



Rhode Island Turnpike and Bridge Authority

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

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 16, 2019

CROFT TO RETIRE AS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE RHODE ISLAND TURNPIKE AND BRIDGE AUTHORITY

JAMESTOWN, R.I. – [The Rhode Island Turnpike and Bridge Authority \(RITBA\)](http://www.ritba.org) announced today that Earl J. “Buddy” Croft III will be retiring as Executive Director. Mr. Croft informed the RITBA Board of Directors of his planned retirement during the regularly scheduled Board meeting this morning. Mr. Croft will be retiring toward the end of January 2020. This will allow time for the Board to engage in the job posting, interview and selection process.

Mr. Croft served in the post for over 13 years becoming Executive Director in July of 2006. During this period he lead the organization through substantial changes which included implementation of electronic tolling, E-ZPass and Open Road Tolling (ORT). He was a driving force behind the installation of a median barrier on the Newport Bridge. During his stewardship, the RI General Assembly assigned RITBA the responsibility for the Sakonnet River Bridge and the Jamestown Bridge, thus expanding RITBA’s responsibilities. Mr. Croft oversaw numerous reconstruction and major maintenance projects on all four bridges under the RITBA’s jurisdiction.

Most recently, Mr. Croft spearheaded the 50th Anniversary Celebration of the Newport Pell Bridge.

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“Throughout his long career in government—including more than a decade as Executive Director of the Rhode Island Turnpike and Bridge Authority—Buddy Croft has shown himself to be a dedicated public servant. Every Rhode Islander has benefited from Buddy’s steadfast commitment to improving our state’s infrastructure and willingness to go the extra mile. I wish him the best of luck in his well-deserved retirement” said Governor Gina Raimondo.

“Buddy Croft has been a dedicated and hardworking leader, not just for the RITBA but throughout his career in government” said Stephen Waluk, Chairman of the RITBA Board of Directors.

Mr. Croft has worked in the public sector for 37 years. Before joining RITBA he worked for the Rhode Island Family Court in a variety of capacities including Chief of Staff, Truancy Court Coordinator and Drug Court Coordinator. Prior to his work for the Family Court he held a number of positions with the City of Cranston, including Assistant Public Works Director. Early in his career, Mr. Croft was a teacher and football coach at Bishop Hendricken High School.

In addition to his local activities, Mr. Croft was an active member of the International Bridge Tunnel and Turnpike Association (IBTTA). He served as President of IBTTA in 2016 and was a member of the organization’s Executive Committee from 2013 through 2017. IBTTA Executive Director and CEO Pat Jones said, “As IBTTA President in 2016, Buddy led our association under the theme ‘People, Partnerships and Progress.’ Under Buddy’s leadership, IBTTA convened a Transportation Visioning Summit to advance a common vision among the leaders of 18 different transportation related associations and societies. Buddy was always looking for ways to lift the entire membership of IBTTA and not just one sector.”

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“Working in the public service provides an opportunity to affect people’s lives in a positive way” said Croft. “I have also had the opportunity to work with a lot of dedicated people and I thank them for all of the support they have given me over the years” Croft concluded.

To ensure a smooth transition and maintain a high quality of service the Rhode Island Turnpike and Bridge Authority Board will immediately begin the search process for a new Executive Director.

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