

CHRIS VAN HOLLEN  
8TH DISTRICT, MARYLAND

COMMITTEE ON  
WAYS AND MEANS

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND  
GOVERNMENT REFORM

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

June 5, 2009

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Mr. Neil J. Pedersen  
Administrator  
Maryland State Highway Administration  
707 North Calvert Street  
Baltimore, MD 21202-3668

Dear Mr. Pedersen:

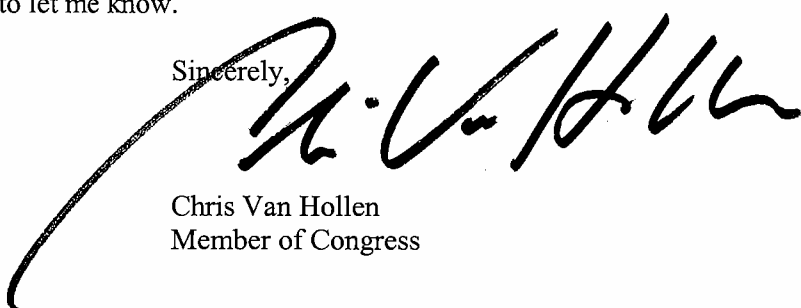
Thank you for your April 17, 2009 reply to my letter dated March 27, 2009 requesting incorporation of bicycle and pedestrian facilities into SHA's work on the improvements proposed for the roadways near the National Naval Medical Center. I appreciate your commitment to improving conditions for cycling, walking, and transit as part of this effort.

I was pleased to learn that members of SHA's management team, including Kirk McClelland and Andy Scott, met with representatives of the Washington Area Bicyclist Association, the NIH Bicycle Commuter Club, and the Montgomery County Planning Department on May 19, 2009 to discuss the incorporation of bicycle facilities in the County's master plan into the BRAC-related intersection proposals. I understand that your staff is now planning to include improvements to the North Bethesda Trail along Old Georgetown Road and the existing multi-use path along Rockville Pike, construction of a new multi-use path along West Cedar Lane, and a variety of additional modifications for the benefit of bicyclists and pedestrians throughout the area covered by the scope of work on the BRAC-related intersections.

As you may know, the North Bethesda Trail on the western side of the NIH property is currently no more than a five-foot sidewalk at the curb. By widening the trail to ten feet and moving it back from the street by at least five feet to conform to AASHTO standards, this segment can become a far more useful link for both bicyclists and pedestrians traveling to, from, and through the Medical Center area to destinations including downtown Bethesda, Rockville, and the residential neighborhoods in the Rockville Pike corridor. Likewise, the construction of a multiuse path on West Cedar Lane will fill an important gap in the bicycle and pedestrian network, allowing safe and convenient access from Rock Creek Park and Beach Drive to the east and several densely populated neighborhoods to the west of Old Georgetown Road. Along with the improvements to the path abutting Rockville Pike described in your letter to me, these connections represent a major step forward from the original plan that your staff presented to the public.

I appreciate your attention to the needs of bicyclists, pedestrians, and transit users as part of the BRAC-related plans. I would appreciate your keeping me apprised of developments to these plans, especially as they affect bicyclists, pedestrians, and transit users. If I can offer any assistance in this regard, please do not hesitate to let me know.

Sincerely,

  
Chris Van Hollen  
Member of Congress