.	Attachments	5

I. BACKGROUND AND NEED

On October 4, 2021, Bill 24-422, the “Torres Strait Way Designation Act of 2022”¹ was introduced by Councilmember Brooke Pinto. This bill would symbolically designate the portion of the alleyway system in Square 181 between Lots 162 and 801 as Torres Strait Way. The location is in Ward 2. A symbolic naming is for ceremonial purposes and shall be in addition to and subordinate to any name that is an official name.

The Embassy of Australia in Washington D.C., located at 1601 Massachusetts Avenue N.W. It is currently being rebuilt and the new design will include access to the embassy loading dock and parking off of the adjacent alleyway which is currently unmarked. The Embassy of the Philippines Consular Center is located adjacent to the same unmarked alley at 1617 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W. The Australian Embassy has requested the alley be designated to facilitate access

¹ Originally introduced as the Wiltberger East Alleys Designation Act of 2021.

for delivery drivers, couriers, emergency vehicles, and law enforcement. Further, the Office of Foreign Missions at the Department of State has no objection to the proposal.

The Embassy of Australia and the Embassy of the Philippines reached mutual agreement to name the alley “Torres Strait Way.” The choice of the proposed name refers to the Torres Strait, which is located to the north of Australia and provides naval passage between Australia and the Philippines. Historically, the Torres Strait linked Australia and the Philippines through early exploration and continues to so via trade, enterprise, mutual geopolitical interest, and migration.

Legal Background

The Street and Alley Closing and Acquisition Procedures Act of 1982, effective March 10, 1983 (D.C. Law 4-201; D.C. Official Code § 9-204.01 *et seq.*) (“Act”) establishes procedures for closing streets and alleys, opening new streets and alleys, naming public spaces, and other procedures related to streets and alleys. The Act authorizes the Council to symbolically or officially designate or change the name of any public space in the District of Columbia, including streets and alleys.² In October 2016, the Act was amended to create a clear distinction between official and symbolic street and alley namings and to establish distinct processes and requirements for each type of naming.³

An “official name” refers to the legal designation of an alley or a street for mailing address and other purposes,⁴ whereas a “symbolic name” for a street or alley shall be in addition to and subordinate to any name that is an official name.⁵ An official name of an alley shall contain the suffix “Alley” or “Court.”⁶ A symbolic name of a street or alley shall contain the suffix “Way” or “Plaza.”⁷ As established by Bill 24-422, “Torres Strait Way” is a symbolic alley designation of the portion of the alleyway system in Square 181 between Lots 162 and 801.

The Act also establishes a notice requirement for symbolic designations. Pursuant to D.C. Official Code § 9-204.23(b), the ANC in which the symbolic designation is located must be put on notice of the public hearing regarding the proposed naming.

After the symbolic street or alley designation legislation becomes law and all conditions required by the Council and the Act have been satisfied, the District Department of Transportation (“DDOT”) shall install signage indicating the symbolic name of the alley or street, or portion thereof. Such signage shall be uniform and distinct from signs for official names⁸

Torres Strait Way is a fitting name for the alley that runs between the Australian and Philippine Embassies, as the Torres Strait runs between both countries, and both Embassies are in

² See D.C. Official Code § 9-204.01 *et seq.*

³ See D.C. Law 21-0161, effective from Oct. 8, 2016, Published in the *DC Register* Vol 63 and Page 12933.

⁴ D.C. Official Code § 9-201.01(5A).

⁵ D.C. Official Code § 9-204.03a(a).

⁶ D.C. Official Code § 9-204.03(c).

⁷ D.C. Official Code § 9-204.03a(c).

⁸ D.C. Official Code § 9-204.24(d).

agreement on the symbolic name. Thus, the Committee of the Whole recommends Council approval of Bill 24-422, the “Torres Strait Way Designation Act of 2022.”

II. LEGISLATIVE CHRONOLOGY

October 4, 2021	Bill 24-422, the “Torres Strait Way Designation Act of 2022” is introduced by Councilmember Pinto.
October 5, 2021	Bill 24-422 is officially read at Legislative Meeting and the referral to the Committee of the Whole is complete
October 8, 2021	Notice of Intent to Act on Bill 24-422 is published in the <i>DC Register</i> .
June 17, 2022	Notice of a public hearing on Bill 24-422 is published in the <i>DC Register</i> .
July 6, 2022	The Committee of the Whole holds a hearing on Bill 24-422.
September 20, 2022	The Committee of the Whole marks up Bill 24-422.

