

Tuesday, Feb. 24, 2015: Maine's beauty, climate change, roads

Wrong road priorities

After attending the Legislature's [Transportation Committee's work session on LD 47](#), I now understand why many lose faith in their elected representatives and the process itself. The Transportation Committee is supposed to provide oversight to the Maine Department of Transportation for Maine citizens, but it behaved more like an arm of that department.

Sentiments of elected leaders of Brewer and Eddington who [strenuously objected](#) to the proposed route multiple times and years of hard work by earnest area citizens choosing a route that made the most sense with the least adverse impact were cast aside as irrelevant.

The study system linkage need was quantified in the Final EIS: "Alternative 2B-2/the Preferred Alternative would further the study's purpose and satisfy the system linkage need in the near term (before 2035)." This project's design life is 20 years and (before 2035) is 2B-2's use by date. Add 20 years to today's date; each day exceeding December 31, 2034 is a day that 2B-2 does not satisfy the system linkage need in the near term or long term, even before construction. With project completion several years away, 2B-2 does not and cannot satisfy purpose and needs for the project's entire 20 year design life.

Over the next three years, MDOT's highway and bridge programs will experience a shortfall of approximately \$119 million per year, including \$70 million in unmet bridge needs per year. The fact is that basic transportation priorities will remain unmet because of MDOT's strange fixation on a deficient route that many question the need for.

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Brewer

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