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STATE OF MAINE LEGISLATURE  
COMMITTEE ON ENERGY, UTILITIES AND TECHNOLOGY – MARCH 7, 2017  
**LD 405 “AN ACT TO MAKE CHANGES TO THE SO-CALLED DIG SAFE LAW”**

WRITTEN TESTIMONY OF LESLIE ANDERSON  
PRESIDENT AND CEO OF PROPANE GAS ASSOCIATION OF NEW ENGLAND

Good afternoon, my name is Leslie Anderson. I am the President and CEO of the Propane Gas Association of New England. We are a regional trade association representing nearly 750 members who sell propane and propane related appliances and equipment in the six New England States. We exist to serve the propane industry by promoting safety, education and public awareness of the uses of propane. I am here today in Maine representing the 132 Maine based member companies of our organization who sell propane at 107 locations throughout the entire state of Maine. Propane is a federally approved clean fuel. Propane is not a greenhouse gas, it is not harmful to soil or water so it is an environmentally green choice for businesses and homes. Direct use of propane for space heating, water heating, cooking, and clothes drying reduces greenhouse gas emissions up to fifty percent.

I am here today to urge you to vote against LD 405, an act which expands Dig Safe by targeting Maine propane businesses. Most of our Maine members are family owned and many of them are small local businesses. This bill seeks to expand the jurisdiction of the PUC beyond its federal jurisdiction and it would create a rule that does not exist in any other state. As I mentioned, I work throughout New England and no other New England state has a requirement that sites be registered beyond those regulated under 49 CFR 192. In preparation for the meeting today I polled the other association heads for the rest of the US through our national association, and no other state has a law like the one proposed in this bill. Maine businesses and citizens should not be subjected to unnecessary rules and regulatory costs. There is no safety need for this bill.

Propane systems are unique and safer when compared to other products that are covered by the Dig Safe rules. Propane is not connected to a long pipeline. Each propane system is connected to a unique tank and each tank has a shut off valve. If a propane line is ever hit by an excavator, unlike natural gas lines, a propane tank is in the immediate vicinity and each tank can easily be turned off. Also, unlike pipelines, there is only a limited volume of propane in each tank. This makes propane installations much safer from a Dig Safe perspective.

Propane companies are not utilities. We do not have separate Dig Safe departments. If this bill were to pass the impact and costs would be staggering. You will hear specific examples today from some of our members about the problem with Dig Safe tickets. Our members are already overburdened with tickets. Ninety to ninety nine percent of the tickets they receive do not apply to their locations, and we are extremely concerned that the number of tickets would likely quadruple or more if this bill were to pass. The Maine PUC is an agency designed to regulate large utilities, not propane dealers. This expansion of Dig Safe rules to target propane facilities by the Maine PUC costs Maine businesses and our customers, and does not protect public safety. There have been no serious propane Dig Safe accidents or incidents. The propane industry has an outstanding safety record.

I urge you to vote ought not to pass on LD 405, I thank you for your time and I would be happy to answer any questions.

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