



STATE OF MAINE  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
16 STATE HOUSE STATION  
AUGUSTA, MAINE 04333-0016

Janet T. Mills  
GOVERNOR

Bruce A. Van Note  
COMMISSIONER

February 6, 2024

**Testimony of Paul Merrill**  
**Maine Department of Transportation**  
**Before the 131<sup>st</sup> Legislature, Joint Standing Committee on Transportation**

**Neither For Nor Against**

LD 2173

*Resolve, to Rename the Interstate 295 Interchange in the Town of Freeport the Matthew MacMillan Bridge*

---

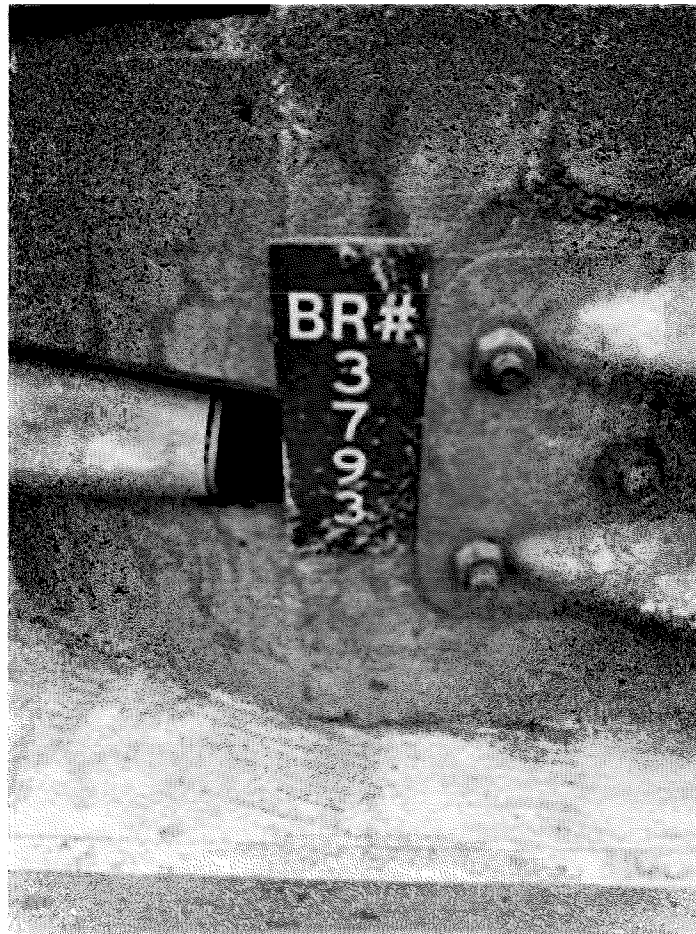
Senator Chipman, Representative Crafts, and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on Transportation; my name is Paul Merrill, and I am Director of Communications at the Maine Department of Transportation. MaineDOT is neither for nor against LD 2173, *Resolve, to Rename the Interstate 295 Interchange in the Town of Freeport the Matthew MacMillan Bridge*.

MaineDOT considers the naming of bridges, roadways, and other state transportation infrastructure to be within the purview of the Legislature. Simply put, we build them, and you name them. Accordingly, we generally do not take positions on so-called "naming bills." However, we do submit written testimony regarding whether the particular infrastructure under consideration has been named before, and if so, what that name is. In this case, we are not aware of any previous legislatively sanctioned names for this bridge. MaineDOT's current inventory number for this structure is 5720.

As the committee is aware, in the last legislative session, two bridges were erroneously named. While we believe that these errors were made due to miscommunication when the bills were submitted, we have a few suggestions on how to prevent similar occurrences from happening in the future. All state-owned bridges in Maine are numbered. These numbers are generally visibly posted on the bridge. MaineDOT recommends that legislators require constituents requesting a bridge naming bill to obtain a picture of the bridge number marker, or if that is not easily found, a photo of the structure referencing geographical markers. We suggest that the committee add this requirement to its list of standards for bridge naming bills.

MaineDOT will commit to contacting the Revisor's Office at the beginning of each new session to pass along the appropriate contact information of the person within the department who can assist with verifying bridge numbers and locations. These issues typically do not arise with the naming of roadways.

Thank you for your consideration.



###