III. POSITION OF THE EXECUTIVE

Dan Emerine, Manager, Policy and Legislative Affairs, District Department of Transportation, testified on behalf of the Executive that it had “no objection” to the symbolic street namings in Bill 24-422. DDOT testified at the hearing that the cost of the signage contemplated in the bill is \$1,315. His testimony is attached.

IV. COMMENTS OF ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSIONS

The Committee received not testimony or comments from and Advisory Neighborhood Commission.

V. SUMMARY OF TESTIMONY

The Committee of the Whole held a public hearing on Bill 24-422 on Wednesday, July 6, 2022. The testimony is summarized below. Copies of the written testimony are attached to this report.

Dan Emerine, Manager, Policy and Legislative Affairs, District Department of Transportation, testified on behalf of the Executive that it had “no objection” to the designation.

In addition, the Committee received written comments in support of Bill 24-422 which are attached to this report. The Committee received no testimony or comments in opposition to Bill 24-422.

VI. IMPACT ON EXISTING LAW

Bill 24-422 has no impact on existing law. D.C. Official Code § 9-204.01⁹ authorizes the Council to name any public space. D.C. Official Code § 9-204.03(a) authorizes the Council to designate a symbolic name for an alley “that shall be in addition to and subordinate to any name that is an official name.”¹⁰ Bill 24-422 symbolically designates the portion of the alleyway system in Square 181 between Lots 162 and 801 as Torres Strait Way. Additionally, “a symbolic name of a street or alley shall contain only the suffix Way or Plaza,” such as proposed by Bill 24-422.¹¹ Lastly, the Act provides that, with limited exception, no public space shall be named in honor of any living person or in honor of any person who has been deceased less than two years.¹²

VII. FISCAL IMPACT

According to the Fiscal Impact Statement of the Chief Financial Officer, funds are sufficient in the fiscal year 2022 through fiscal year 2025 budget and financial plan to implement the proposed legislation. Because the cost to the District Department of Transportation (DDOT) is estimated at \$1,315 (\$65 per sign for fabrication and \$125 for installation), the cost of Bill 24-422 can be absorbed.

VIII. SECTION-BY-SECTION ANALYSIS

<u>Section 1</u>	States the short title of Bill 24-422.
<u>Section 2</u>	Symbolically designates the portion of the alleyway system in Square 181 between Lots 162 and 801 as Torres Strait Way.
<u>Section 3</u>	Adopts the Fiscal Impact Statement.
<u>Section 4</u>	Establishes the effective date by stating the standard 30-day congressional review language.

IX. COMMITTEE ACTION

⁹ Street and Alley Closing and Acquisition Procedures Act of 1982, effective March 10, 1983 (D.C. Law 4-201).

¹⁰ D.C. Code § 9-204.03(a).

¹¹ D.C. Code § 9-204.03(c).

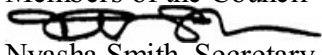
¹² See D.C. Code § 9-204.05.

X. ATTACHMENTS

1. Bill 24-422 as introduced.
2. Written Testimony and ANC 6E letter.
3. Map of Proposed Designation.
4. Fiscal Impact Statement for Bill 24-422.
5. Legal Sufficiency Determination for Bill 24-422.
6. Committee Print for Bill 24-422.

COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington D.C. 20004

Memorandum

To : Members of the Council

From : Nyasha Smith, Secretary to the Council
Date : Monday, October 4, 2021
Subject : Referral of Proposed Legislation

Notice is given that the attached proposed legislation was introduced in the Office of the Secretary on Monday, October 04, 2021. Copies are available in Room 10, the Legislative Services Division.

TITLE: "Torres Strait Way Designation Act of 2021", B24-0422

INTRODUCED BY: Councilmember Pinto

The Chairman is referring this legislation to Committee of the Whole.

Attachment
cc: General Counsel
Budget Director
Legislative Services



COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
OFFICE OF COUNCILMEMBER BROOKE PINTO
THE JOHN A. WILSON BUILDING
1350 PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE, N.W., SUITE 106
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20004

October 1, 2021

Nyasha Smith, Secretary
Council of the District of Columbia
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20004

Dear Secretary Smith,

Today, I am introducing the “Torres Strait Way Designation Act of 2021.” Please find attached a signed copy of the legislation.

This legislation would symbolically designate the alleyway between 1601 Massachusetts Avenue N.W. and 1603 Massachusetts Avenue N.W., in Ward 2, as “Torres Strait Way”.

