

119TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 218

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

JANUARY 23, 2025

Mr. CRUZ (for himself, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. CURTIS, and Mr. SCOTT of Florida) 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) the revolution led by Fidel Castro in Cuba
6 in 1959 started 64 years of an ongoing dictatorship,
7 systemic human rights abuses, and a lack of basic

1 freedom of press, religion, assembly, and association
2 that continue to this day under the Communist rule
3 of Raúl Castro and his successor, Miguel Díaz-
4 Canel;

5 (2) Oswaldo Payá Sardiñas was a Cuban polit-
6 ical dissident and activist dedicated to promoting
7 democratic freedoms and human rights in Cuba;

8 (3) the Communist Party of Cuba has always
9 viewed individuals with a commitment to democracy
10 and freedom as a threat to the existence of the Com-
11 munist Party of Cuba;

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

16 (5) the official investigation conducted by the
17 Cuban regime into the crash has been demonstrated
18 to be compromised, and the Cuban regime has
19 blocked all efforts to conduct a credible and inde-
20 pendent investigation into the crash, leaving the cir-
21 cumstances of the death of Oswaldo Payá unknown;

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

1 continued through high school, when he publicly
2 criticized the invasion of Czechoslovakia by the So-
3 viet Union;

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

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

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

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

(11) on April 11, 2018, the Senate unanimously passed S. Res. 224, recognizing the sixth anniversary of the death of Oswaldo Payá Sardiñas, commemorating his legacy and commitment to democratic values and principles, and calling on the Cuban Government to allow an impartial, third-party investigation into the circumstances surrounding his death; and

(12) renaming the street in front of the Embassy of Cuba in the District of Columbia after Oswaldo Payá serves as an expression of solidarity between the people of the United States and the people of Cuba, who are engaged in a long, nonviolent struggle for fundamental human rights.

SEC. 2. DESIGNATION OF OSWALDO PAYÁ WAY.

(a) DESIGNATION OF WAY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—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, shall be known and designated as “Oswaldo Payá Way”.

(2) REFERENCES.—Any reference in a law, map, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the area referred to in para-

1 graph (1) shall be deemed to be a reference to
 2 Oswaldo Payá Way.

3 (b) DESIGNATION OF ADDRESS.—

4 (1) DESIGNATION.—The address of 2630 16th
 5 Street, Northwest, Washington, District of Colum-
 6 bia, shall be redesignated as 2630 Oswaldo Payá
 7 Way.

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

13 (c) SIGNS.—The District of Columbia shall construct
 14 2 street signs that shall—

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

16 (2) be placed immediately above existing signs
 17 at the intersections of 16th Street, Northwest and
 18 Fuller Street, Northwest and 16th Street, Northwest
 19 and Euclid Street, Northwest in Washington, Dis-
 20 trict of Columbia; and

21 (3) be similar in design to the signs used by the
 22 District of Columbia to designate the location of
 23 Metro stations.

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