



Rhode Island Turnpike and Bridge Authority

One East Shore Road | P.O. Box 437 | Jamestown, Rhode Island 02835-0437

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 29, 2017

FIRST AMERICAN FLAG ON MOUNT HOPE BRIDGE RITBA Hosts Ceremony

JAMESTOWN, R.I. – [The Rhode Island Turnpike and Bridge Authority \(RITBA\)](#) hosted an historic American flag installation ceremony today in Bristol RI. RITBA was joined by Local and State Elected Town Officials, Veterans and Active Military Personnel, Bristol Veteran’s Council, Members of the Bristol Fourth of July Celebration Committee, and Town Council Members for both Bristol and Portsmouth and various Town Law Enforcement Officers in recognizing the first ever installation of the flag in the heart of the historic Independence Day celebration hosted in Bristol each year. This celebration is the oldest celebration of Independence Day in the nation. The brand new 16’ by 30’ American flag hangs from the north tower of the Mount Hope Bridge which connects Aquidneck Island’s Portsmouth to Bristol. The eye-catching flag suspends in recognition of the Fourth of July as well as in honor of the Veterans and Active Military Personnel for their service.

The Rhode Island Turnpike and Bridge Authority Executive Director Buddy Croft welcomed speakers; Gail Parella and Lisa Sienkiewicz, Chief Marshals of the 2017 Bristol 4th of July Celebration, Brigadier General David Medeiros, Assistant Adjutant General, Rhode Island Army National Guard, Karl Antonevich, Commander, VFW Post 237-Bristol and Kasim Yarn, Director, Rhode Island Office of Veteran Affairs.

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During his speech, Karl Antonevich stated “In 1929, my father-in-law walked across this Bridge with the Boy Scouts...so this is a very special day.” Kasim Yarn, went on to say “Today is symbolic in so many ways. [It] defines who we are as Rhode Islanders. I tell anyone; when you study American history, look no further than Rhode Island.”

Travelers driving over the bridge on the way to the Bristol Independence Day celebrations or just passing through will now be able to witness the prominent display of the flag present on the bridge as a stunning exhibit of patriotism, spirit, and local history.

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