



Testimony in support of LD 1035: Resolve, to Study the Safe Disposal of Single-use Propane Canisters

Victor Horton, Executive Director, Maine Resource Recovery Association
March 24, 2025

Senator Tepler, Representative Doudera, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Environment and Natural Resources, my name is Victor Horton. I am the Executive Director of the Maine Resource Recovery Association (MRRA). I appreciate the opportunity to testify in support of LD 1035.

The Maine Resource Recovery Association ("MRRA") is a nonprofit organization committed to supporting professional and sustainable materials management in Maine. Established in 1984, MRRA serves over 160 municipalities through its work to provide ongoing education on waste regulations, evolving waste streams, and best practices. We also assist in operating 60 transfer stations and recycling centers and help members find markets for recyclable materials, reinforcing Maine's commitment to resource recovery.

LD 1035 would afford an opportunity to study and take a closer look at a take back program or a deposit system to get the one pound propane tanks recycled and out of the waste stream.

Adding these canisters to the Extended Producer Responsibility Law seems like a good approach.

Currently there is no statewide program to collect, recycle, or dispose of these one pound canisters.

The one pound propane tanks can be found for sale in retail outlets that sell grocery, camping supplies, hardware, and convenience stores and possibly many other department stores.

I have recently spoken with several of our member towns and metal recyclers in the hopes of getting a better understanding of their handling of these items.

I found that the recycling methods are inconsistent state-wide.

Some towns have a vendor that collects them at their facility for a fee and a NH company hauls them off.



Another sends them to Ohio in bulk for recycling at a higher cost to recycle than the purchase price.

Several scrap metal vendors do not accept them at all while others will take them mixed with scrap metal and still others require them to be brought in separated from metal.

With regards to safety: these tanks are fairly small so sometimes they may slip through the steel can recycling stream and inadvertently be baled with scrap cans by a town employee. This could cause an explosion as some of the tanks come in with residual propane still in them.

When no easily accessible recycling outlet is available, they seem to become litter and end up in our woods and wild lands.

Having one pound propane tanks as part of EPR would send a consistent message to residents that there are reliable safe ways to dispose of them.

For these reasons, we urge the Committee to support LD 1035.

Victor Horton