The Embassy of Australia in Washington D.C., located at 1601 Massachusetts Avenue NW in Ward 2, is currently constructing a new embassy building to be completed approximately during the fourth quarter of 2022. With the construction of the new embassy, the alleyway will provide access to the embassy loading dock and car park. The embassy has requested for the alley to be given a name to facilitate access for delivery drivers, couriers, emergency vehicles, and law enforcement. Further, the Office of Foreign Missions at the Department of State has no objection to the proposal.

The Embassy of Australia and the adjoining Embassy of the Philippines have reached mutual agreement for naming the alley “Torres Strait Way”. The choice of the proposed name refers to the Torres Strait, which is located to the north of Australia and provides naval passage between Australia and the Philippines. Historically, the Torres Strait linked Australia and the Philippines through early exploration and continues to so via trade, enterprise, mutual geopolitical interest, and migration.

Should you have any questions about this legislation, please contact my Legislative Director, Barry Weise, at bweise@dccouncil.us.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "BE RP".

Brooke Pinto



Councilmember Brooke Pinto

1 A BILL
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6 IN THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
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10 To symbolically designate the alleyway between 1601 Massachusetts Avenue N.W. and 1603
11 Massachusetts Avenue N.W., in Ward 2, as “Torres Strait Way”.

12 BE IT ENACTED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, That this
13 act may be cited as the “Torres Strait Way Designation Act of 2021”.

14 Sec. 2. Pursuant to sections 401, 403a, and 423 of the Street and Alley Closing and
15 Acquisition Procedures Act of 1982, effective March 10, 1983 (D.C. Law 4-201; D.C. Official
16 Code §§ 9-204.01, 9-204.03a, and 9-204.23), the Council symbolically designates the alleyway
17 between 1601 Massachusetts Avenue N.W. and 1603 Massachusetts Avenue N.W., in Ward 2, as
18 “Torres Strait Way”.

19 Sec. 4. Fiscal impact statement.

20 The Council adopts the fiscal impact statement in the committee report as the fiscal
21 impact statement required by section 4a of the General Legislative Procedures Act of 1975,
22 approved October 16, 2006 (120 Stat. 2038; D.C. Official Code § 1-301.47a).

23 Sec. 5. Effective date.

24 This act shall take effect following approval by the Mayor (or in the event of veto by the
25 Mayor, action by the Council to override the veto), a 30-day period of congressional review as
26 provided in section 602(c)(1) of the District of Columbia Home Rule Act, approved December

27 24, 1973 (87 Stat. 813; D.C. Official Code § 1-206.02(c)(1)), and publication in the District of
28 Columbia Register.

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
District Department of Transportation



Public Hearing on
Bill 24-417, the “Theresa Howe Jones Way Designation Act of 2021”
Bill 24-422, the “Torres Strait Way Designation Act of 2021”
Bill 24-427, the “River Rock Court Designation Act of 2021”
Bill 24-436, the “Kenilworth Courts Street Designation Act of 2021”
Bill 24-528, the “W. Cardell Shelton Way Designation Act of 2021”
Bill 24-736, the “Wilhelmina and Calvin Rolark Way Symbolic Street Designation
Act of 2022”
Bill 24-761, the “Overbeck Alley Designation Act of 2022”

Testimony of
Dan Emerine
Manager, Policy and Legislative Affairs Division
District Department of Transportation

Before the
Committee of the Whole
Council of the District of Columbia

Wednesday, July 6, 2022
9:30 a.m.
Live via Zoom Video Conference Broadcast
John A. Wilson Building
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20004



Good morning, Chairman Mendelson, members of the Council, staff, and District residents. My name is Dan Emerine, Manager of the Policy and Legislative Affairs Division at the District Department of Transportation, commonly referred to as DDOT. I am here today to present testimony on behalf of Mayor Muriel Bowser and DDOT Director Everett Lott regarding Bill 24-417, the “Theresa Howe Jones Way Designation Act of 2021”; Bill 24-422, the “Torres Strait Way Designation Act of 2021”; Bill 24-427, the “River Rock Court Designation Act of 2021”; Bill 24-436, the “Kenilworth Courts Street Designation Act of 2021”; Bill 24-528, the “W. Cardell Shelton Way Designation Act of 2021”; Bill 24-736, the “Wilhelmina and Calvin Rolark Way Symbolic Street Designation Act of 2022”; and Bill 24-761, the “Overbeck Alley Designation Act of 2022.”

The stated purpose of **Bill 24-417** is to *symbolically* designate the 4020 block of First Place, S.W., in Square 6172, in Ward 8, as *Theresa Howe Jones Way*. For visualization purposes, I have attached to this testimony a copy of a DDOT-generated map highlighting the 4020 block of First Place, S.W. In fiscal terms, the cost of each installed sign for this designation is approximately \$190 (\$65 for sign fabrication and \$125 for sign installation). Sufficient signage requires two total signs, totaling \$380.

