

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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# Sixty-Eighth Legislature.

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HOUSE.

No. 213.

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## STATE OF MAINE.

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RESOLVE in aid of the Wiscasset Bridge.

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*Resolved,* That there be and hereby is appropriated from  
2 the funds of the State, to be paid out of any money in the  
3 State treasury, not otherwise appropriated, the sum of  
4 twenty-five hundred dollars, to be expended under the direc-  
5 tion of the county commissioners of the county of Lincoln,  
6 for the repair of the Wiscasset bridge, between the towns  
7 of Wiscasset and Edgecomb, in the county of Lincoln, upon  
8 vouchers to be examined and approved by said county com-  
9 missioners, and audited by the Governor and Council.

Provided, that no part of the money hereby appropriated  
11 shall be applied, directly or indirectly, to the payment of any  
12 indebtedness of the proprietors of said bridge or of any divi-

13 dend on its capital stock, or for the ordinary care and super-  
14 intence of said bridge.

Provided further, that no dividend or distribution of the  
16 earnings or income of said corporation shall be declared or  
17 paid, directly or indirectly, to the proprietors of said bridge  
18 until all sums of money expended under this appropriation  
19 shall have been repaid by said proprietors to the State.

## STATEMENT OF FACTS.

Relating to Wiscasset Bridge.—Aid is asked of the State, under the Petitions heretofore presented, for the Repair and Preservation of said Bridge.

## HISTORY.

This bridge was built in 1847 under a charter granted in 1846, (Private Laws, chapter 329,) and has been maintained for fifty years. Prior to the building of the bridge the river was crossed by a ferry, first, and for many years managed, as a private enterprise, but incorporated in 1832 as the Sheepscoot Ferry Company, (Private Acts, chap. 281). Ferry operated by horse power. Expensive and unreliable. Tolls on the ferry were fifty to seventy-five per cent. higher than the rates established by charter of the bridge. Public convenience and necessity demanded a bridge. The sum of \$18,000.00 was raised, in shares of the par value of \$100.00 each, and expended in its construction. The proprietors were required by the charter to maintain a sufficient draw with pier and wharves for the accommodation of passing vessels, without expense or unnecessary delay, and with penalties for any neglect of this requirement, (Charter, sect. 3.) This requirement has always been complied with. Up to the opening of the Knox & Lincoln R. R., (about 1869), the bridge received a considerable income from the stage line running between Bath and Rockland; and being comparatively new, the proprietors were enabled to keep it in repair and pay occasional moderate dividends from the earnings.

Since 1869 no dividends have been paid, and the stock has had only a nominal value, and prior to 1886 the proprietors had incurred an indebtedness of \$326.00 which has not yet been paid. At that time (1886), Mr. J. C. Budd became the owner of a controlling interest in the capital stock, and having established a store at the western end of the bridge, maintained the bridge in connection with his business, paying for such repairs

as were made and for attending the draw out of the proceeds of his business, the tolls received being insufficient for that purpose. He failed in 1893, and the stock passed out of his control; but he still continued as agent and general manager. Fortunately the bridge has sustained no serious accident in the last ten years, but its present condition is such that it cannot be maintained without thorough and extensive repairs.

#### DESCRIPTION.

The length of the bridge is 3,333 feet. Width 25 feet. It is subject to the action of floating ice from above and tides from below, and the sub-structure is endangered by marine worms, requiring constant supervision and frequent replacement of piling and spi-shores. It is believed to be the longest bridge and crossing the deepest water of any in New England. To maintain this supervision requires the services of two men, besides the labor required in making necessary repairs and attending the draw.

#### PUBLIC NECESSITY.

All the roads leading eastward from the Kennebec river, between Bath and Augusta, inclusive, lead directly to Wiscasset; and there are no cross roads by which persons traveling from those points can reach places east of the Sheepscot river, without first coming to Wiscasset and then making a long detour to the north and east by way of Sheepscot bridge and Newcastle. Not only the local interests of Wiscasset and Edgecomb, but the general interests of the traveling public between the Kennebec and the southeastern towns of Lincoln county, require the maintenance of this bridge,—it being about twelve miles from the ocean, and the most southerly point at which a bridge can be maintained. While the Sheepscot bridge (five miles above), has been made free, it is still true that the public travel from Edgecomb, Boothbay, Boothbay Harbor and the southern part of Newcastle, as well as a considerable portion of that from Damariscotta and other towns to the south and eastward comes by way of Wiscasset bridge.

The towns of Wiscasset and Edgecomb are not able to assume the support of this bridge. Being situated near the sea-coast their roads are crossed by numerous streams, many of them being over tide waters and subject to extreme freshets. The town of Wiscasset has seventeen bridges of considerable length, one-third part of which are across tide waters, and one of them, more than half a mile in length, includes a draw which must be attended at all times. It was repaired four years ago at an expense of about one thousand dollars and requires considerable repairs every year. In the severe freshet of the spring of 1896, a large portion of these bridges was carried away or seriously damaged, and have been rebuilt at great expense to the town.

#### THE ESTIMATED EXPENSE

for necessary repairs on bridge is as follows:

240,000 ft. of plank for surface covering, at \$12 per M, delivered.....	\$2,880.00
121,420 ft. of stringers, at \$12 per M.....	1,457.40
167 caps, 10 x 12, 26 ft. long, 43,420 feet.....	521.00
100 new piling estimated at \$2, \$200; 6,666 ft. of railings, both sides, if new, \$300.....	500.00
New draw, \$100; booming and towing, \$100; trucking and scowing, \$200.....	400.00
Blacksmithing, \$100; iron, \$50; labor, \$273.....	423.00
	\$6,181.40

By close economy and using old material it is estimated that the bridge may be put in complete repair for the sum of \$5,000.00.



STATE OF MAINE.

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IN HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
March 3, 1897.

Reported by Mr. DICKEY of Fort Kent, from Committee on Ways and  
Bridges, and ordered printed under joint rules.

W. S. COTTON, *Clerk.*