

Sue Waltz
Buxton
LD 894

February 7, 2023

TESTIMONY OF SUE WALTZ
Owner / CFO of Waltz & Sons Propane

BEFORE THE MAINE COMMITTEE ON STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT
Concerning LD 894 An Act to Preserve Heating and Energy Choice by Prohibiting a
Municipality from Prohibiting a Particular Energy System or Energy Distributor

Senator Nangle, Representative Stover and members of the State and Local Government Committee, I am pleased to have the opportunity to offer my comments regarding LD 894 An Act to Preserve Heating and Energy Choice by Prohibiting a Municipality from Prohibiting a Particular Energy System or Energy Distributor.

I, on behalf of my company, Waltz & Sons Propane, respectfully request that the committee vote PASS on this bill LD 894.

We are a family owned and operated Propane company located in Buxton. We service a 97% residential customer base in Southern Maine. Due to the diversity of our customer base and their various approaches to heating their homes, we feel it is imperative that their choices to heat and energize their homes is not restricted. We feel our customers choose a solution that suits their personal heating needs and do not need local or state government reducing their access to any heating source that may be best for them.

All fuel sources used for Primary Heating, be it electric for a Heat Pump, Oil, K-1, Wood Products, Propane or Natural Gas for a furnace or boiler, have high efficiency units which all meet stringent efficiency guidelines. However, regardless of how efficient and clean burning these units are, there may be a need to use a different fuel source to fuel other heating sources in a home, or at least have a choice to do so.

Many of our customers use our propane services to augment or supplement their primary heating system. A propane fireplace or space heater will operate when the power goes out and can heat a room quickly in the morning rather than turning on the central heating system. Perhaps it's a garage heater that can't be tied into their primary heating system. Of course, most of today's homeowners are choosing propane as a fuel for their generators, which help their primary heating units to operate when the power goes out. If we were to allow local or state government dictate our fuel choices, many of these choices could go away.

In most cases, it's the product that determines which fuel is chosen. This could be due to space challenges. For instance, many high efficiency boilers and water heaters are wall hung and take up minimal space. Perhaps there is no room for an outside condenser for a heat pump so that eliminates that choice. When renovating a home, heating choices could be limited to code restrictions or ease of installation. By having a choice of fuels, one can look at various options and choose one that works best for them.

Another key point is maintenance. By allowing fuel of choice, it is also allowing the consumer to choose their maintenance plan. For example, Heat Pump heads require routine maintenance throughout the year, and in many cases, a complete cleaning annually. Many of the newer high efficiency oil or propane boilers have lower, and less frequent, maintenance costs.

Of course, we can't forget our outside spaces. If certain energy sources were banned or restricted, it could extend beyond our primary heating and restrict the usage of many lifestyle products that many have come to enjoy. I know that personally, I would miss my fire tables, and heat in my she shed.

For these reasons, I, on behalf of my company, respectfully request that the committee vote PASS on this bill.

Thank you for your consideration.