FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
September 29, 2016

CONTACT

William Pitman, Governor’s Office
william.pitman@state.ma.us

Seth Gitell, House Speaker’s Office
Seth.gitell@mahouse.gov

Pete Wilson, Senate President’s Office
Peter.wilson@masenate.gov

Beacon Hill Leadership Moves To Rename Brookline Avenue Bridge In Honor Of David Ortiz

Governor Baker, Senate President Rosenberg, Speaker DeLeo Propose Bridge Naming for the retiring Boston Red Sox legend

BOSTON – Massachusetts took the first official step toward naming a bridge in honor of legendary Red Sox player David Ortiz tonight.

As part of a joint-plan between the House, Senate and Governor’s office, the House Committee on Ways & Means Committee put language out to poll as part of a supplemental budget that would rename the Brookline Avenue bridge, between Lansdowne Street and Newbury Street, and spanning the Massachusetts Turnpike, the “David Ortiz (‘Big Papi’) Bridge.”

The legislation states the honor is “in recognition of his athletic accomplishments during fourteen seasons as a member of the Boston Red Sox, and his personal contributions to the Commonwealth, notably, his charitable commitment to children in New England and the Dominican Republic who do not have access to the critical pediatric services they need, and in helping our city heal in the face of the Boston Marathon bombing tragedy.”
The Massachusetts Department of Transportation will place a “suitable marker on the bridge bearing the designation in compliance with the standards of the department.”

“David Ortiz’s accomplishments and heroics on and off the baseball field have made him a living legend, and his heartfelt contributions to the communities here and in his native Dominican Republic have made him an icon,” said Governor Charlie Baker. “As a lifelong Red Sox fan, I am thrilled to be able to help our Commonwealth create a lasting ‘Thank You’ to Big Papi through the renaming of this bridge.”

“I’m so excited to be part of this process of giving David Ortiz, one of the greatest Red Sox of all time, his proper due by naming a bridge in his honor,” House Speaker Robert A. DeLeo (D-Winthrop) said. “David has not only been an extraordinary baseball player, he has been an exemplary and inspirational member of our community, most notably after the Boston Marathon bombings. As a fan, I will miss his stride up to the plate followed by a clutch hit and the ballpark exploding into applause.”

“David Ortiz has been a big part of our community both on and off the field,” said Senate President Stan Rosenberg (D-Amherst). “Whether is it leading the Red Sox to multiple World Series Championships or all of his charitable work, he has truly been the pride of Boston. I am proud that we can honor him by naming this bridge after him so his legacy can live on after his playing days have ended.”

“David Ortiz has meant so much to the City of Boston, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and all of Red Sox Nation,” said Representative Brian S. Dempsey, House Chair of the Committee on Ways & Means (D-Haverhill). “Whether it be his clutch curse breaking hits on the diamond, his now legendary speech to rally the spirits of this city in the aftermath of the Marathon Bombing, or his prodigious charity work, ‘Papi’ has left a lasting impact. I am proud that we can recognize his efforts and wish him well as he ends his career with what we hope is another memorable playoff run.”

“As a Red Sox fan, I’m proud that the Commonwealth is taking this step to recognize one of our athletic legends,” said Senator Karen E. Spilka, Senate Chair of the Committee on Ways & Means (D-Ashland). “David Ortiz is a major force in baseball, and he has also made significant contributions to our community over the course of his long career.”

Once the House Ways & Means Committee poll is completed, the House will act on the measure tomorrow. The legislation will then go to the Senate.