

[FHWA Home](#) | [Feedback](#)**VA Policy Memorandums - Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices**U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration

Memorandum

Subject: **INFORMATION:** Adopt-a-Highway Signs - Interpretation

Date: November 9, 2001

From: Dennis C. Judycki
Deputy Executive DirectorReply to: HOTO-1
Attn. of:To: Core Business Units
Service Business Units
Directors of Field Services
Division Administrators
Federal Lands Highway Division Offices

On April 27, 2001, former Deputy Executive Director Vincent F. Schimmoller issued a memorandum providing guidance with respect to the size and markings on Adopt-A-Highway signs. Given the factors discussed below and a review of our policy by new agency leadership, effective immediately, that memorandum is rescinded.

Recent discussions of the April 27 policy, along with dialogue in several of the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) subcommittees, have highlighted much deeper issues that go beyond the simple enforcement of the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices standards. For example, the Maintenance Subcommittee has argued that several States have entered into agreements that allow a commercial entity to exchange maintenance and litter pickup services for signs acknowledging commercial sponsors who pay for the services. This saves scarce maintenance resources for those States. They also noted that the use of more experienced crews used in such arrangements increases safety.

The Traffic Engineering Subcommittee, on the other hand, has argued that this is a foot in the door to other types of advertising, including electronic advertising on overhead message boards, raising serious concerns over driver distraction and confusion.

At the request of the Subcommittee on Maintenance, the AASHTO Standing Committee on Highways will establish a task force to work through the many underlying issues associated with signage for the Adopt-A-Highway program. The Federal Highway Administration leadership will actively participate in those deliberations.

Further guidance will be forthcoming after we consider the AASHTO Task Force recommendations. In the interim, States should follow their existing guidelines on Adopt-A-Highway signing. To the extent possible, these guidelines should ensure that Adopt-A-Highway signs serve only as an acknowledgement, not an advertisement.

If you have questions, please contact Mr. Ernie Huckaby at 202-366-9064.

Attachment

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