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**From:** Erin O'Hara O'Connor  
**Sent:** Friday, February 23, 2018 6:26 AM  
**To:** LAW-1L;LAW-2L;LAW-3L  
**Cc:** law-faculty;Laura Sellati;Becky Shepherd;Christi Morgan  
**Subject:** Upcoming Meetings Regarding Roberts Hall  
**Attachments:** FloridaCh73-370.pdf

Dear Students:

Next Thursday, March 1<sup>st</sup>, from 9:00-11:00am in room 102 (Roberts Hall), the President's Advisory Panel on University Namings and Recognitions will be holding a Town Hall focusing on B.K. Roberts Hall.

I'm writing to provide you with a bit of history and more information regarding the issues being discussed. The naming of B.K. Roberts Hall was associated with state legislation, specifically Chapter 73-370 (attached). It was passed in May 1973 as a special law. BK Roberts was one of a team of four individuals who worked to start FSU Law, and he played a leading role. While serving on the Florida Supreme Court, he authored two opinions that had the effect of protecting the UF College of Law from racial integration, despite the US Supreme Court's mandate in *Brown v. Board of Education*.

A few of our alums and students have asked the committee to consider taking action to change the name of Roberts Hall, and others have requested the removal of two additional namings/recognitions unrelated to the law school. In response, the committee has decided to host a series of town halls, including one at the College of Law. The committee's official website is <http://president.fsu.edu/namings/>. It provides more information on the committee's work to date.

A College of Law alumna has created a website advocating for the removal of BK Roberts' name on the Hall: <https://www.renamebkrobertshallnow.org/>. This website provides information on BK Roberts and his controversial Florida Supreme Court opinions.

The town halls are intended to provide a forum for community conversation about BK Roberts Hall and the other naming/recognition matters. I encourage you to attend at least one of them if you have views on the issue. This is a terrific opportunity to use your advocacy skills. BK Roberts Hall has proven to be an emotion-fraught topic in our community, so please let's also keep in mind our very strong community norms of inclusion and collegiality.

If you are unable to attend Thursday's town hall, the announcement below lists the dates and locations of the others.

Let me know if you have questions or concerns. I hope to see some of you at next Thursday's town hall!

Erin O'Hara O'Connor | Dean and McKenzie Professor of Law

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*Please note: Florida has very broad public records laws. Most written communications to or from state/university employees and students are public records and available to the public and media upon request. Your e-mail communications may therefore be subject to public disclosure.*

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**From:** Important Announcements [mailto:importantannouncements@fsu.edu]

**Sent:** Thursday, February 22, 2018 3:54 PM

**Subject:** You're Invited: President's Advisory Panel on University Namings and Recognitions Town Halls

A message from FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY



This message has been approved by Renisha Gibbs, Associate Vice President for Human Resources and Chair of the President's Advisory Panel on Namings and Recognitions for distribution to all faculty, staff, and students.

This past fall, President Thrasher announced the creation of the *President's Advisory Panel on University Namings and Recognitions*. Since that time, the panel of appointed university students, faculty, staff, administrators, and alumni has been working to review and make recommendations on current university policies concerning campus names and markers, including statues and other recognitions.

Based on public input thus far, President Thrasher recently asked the panel to prioritize B.K. Roberts Hall, Francis Eppes Hall, and the Eppes statue as we continue our work, recognizing that there are members of our community who feel very passionately about these campus landmarks in particular. He also requested that the panel submit its recommendations on these items first before returning their focus to the rest of their charge.

As the panel moves forward to consider these three priorities, we are seeking input from the entire university community, including students, faculty, staff, alumni, and members of our local community. We invite you to attend one of the Town Hall forums listed below to share your valuable feedback.

