



Solutions for a
Toxic-Free Tomorrow

Testimony of Sarah Woodbury, Vice President of Policy and Advocacy, Defend Our Health
In Support of LD 1035, "Resolve, to Study the Safe Disposal of Single-use Propane Canisters"
Before the Environment and Natural Resources Committee
March 24, 2025

Senator Tepler, Representative Doudera, and members of the Environment and Natural Resources Committee. My name is Sarah Woodbury. I am the Vice President of Policy and Advocacy for Defend Our Health. Defend Our Health's mission is to make sure that everyone has equal access to safe food and drinking water, healthy homes, and products that are toxic-free and climate friendly. I am here to testify in support of LD 1035, "Resolve, to Study the Safe Disposal of Single-use Propane Canisters".

Single-use propane tanks are an easy, affordable way for popular people that camp or are hosting cookouts to be able to cook meals outdoors. Unfortunately, the state of Maine doesn't have a good system set up for people to be able to dispose of these canisters, with some people having to drive several hours to a facility to take them. This isn't a viable way to manage the collection of these canisters, particularly in a state as large and rural as Maine. This leads to people either having a large collection of them in their homes, being left behind as litter at campsites, or improperly disposing of them in landfills or other facilities. This is dangerous. If the canisters still have any of the fuel in them, they could explode. This was the case in January of 2020 when a propane canister exploded at the Hampden waste facility causing a fire and injuring a worker. It also caused the facility to have to shut down while the assessed the damage¹.

Propane canisters should be managed under Maine's Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) law. It's our understanding that Rep. Rana has an amendment to to her original bill that will require the DEP to evaluate if they meet the criteria for the EPR law and how they should be managed. Disposing of these canisters can be dangerous and we need to have an appropriate program set up so folks can dispose of them safely. We support Rep. Rana's amendment and urge the committee to vote "ought to pass as amended" on LD 1035.

¹ Stone, M. (2020, January 10). *Propane tank explosion at Hampden Waste Plant injures worker and forces shutdown*. Bangor Daily News.
<https://www.bangordailynews.com/2020/01/10/bangor/propane-tank-explosion-at-hampden-waste-plant-injures-worker-and-forces-shutdown/?ref=also-like&noamp=available>