

REPRESENTATIVE GAREY BIES



Rep. Bies testifies before an Assembly Committee

The Propane Safety Act

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AB 515/SB 273 was developed in close cooperation with the industry, the bill addresses several safety concerns and consumer protection components. One of the two main components of the legislation is establishing new requirements for propane suppliers to meet certain financial responsibility standards in order to be licensed by the state. The new standards are designed to ensure that the propane suppliers operate a safety-conscious business with a well-trained staff and possess the financial backing necessary for commitment to their industry and customers.

Secondly, the Act focuses on new communication requirements between propane suppliers and customers as well as changes to the Statewide Communication System, or Digger's Hotline.

Legislative Proposals Authored by Rep. Bies

■ Restriction on Sale of Phosphorous

AB 396/SB 197 would establish restrictions on the sale of fertilizer containing phosphorous. The legislation aims to reduce the phosphorous runoff that is making its way into Wisconsin's waterways.

■ Wisconsin Crime Alert Network

AB 737/SB 452 was introduced with Attorney General Van Hollen and establishes an alert network to provide crime notices to participating businesses and community members.

■ Additional Circuit Court Branches

AB 393/SB 199 was introduced with the Director of State Courts and establishes new circuit court branches in several counties where case loads have far exceeded operational capacity.



Governor Doyle signs The Propane Safety Act authored by Rep. Bies



Rep. Bies with the Door County Legislative Days Delegation

■ Mental Health Access Bill

AB 463/SB 246 would increase the locations where clients could receive services from licensed clinical social workers and therapists and have those services be reimbursed by insurance carriers or Medicaid.

■ Volunteer Firefighter Death Benefit

AB 275 was drafted after a First District firefighter died of a heart attack while responding to a call. Wisconsin law does not provide for a death benefit to volunteer firefighters that succumb to a heart attack. Full-time firefighters do have such a benefit.

■ Stewardship Trust Fund

AB 156 would establish a trust fund for the Stewardship Program that would allow for private, tax-deductible contributions, to be made directly to the Stewardship Program. These private donations would supplement state funding.

■ Campaign Finance Reform

AB 155 would increase the reporting requirements for candidates allowing for better review and tracking of campaign contributions.

Other Highlights of the 2007-2008 Session

Ethics and Elections Reform

A major bi-partisan reform initiative that established the Governmental Accountability Board. The Board has independence from the legislature and Governor to initiate investigations of violations of the state's ethics, campaign finance and election laws.

BadgerCare Plus

With passage of the expanded BadgerCare Plus program, the Department of Health and Family Services estimates that 98% of Wisconsin residents as well as 100% of all children, regardless of family income, will have access.