The stated purpose of **Bill 24-422** is to *symbolically* designate the alleyway between 1601 Massachusetts Avenue N.W. and 1603 Massachusetts Avenue N.W., in Ward 2, as *Torres Strait Way*. For visualization purposes, I have attached to this

testimony a copy of a DDOT-generated map highlighting the alleyway between 1601 Massachusetts Avenue N.W. and 1603 Massachusetts Avenue N.W.

Sufficient signage requires one sign, totaling \$190, as the alleyway only has one entrance.

The stated purpose of **Bill 24-427** is to *officially* designate the public alley system within Square 969, bounded by 10th Street, S.E., Independence Avenue, S.E., 11th Street, S.E., and C Street, S.E. in Ward 6, as *River Rock Court*. For visualization purposes, I have attached to this testimony a copy of the plat of the designated alley. Sufficient signage requires four total signs, totaling \$760.

The stated purpose of **Bill 24-436** is to designate the street in Square 5116 between 45th Street, N.E. and Kenilworth Avenue, N.E., in Ward 7, as *Amin Muslim Street* and the street in Square 5116 that connects to Quarles Street, N.E., in Ward 7, as *Denise Stanley Street*. For visualization purposes, I have attached to this testimony a copy of the plat of the designated streets. Sufficient signage requires five total signs, totaling \$950. DDOT notes that, as introduced, the bill does not make explicit whether the designation is symbolic or official. For purposes of this testimony, DDOT assumes the designation is official, but recommends that the committee specify the type of designation.

The stated purpose of **Bill 24-528** to *symbolically* designate the 100 block of Upsal Street, S.E., in Square 6094, in Ward 8, as *W. Cardell Shelton Way*. For visualization purposes, I have attached to this testimony a copy of a DDOT-

generated map highlighting the 100 block of Upsal Street, S.E. Sufficient signage requires two total signs, totaling \$380.

The stated purpose of **Bill 24-736** is to *symbolically* designate the 500 block of Foxhall Place, S.E. in Square 6126, in Ward 8 as *Wilhelmina and Calvin Rolark Way, S.E.* For visualization purposes, I have attached to this testimony a copy of a DDOT-generated map highlighting the 500 block of Foxhall Place, S.E. Sufficient signage requires one sign, totaling \$190, as the 500 block of Foxhall Place, S.E. only has one entrance.

The stated purpose of **Bill 24-761** is to *officially* designate a portion of the public alley system within Square 1009, bounded by 12th Street, N.E., D Street, N.E., 13th Street, N.E., and C Street, N.E. in Ward 6, as *Overbeck Alley*. For visualization purposes, I have attached to this testimony a copy of the plat of the designated alley. Sufficient signage requires two total signs, totaling \$380. The portion of the public alley system addressed in the bill only has two entrances where DDOT would normally post signs: one at the north entrance of the alley, and the other at the south entrance of the alley.

DDOT is able to absorb the costs of these signs within its current budget and does not foresee any operational impact these designations would have on the District's transportation network. Therefore, the Administration has no objection to these designations and DDOT stands ready to assist the Council and all other

stakeholders with any ceremonial unveiling activities that may materialize as a result of these Bills being passed.

This concludes my testimony. Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to testify before you today. I am available to answer any questions that you may have.



United States Department of State

Office of Foreign Missions

Washington, D.C. 20520

April 20, 2021

REF 21-559

Mr. Matthew Marcou
Associate Director
Public Space Regulations Division (PSRD)
District Department of Transportation (DDOT)
250 M Street SE
Washington, DC 20003

Dear Mr. Marcou:

The Department of State's Office of Foreign Missions (OFM) has been informed of the Embassy of the Commonwealth of Australia's plan to name the unnamed street between the Embassy of Australia, located at 1601 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20036, and the Embassy of the Republic of the Philippines, located at 1600 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20036.

OFM understands that after consultations with the Embassy of the Philippines, both the Embassy of Australia and the Embassy of the Philippines have agreed to name this street, *Torres Strait*.

The Department has no objection to the Embassy's proposal and would appreciate DDOT's review of the plans.

If you have any questions regarding this matter, please contact the Department's Office of Foreign Missions at (202) 895-3500, extension 5 or OFMProperty@state.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. Michael Lowell".

