

Initial Request to allow Dual Language (Spanish and English) Changeable Message Sign Messages

Background:

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) (District 8) is requesting to pilot the use of Changeable Message Signs (CMS) to display dual language safety message in Spanish and English.

CMS are used statewide to give motorists real-time traffic safety and guidance information about events and incidents that significantly impact traffic or travel on the State Highway System. Events include advance notice of upcoming roadwork or special events that will affect traffic/travel, and to notify the travelling public of work zones ahead. It is also used to display safety campaign messages. These safety campaign messages could be part of the annual statewide CMS safety campaign calendar or part of specific local area larger multi-organizational and multi-media safety campaign.

In accordance to Section 1A.10 "Interpretations, Experimentations, Changes, and Interim Approvals" of the California Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (CA-MUTCD), this request is being made to the California Traffic Control Devices Committee and Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) for experimenting with a new application or manner of use, not specifically described in the CA-MUTCD.

Upon approval of this request, Caltrans District 8 will develop a detailed proposal including, location, message, and implementation, etc. in coordination with Caltrans HQ Traffic Operations and Safety Program, District and HQ Public Information Officer, FHWA and Local Partners. District 8 will also conduct survey in person and social media to measure effectiveness of the pilot.

If successful, District 8 will coordinate with HQ Traffic Operations, Safety Programs and FHWA in getting approval to draft a standard to be included in the CA-MUTCD in the use of dual language message on the Changeable Message Signs.

Problem Statement:

Caltrans District 8 (Inland Empire) now has many Hispanic residents. They account for almost 50% of the population. By county, the share was 48.4 percent in Riverside County and 52.8 percent in San Bernardino County.

Changeable Message Signs can provide immediate and relevant information to road users and multilingual message can provide great flexibility in regions where a significant proportion of the population that only speak an alternative

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language (Spanish) to the majority. The goal is to utilize this asset to promote equity, enhanced awareness of linguistic and cultural diversity, and outreach to citizens that only speaks an alternative language (Spanish) in the region.

Proposed Change:

District 8 would like to propose a pilot to display dual language safety message in Spanish and English on the CMS. The use of CMS signs to display dual language message statewide has not been attempted. The CA-MUTCD does not have provisions that disallow the use of dual language message.

Visual Representation:

