NEWS RELEASE

Today's Date: June 8, 2012
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Caltrans calls for full retraction of Sacramento Bee Bay Bridge story

SACRAMENTO – In an effort to raise public awareness about the safety and integrity of the new east span of the Bay Bridge, Caltrans director Malcolm Dougherty called on the Sacramento Bee to retract a recent story that made false claims about the bridge.

In a letter to Sacramento Bee executive editor Joyce Terhaar, Dougherty outlines the major flaws in the May 27 story by reporter Charles Piller and calls on the paper to set the record straight. A Caltrans review of the Bee's assertions has determined that they are completely inaccurate. Every part of the new span has been thoroughly tested by expert engineers and independent experts who have determined that the bridge is safe and sound.

"The safety of millions is dependent on the engineering work we do on structures like the Bay Bridge," writes Dougherty. "As public servants, we are not beyond criticism or questioning of how we do our jobs, but we ask that you understand your unique responsibilities to present a fair picture of our work. We also expect you to get it right."

Director Dougherty also took the opportunity to reassure Californians that the new eastern span of the Bay Bridge meets or exceeds all safety standards.

"Every concrete pile in the new bridge's tower foundation has passed three rigorous, mandatory safety tests," said Dougherty. "The tower foundations were designed to exceed normal safety standards. Every aspect of the bridge has been tested, checked and rechecked multiple times. These tests were reviewed by a panel of internationally-renowned experts who have confirmed the integrity and seismic safety of the bridge."

Attached is Director Dougherty's letter to the Sacramento Bee.

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