

LATE TESTIMONY

Testimony for HB1879 on 1/25/2012 2:00:00 PM

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Cc: sackerman@hawaiigas.com
Attachments: HB1879 Revised Testimony.pdf (724 KB)

Testimony for CPC 1/25/2012 2:00:00 PM HB1879

Conference room: 325
Testifier position: Oppose
Testifier will be present: Yes
Submitted by: Stephanie Ackerman
Organization: The Gas Company
E-mail: sackerman@hawaiigas.com
Submitted on: 1/25/2012

Comments:

Forwarding revised testimony to replace the testimony that was previously emailed yesterday.

THE GAS COMPANY

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LATE TESTIMONY

January 25, 2012 **REVISED TESTIMONY**

Testimony To: House Committee on Consumer Protection and Commerce
 Representative Robert N. Herkes, Chair
 Representative Ryan I. Yamane, Vice Chair
 Members of the Committee

Presented By: Stephanie Ackerman
 Vice President Public Policy and Communications

Measure: H.B. 1879
Title: Relating to the One Call Center

Chair Herkes and Members of the Committee:

I am Stephanie Ackerman, Vice President of the Gas Company. The Gas Company strongly opposes this measure because it jeopardizes the safety of the public.

The Gas Company has been in business since 1904 providing safe, efficient and reliable gas service to Hawaii's homes and businesses. We distribute gas to over 35,000 utility customers statewide through more than 1,000 miles of underground gas pipelines.

Gas pipeline safety is tremendously important throughout Hawaii and throughout the nation. There are well established best practices to ensure our communities remain safe and it is important that these best practices are continually reinforced and not weakened over time.

Hawaii has an established One-Call prevention program requiring excavators to notify the center at no cost at least five working days prior to excavation. The One-Call center then contacts the utility companies so they can locate their infrastructure and prevent unintended damage. If excavators do not contact One-Call they can be liable for damages.

All stakeholders must recognize that safety is shared responsibility and by allowing some to circumvent the One-Call system, we would be needlessly introducing risk to the people of Hawaii.

Since 2009, our records confirm two pipeline breaks by pest control operators. In addition, excavators who failed to contact the Hawaii One-Call Center before digging underground accounted for 163 pipeline leaks in 2009-2010 that could have been avoided.

Safety is our number one priority, and we must follow best practices established by Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) to ensure the safety of Hawaii's citizens.

We ask that the exemption be allowed to expire so that every business that performs excavations in its operations regardless of frequency, develop safe practices and be required to contact the One Call Center to first verify that it is safe to do so.

Thank you for allowing me to testify on H.B. 1879.