**Date:** *Tuesday, February 27, 2018*  
**Time:** *5:00 – 7:00 p.m.*  
**Location:** FSU Alumni Center, Grand Ballroom  
 1030 West Tennessee Street, Tallahassee

**Date:** *Monday, March 5, 2018*  
**Time:** *9:00 – 11:00 a.m.*  
**Location:** Askew Student Life Center, Room 101A-D  
 942 Learning Way, Tallahassee

**Date:** *Thursday, March 1, 2018*  
**Time:** *9:00 – 11:00 a.m.*  
**Location:** Roberts Hall, Room 102  
 425 West Jefferson Street, Tallahassee

**Date:** *Tuesday, March 6, 2018*  
**Time:** *2:00 – 4:00 p.m.*  
**Location:** Florida State Conference Center (Turnbull Center), Room 103  
 555 West Pensacola Street, Tallahassee

**Date:** *Thursday, March 1, 2018*  
**Time:** *3:00 – 5:00 p.m.*  
**Location:** Black Student Union House,  
 Multipurpose Room  
 921 West Jefferson Street, Tallahassee

**Details:** In order to hear from as many people as possible, comments will be limited to no more than five minutes per speaker, with the option to supplement feedback by submitting additional comments via the panel's website: <http://president.fsu.edu/namings/>.

Speakers will also be asked to consider and provide feedback on the following:

*With regard to B.K. Roberts Hall, the Francis Eppes Hall, and the Francis Eppes statue:*

- *What impact have these landmarks had on you and/or others? What message do you and/or others think these landmarks are communicating?*
- *What role should university history play in our current day campus environment?*
- *What do you think should be done and why (i.e., suggestions for solutions)? Are there additional options besides removing and/or renaming?*

We encourage you to attend. Your feedback is important to ensure that the Panel makes a recommendation that is inclusive of the feedback provided by our university community.

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Approved by the Governor May 29, 1973.

Filed in Office Secretary of State May 29, 1973.

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## CHAPTER 73-370

### Senate Bill No. 905

AN ACT designating the building housing the College of Law at Florida State University in Tallahassee, Florida, as the "B. K. Roberts Hall"; providing an effective date.

WHEREAS, B. K. Roberts was born of a pioneer Florida family in the town of Sopchoppy and the County of Wakulla, Florida, on February 5, 1907, and developed his love of books and letters early by becoming the youngest licensed public school teacher in the history of Florida at the age of fourteen; and thereafter in 1928 entering the practice of law in Tallahassee, Florida, having been awarded a Bachelor of Laws degree from the University of Florida College of Law, followed by admission to the Bar of the Supreme Court of the United States; and

WHEREAS, he continued in his practice until 1942, when he patriotically responded to the call of his country by enlisting and serving with distinction in the United States Naval service until 1946, after which he resumed the practice of law; and

WHEREAS, his distinction as a citizen, scholar of the law, and student of government led to his appointment as a Justice of the Supreme Court of Florida in 1946, an office which he has held continuously since that time; and

WHEREAS, in recognition and respect for his ability and the fidelity with which he discharged his duties, his colleagues and Associate Justices unanimously elected him to serve as Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Florida in 1953 and 1954, an honor which was to make the said B. K. Roberts the youngest Chief Justice of any state in the Union; and

WHEREAS, his colleagues of the Court have continued their recognition of the said B. K. Roberts by subsequently electing him to two additional two-year terms as Chief Justice, 1961-1963, and 1971-1972, an honor which has been bestowed on only two other men in our State's history; and in 1972 he was honored nationally by being elected Deputy Chairman of the National Conference of Chief Justices; and

WHEREAS, as a Justice of the Supreme Court of Florida for over twenty-three years, he has enriched the law with his learning, strengthened the court with his character, and added new security to the liberties and freedom of our citizens through his interpretation of the Constitution and laws of our land; and

WHEREAS, in addition, the said B. K. Roberts has continued his quest to assist the cause of a better government by serving on the Florida Constitutional Revision Commission from 1966 to 1967, as Chairman of the subcommittee on human rights, and as Chairman of the Judicial Council of Florida from 1962 until the present; and

