

## OFFICE OF POLICY AND LEGAL ANALYSIS

Date: February 2, 2021  
To: Transportation Committee  
From: Karen S. Nadeau, Legislative Analyst

### **LD 45 – Resolve, Directing the Department of Transportation To Improve a Bridge over the West Branch of the Mattawamkeag River in Moro Plantation and Associated Culverts**

#### **SUMMARY:**

This resolve requires MaineDOT, using existing budgeted resources or available grants or other funding sources, to design and construct ancillary culverts or other flooding mitigation devices in support of Bridge 6239 in Moro Plantation.

#### **TESTIMONY:**

##### **Proponents:** *None other than the sponsor*

- Moro Plantation has 32 residents and is located at the intersection of Routes 11 and 212.
- The problem is Townline Road – four towns border on this approx. 5 miles of road.
- When the State put in Bridge #6239, they restricted the flow of the West Branch of the Mattawamkeag River, which has very low banks and a wide flood plain upstream from this bridge.
- During periods of high water, the flow is restricted at the bridge causing the river to spread out through the flood plain.
- Up the road several yards are two 3-foot culverts that drain the flood plain during high water; beaver dams and a high-water event caused one of the culverts to fail. The other is working in diminished capacity.
- The State should have put in larger culverts when the bridge was replaced; town of 32 residents does not have the resources to do this work. It will cost approximately \$500,000 to fix the two culverts.

##### **Opponents:** *MaineDOT*

- Oppose any measure that directly earmarks our Highway Fund dollars or proposes the addition of unscheduled work into our annual 3-year work plan.
- Bridge #6239 is not posted and remains open to traffic; it is listed in good condition.
- The scope of Maine's transportation funding challenges is daunting. Members of the BRC on transportation funding agreed that Maine's unmet transportation need is more than \$230 million per year; this was before the pandemic caused a decrease in traffic volumes and Highway Fund revenues.
- Bridge #6239 meets the definition of low-use bridge; the current AADT (average annual daily traffic) is 49 and the bypass detour length is between 7 and 12 miles. While the structure should be classified as a local bridge since it meets the criteria of a low-use bridge and is located on a town way, the bridge's AADT was 101 when the current bridge law was passed in 2001. Therefore, it remains the sole responsibility of MaineDOT.

**NFNA:** *None*

**RELEVANT STATUTES:** Title 23 sections 561 – 568 (Local Bridges)

**FISCAL IMPACT:** *Not yet determined.*