



STATE OF MAINE
Department of Public Safety
Office of State Fire Marshal
52 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333-0052

JANET T. MILLS
GOVERNOR
MICHAEL SAUSCHUCK
COMMISSIONER
SHAWN ESLER
STATE FIRE MARSHAL

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LD 28- Rename the Twin Rivers Fire Academy in Fairfield the Duane Bickford Fire Academy

Senator Beebe-Center, Representative Hasenfus, and distinguished members of the Criminal Justice and Public Safety Committee, I write in **support** of LD 28, with a slight amendment.

It is my recommendation to name the training facility the “Duane Bickford Fire Training Facility”.

I have consulted with Fire Chief Travis Leary of the Fairfield-Benton Fire Department, who confirmed that the facility does not have a name. It is his request that the building itself be dedicated to the late Chief Duane Bickford. In Chief Leary’s words, “This will ensure that everyone that attends any form of training at this facility for as long as it remains, will see Chief Bickford’s name attached.”

Chief Leary further clarified that the “Twin Rivers Fire Academy” was an annual certification program (Firefighter I & II) that Chief Bickford himself created in coordination with area Fire Chiefs. Chief Leary would like to see that program, to include its name, continue. **For clarity, the Twin Rivers Fire Academy (program) will be held at the Duane Bickford Fire Training Facility (training site and building).**

I write today, as both a representative of the Fire Service and as character reference, for Chief Bickford. Prior to his passing, I worked alongside him for over 20 years. Chief Bickford was educated, talented, dedicated, and always looked out for the best interest of his Fire Department and community.

From the idea of a regional training facility to its construction, Chief Bickford was instrumental in securing funding, communicating his ideas, soliciting involvement from area departments, and pushing forward to ensure a bright future training central Maine firefighters. With training being the highest priority to increase safety and reduce liability, it is no doubt that Chief Bickford’s efforts will impact the fire service for years to come. I will always remember his contribution to Maine’s fire service and his positive impact on my career.

I urge you to support and amend LD 28 to name the **Duane Bickford Fire Training Facility** in honor of the late Chief Duane Bickford of Fairfield.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions at 441-9958.

Shawn Esler, State Fire Marshal