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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
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February 6, 2024

Testimony of Paul Merrill
Maine Department of Transportation
Before the 131st Legislature, Joint Standing Committee on Transportation

Neither For Nor Against

LD 2183

Resolve, to Correct the Designation of a Bridge in Canaan to Be Named After Staff Sergeant Richard Gerald Salsbury

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 2056, *Resolve, to Correct the Designation of a Bridge in Canaan to Be Named After Staff Sergeant Richard Gerald Salsbury*.

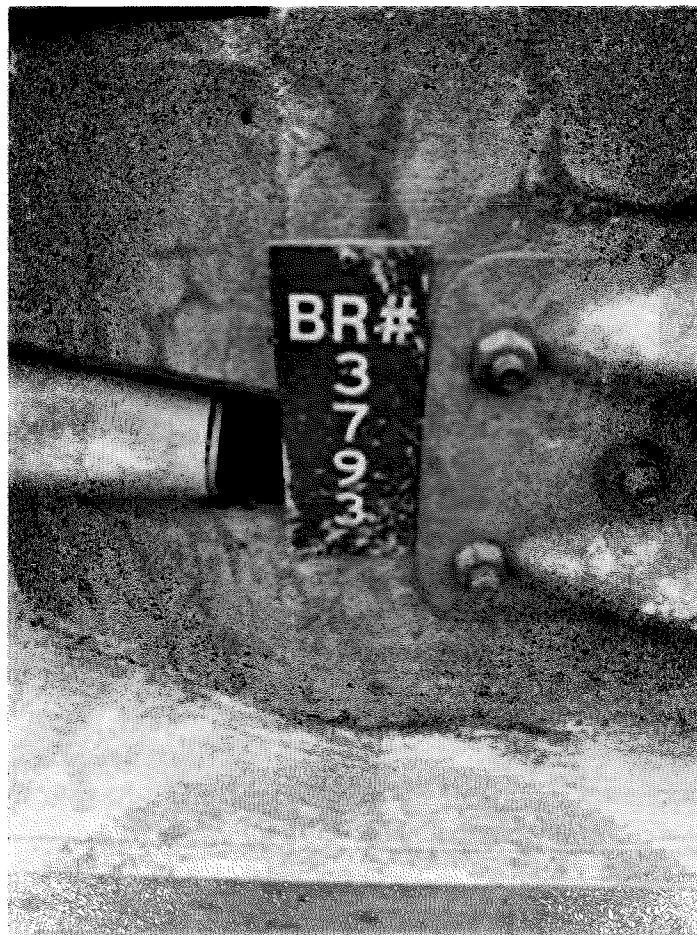
MaineDOT considers the naming of bridges, roadways, and other state transportation infrastructure to be within the purview of the Legislature. Simply put, we build them, and you name them. Accordingly, we generally do not take positions on so-called "naming bills." However, we do submit written testimony 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 2120.

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.



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