



1024 Suncook Valley Hwy. Unit C5  
PO Box 1071, Epsom, NH 03234-1071

**April 18, 2019**

**TESTIMONY OF LESLIE ANDERSON**

President and CEO of the Propane Gas Association of New England

**In Opposition to H 51 An Act Relating To Fossil Fuel Infrastructure**

The Propane Gas Association of New England (PGANE) is pleased to have the opportunity to offer its comments regarding H 51 an act relating to fossil fuel infrastructure.

The Propane Gas Association of New England is a regional trade association representing members of the propane industry in the 6 New England States. We exist to serve the propane industry by promoting safety, education and public awareness of the uses of propane. Our membership includes propane companies and suppliers, including numerous small companies who are often family owned and operated, many for several generations.

We are very concerned about the energy security of Vermont residents and I urge you not to limit any energy infrastructure and to certainly not discourage any propane bulk plant energy infrastructure. Propane is a critical backup energy used by many citizens and businesses when the power goes out. Because propane is blessed by chemistry and easily compacted into a portable tank it is the perfect fuel for emergency situations and for rural states.

In 2017, when Hurricanes Irma and Maria hit the island of Puerto Rico, propane bulk plants provided the only reliable energy security to the citizens hit by this emergency. Propane was the only energy that was available before, during and after the hurricanes across the island. Hospitals and businesses using combined heat and power propane systems were the only ones that continued to be operational following the hurricane and throughout the recovery period. Wind and solar farms were completely decimated by the storms and power lines took between 2 and 12 months to be restored.

It is important to have an energy infrastructure of propane bulk plants spread across our rural state so that the energy is available when roads are flooded, washed away or otherwise impassable. This is what saved Puerto Rico and Vermont's history with Irene shows the importance of this need for critical infrastructure in Vermont. During the coming decades, we will continue to experience extreme climate events such as floods and winter storms. Vermont needs a reliable backup power to provide heat to our homes and to cook and boil water during emergencies. Propane is the best solution for Vermont since it is nontoxic, does not contaminate groundwater or surface water, is portable, and is already present across our state supporting local businesses and employees by providing green jobs. Propane microgrids are increasing in use across Europe and are also a potential solution for Vermont energy security. Already this winter, we have seen commercial businesses and hospitals

switch from natural gas to propane as the demand for natural gas from residential customers skyrocketed across the region.

Propane is an extremely safe energy, and our members are committed to safety. Unlike natural gas, propane systems are small and distinct. In the event of any emergency, propane tanks can be turned off to isolate the supply of gas. It would be impossible for propane to have an incident like the one that happened in the Merrimack valley in Massachusetts. In addition, our association offers free three-day training for firefighters twice every year at the NH and Massachusetts fire academies, and we have provided training and grants to secure a response trailer to the Vermont Hazmat Team. We are committed to safety and all our Vermont drivers and technicians are nationally certified and trained.

Using propane furthers the fundamental environmental goal to Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle as promoted by EPA and DEP. Most people do not realize that propane is a byproduct of natural gas processing. About 5% of natural gas processing produces propane. If propane is not captured and beneficially used to offset another energy source, it is simply burned off. Propane is a partner with renewable energy as it is the perfect backup for solar installations and wind turbines. It is a recognized clean alternative fuel by EPA under the 1990 Clean Air Act, and it is an essential backup for our ever-increasing use of the electric grid. Propane is nontoxic and has no ozone depleting chemicals. Renewable propane is also a viable innovation and under development from both algae sources and bio sources.

Our industry is concerned about the environment and is actively working to reduce carbon emissions. Let me tell you how the propane industry is reducing millions of tons of carbon emissions each year. Across the globe, propane is being used to solve the world's greatest health threat, indoor air pollution caused primarily by burning wood for cooking and heating. Over 3.5 million people die annually from cooking with solid fuels. This leads to deforestation at an alarming rate in many developing countries and causes enormous carbon dioxide emissions. Moving one family from wood to propane saves over one ton of CO<sub>2</sub> per year. In India, the propane industry has partnered with the Indian government to move 3 million people annually from solid fuels to propane, saving over 3 million tons of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions per year for the last three years. In addition, moving 100 families to propane from wood saves an acre of rainforest land. **Across the globe propane is being used improve human health, reduce carbon emissions, and reduce deforestation.** <sup>1</sup> Propane is also literally improving the lives of women around the globe. Once women and girls switch from gathering wood, an activity that takes up to six hours per day and is fraught with danger including snake bite and rape, women are freed to become educated and spend more time with their children.<sup>2</sup> Vermont needs to join in this effort recognized by many countries around the globe, and partner with propane as a solution for reducing carbon dioxide emissions!

I thank you for the opportunity to comment before the committee.

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<sup>1</sup>[https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&ved=2ahUKEwi8r\\_CkxKrgAhVxTd8KHRHKDVsfjAAegQICRAC&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.wlpga.org%2Fwp-content%2Fuploads%2F2018%2F10%2FSubstituing-LPG-for-Wood-Carbon-and-Deforestation-Impacts.pdf&usg=AOvVaw0tDVhcCRzteoCRO2sxX8jc](https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&ved=2ahUKEwi8r_CkxKrgAhVxTd8KHRHKDVsfjAAegQICRAC&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.wlpga.org%2Fwp-content%2Fuploads%2F2018%2F10%2FSubstituing-LPG-for-Wood-Carbon-and-Deforestation-Impacts.pdf&usg=AOvVaw0tDVhcCRzteoCRO2sxX8jc)

<sup>2</sup> <file:///C:/Users/Lealie%20Anderson/AppData/Local/Microsoft/Windows/INetCache/IE/9KCM4Y26/2014-cooking-with-lp-gas-women-report.pdf>