WHEREAS, the said B. K. Roberts, through his proven leadership and ability in seeking a better government and his interest in the rights of the people before the law is widely known as one of the Country's most serious students of judicial reform, having been a primary sponsor and architect of the Florida Public Defender System, and Judicial Qualification Commission and, more recently, the general revision of our entire trial court structure and administration of justice; and

WHEREAS, it is generally known throughout the University community that for over ten years he worked with dedication and undaunted persistence towards the creation of the Florida State University College of Law, and

WHEREAS, in recognition of this goal and devotion, the Chairman of the Board of Regents of the Florida University System, in 1965, appointed him as Chairman of a Citizens Activation Committee to promote, establish, and develop the said Florida State University College of Law; and

WHEREAS, all projections and advice suggested that such an institution could not be in operation in less than three years, or considered for accreditation in less than five years, it was primarily due to the faith, persuasion and ingenuity of the said B. K. Roberts that in the span of one year a dean of national reputation and a faculty of outstanding scholars of the law had been retained, a temporary but adequate facility had been made available, a generous private contribution had furnished a basic library and, to the amazement of all, in September, 1966, the doors of the Florida State University College of Law opened to greet an entering class of 125 freshmen; and

WHEREAS, the development and reputation of the college was thereafter phenomenal with full accreditation by the American Bar Association and membership in the American Association of Law Schools being granted within three years of its opening, and the successful passage of the Florida Bar Examination by 100 per cent of the participating members of its first graduating class; and

WHEREAS, the State of Florida and the Legislature of the State of Florida desire in some fitting way to honor the said B. K. Roberts for his contributions to his people, government and profession, and deem it appropriate that such recognition can be extended and such honor worthily bestowed by setting aside and honoring with his name the building which houses his most beloved achievement, the Florida State University College of Law; and

WHEREAS, the Honorable Mason Ladd, the founding Dean of such College of Law has, in writing, recommended that the Law School be named in honor of Justice B. K. Roberts, NOW, THEREFORE,

*Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:*

Section 1. The structure owned by the State of Florida and presently housing the Florida State University College of Law in Tallahassee, Florida, shall bear the name of the individual who has given so much of his life to the principles taught within that institution and contributed so much to the existence of it, and said building shall be hereafter known as the "B. K. Roberts Hall".

Section 2. This act shall take effect immediately upon becoming a law.  
Approved by the Governor May 29, 1973.  
Filed in Office Secretary of State May 29, 1973.

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**CHAPTER 73-371****Senate Bill No. 582**

AN ACT relating to highway designation; providing that the highway constructed across the Indian and Banana Rivers in Brevard County be designated the Max K. Rodes Bridge and Causeway; authorizing and directing the department of transportation to erect markers; providing an effective date.

WHEREAS, Max K. Rodes served as a member and chairman of the Board of County Commissioners of Brevard County, and

WHEREAS, the citizens of Brevard County appreciate and respect the services rendered by Max K. Rodes, and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that a suitable memorial to Max K. Rodes be designated for his service to the people of Brevard County, NOW, THEREFORE,

*Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:*

Section 1. The highway designated State Road 404, constructed from United States Highway 1 (State Road 5) across the Indian and Banana Rivers in Brevard County to State Road A-1-A is hereby named the Max K. Rodes Bridge and Causeway.

Section 2. The department of transportation is hereby authorized and directed to erect appropriate markers designating the "Max K. Rodes Bridge and Causeway".

Section 3. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law.

Approved by the Governor May 31, 1973.

Filed in Office Secretary of State June 1, 1973.

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**CHAPTER 73-372****Senate Bill No. 747**

AN ACT relating to building designation; naming the state archives library and museum building the "R. A. Gray Archives, Library and Museum Building"; providing an effective date.

*Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:*

Section 1. The state archives, library, and museum building to be constructed is hereby designated and named the "R. A. Gray Archives, Library and Museum Building."