

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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Seventy-first Legislature.

HOUSE.

No. 15

STATE OF MAINE.

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD ONE THOUSAND NINE
HUNDRED AND THREE.

AN ACT to maintain large bridges by the county and State.

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in
Legislature assembled, as follows:*

Section 1. The county commissioners of each county shall
2 hereafter have the supervision, inspection, building, repairing,
3 maintaining of all highway bridges in their respective coun-
4 ties, when such bridges are fifty feet or more in length, exclu-
5 sive of approaches, and forms a part of any county road or
6 forms a part of any State road designated under chapter 285,
7 Public Laws of 1901.

Sect. 2. The county commissioners shall inspect all public
2 bridges in their respective counties, and designate by sign or
3 number on the bridge all bridges included in this act, and all
4 such bridges shall become the property of the county where
5 located, and shall be known as county and State bridges.

Sect. 3. When any bridge so designated requires to be
2 repaired the county commissioners shall inspect the same,
3 and repair the same at the expense of the county. When
4 public necessity requires that a new bridge of the above classi-
5 fication be constructed or any toll bridge of the above classifi-
6 cation now established shall be made a public bridge, upon
7 petition of the inhabitants of the town or towns where such
8 bridge is located, they shall give the same notice required to
9 lay out, alter or discontinue highways, and if after hearing
10 the parties they decide such bridge to be a public necessity
11 they shall render to the municipal officers of the town or
12 towns where such bridge is located, a statement of the amount
13 necessary to build or purchase such bridge. If the town or
14 towns where such bridge should be located shall raise by vote
15 or otherwise and pay to the county treasurer of their county
16 one-third of the amount estimated by the county commis-
17 sioners to build or purchase such bridge, the commissioners
18 shall at the expense of the county, build such new bridge of
19 the above classification, or purchase any private bridge or toll
20 bridge for the public benefit.

Sect. 4. The county commissioners shall have the same
2 rights to take land for the purpose of locating a new bridge
3 or to take any private bridge for public use, as they now have
4 in laying out, altering, or discontinuing highways, and shall
5 proceed in the same manner. All parties aggrieved thereby
6 shall have the same rights and remedies as now provided for
7 damages in laying out, altering, or discontinuing highways.

Sect. 5. The county commissioners shall make a list of all
2 iron, steel, cement, or stone bridges, of this classification,
3 found in good condition in their counties, and fix a value
4 upon the same, deducting therefrom any aid received from
5 the State in the original construction of such bridge, and file
6 the list with the county treasurer. The county treasurer shall
7 allow the town where such bridges are located a discount

8 upon its county tax, of ten per cent. Such discounts shall
9 be allowed from year to year until the discounts of any given
10 town shall equal two-thirds of the recorded value of said
11 irons, steel, concrete or stone bridge located therein.

Sect. 6. The municipal officers of any town where a county
2 or State bridge is located shall act as agents to the county
3 commissioners in repairing any sudden defect, dangerous to
4 public travel, and shall immediately send the county commis-
5 sioners notice of such defect with a statement of their
6 expenses which shall be paid by the county, if the commis-
7 sioners, on inspection, find such expenses not excessive. If
8 after twenty-four hours actual notice the municipal officers
9 neglect to repair any sudden defect in a county and State
10 bridge, the town where such bridge is located shall be liable
11 for all damages for injuries to persons and property caused
12 by such defect.

Sect. 7. The county commissioners shall estimate the
2 amount to be expended in their several counties under this act,
3 and the same shall be assessed upon the county as other
4 county expenses. They shall annually render to the governor
5 and council an account of all money expended under this act,
6 deducting therefrom amount received from any towns. The
7 governor and council shall authorize the State treasurer to
8 reimburse each county one-half of all money so expended,
9 unless the governor and council should find such expenditures
10 exhorbitant and excessive, then they shall order a reimburse-
11 ment one-half of such part as are reasonable.

Sect. 8. The word town in this act shall be construed as
2 meaning cities, towns or organized plantations.

Sect. 9. This act shall take effect when approved.

STATE OF MAINE.

IN HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

AUGUSTA, January 23, 1903.

Tabled pending reference to Committee on Ways and Bridges, by Mr. THORNTON of Ashland, and ordered printed.

W. S. COTTON, *Clerk*.