J. Michael Lowell
Principal Deputy Director, Acting

cc: Embassy of the Commonwealth of Australia



Note No. 45/2021

The Embassy of Australia in Washington D.C. presents its compliments to the United States Department of State's Office of Foreign Missions (OFM) and has the honour to refer to the naming of the currently unnamed lane between the permanent Chancery premises of the Embassy located at 1601 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W., Washington D.C. 20036, and the adjacent premises owned by the Embassy of the Republic of the Philippines located at 1600 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W., Washington D.C. 20036.

The Embassy respectfully requests the support of the Department in engaging with the Government of the District of Columbia's District Department of Transportation (DDOT) to communicate the preferred name for the lane located along the western boundary of the new Chancery at 1601 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W., Washington D.C. 20036.

The Embassy understands that OFM was previously contacted by DDOT in regard to the naming of the lane. OFM subsequently contacted the Embassy to advise that OFM could act as an intermediary with DDOT after the Embassy consulted the Embassy of the Republic of the Philippines and received its agreement for the choice of name.

Following consultation with the neighboring Embassy of the Republic of the Philippines the Embassy of Australia wishes to nominate '**Torres Strait**' to the DDOT as the name choice for the lane that runs between the two premises. A copy of a Diplomatic Note from the Embassy of the Republic of the Philippines (Note Number JMGR-66-2021) endorsing the name '**Torres Strait**' is attached.

The choice of the proposed name refers to the Torres Strait, which is located to the north of Australia and provides naval passage between Australia and the Philippines. The Torres

Strait linked the two countries through early exploration and continues to so via trade, enterprise, mutual geopolitical interest and migration.

The Embassy is hopeful that DDOT will grant permission for the proposed name and that administrative arrangements can be finalized to align with the completion of the new Chancery, currently scheduled for the fourth quarter of 2022. The Embassy, therefore, respectfully requests OFM assistance in liaising with DDOT to facilitate DDOT agreement to the naming of the lane '**Torres Strait**'.

Further information relating to the naming of the lane, or the new Chancery Project more broadly, can be obtained by contacting the Embassy's Relocations Manager, Sam Rossato via email sam.rossato@dfat.gov.au or phone 202-341-5531.

The Embassy of Australia in Washington D.C. avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Office of Foreign Missions, the assurances of the highest consideration.

WASHINGTON DC

9 April 2021



EMBASSY OF THE PHILIPPINES
WASHINGTON, D.C.

No. JMGR- -2021

The Embassy of the Republic of the Philippines presents its compliments to the Embassy of the Commonwealth of Australia and has the honor to refer to Note No. 38/2021 dated 30 March 2021.

The Embassy of the Republic of the Philippines concurs with the proposed name "Torres Strait" for the lane located between the Chancery Annex of the Embassy of the Republic of the Philippines and the New Australian Embassy.

The Embassy of the Republic of the Philippines avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Embassy of the Commonwealth of Australia the assurances of its highest consideration.

Washington, D.C.

31 March 2021



Bill 24-422, Torres Strait Way Designation Act of 2021



THE AREA SHOWN THUS ■ ■ ■ ■ IS SYMBOLICALLY DESIGNATED AS TORRES STRAIT WAY



1 **DRAFT COMMITTEE PRINT**
2 **Committee of the Whole**
3 **September 20, 2022**

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5 A BILL

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8 24-422
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11 IN THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
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15 To symbolically designate the portion of the alleyway system in Square 181 between Lots 162
16 and 801 as Torres Strait Way.

17
18 BE IT ENACTED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, That this
19 act may be cited as the “Torres Strait Way Designation Act of 2022”.

20 Sec. 2. Pursuant to sections 401, 403a, and 423 of the Street and Alley Closing and
21 Acquisition Procedures Act of 1982, effective March 10, 1983 (D.C. Law 4-201; D.C. Official
22 Code §§ 9-204.01, 9-204.03a, and 9-204.23), the Council symbolically designates the portion of
23 the alleyway system in Square 181 between Lots 162 and 801 as “Torres Strait Way”.

24 Sec. 3. Fiscal impact statement.

25 The Council adopts the fiscal impact statement in the committee report as the fiscal
26 impact statement required by section 4a of the General Legislative Procedures Act of 1975,
27 approved October 16, 2006 (120 Stat. 2038; D.C. Official Code § 1-301.47a).

28 Sec. 4. Effective date.

29 This act shall take effect following approval by the Mayor (or in the event of veto by the
30 Mayor, action by the Council to override the veto), a 30-day period of congressional review as
31 provided in section 602(c)(1) of the District of Columbia Home Rule Act, approved December
32 24, 1973 (87 Stat. 813; D.C. Official Code §1-206.02(c)(1)), and publication in the District of
33 Columbia Register.