

Dear Chair and Honorable Members:

As an Oregon citizen, I come before you asking, not for your immediate agreement, but for your fair consideration..

THIS HB 2426 SEEMS LIKE DEJA-DEJA VU ALL OVER AGAIN AND AGAIN..AND AGAIN ONCE MORE!!!

My name is Scott Bartlett and I reside in Eugene. I am very familiar with this issue, having served as a Legislative Assistant who was closely involved with ENHANCING Oregon's landmark laws during the '87, '89 and '91 Sessions.

I am here today to implore you not to eviscerate Oregon's historic and proud Ban on Self Service, Class 1 flammable Gasoline dispensing. Fast tracking this bill with an Emergency clause is frankly cynical and outrageous! There is no grassroots groundswell begging for slashing Oregon's historic ban by 50%. Having a choice at the gas station between attended/assisted pumping and self-service hardly warrants a 50% reduction!

This bill will do just that and it is unarguably just one more effort IN THE QUIET PROGRESSION to weaken Oregon motorists' Assisted Service protections: by 50%! And... you won't be told the full and complete revenue consequences when Fire Marshall field operatives will ultimately need to monitor and inspect self-service pumps from Portland to Port Orford and from Newport to Nyssa!

This Committee should hear from Senior advocates, older women's advocates, disability specialists, paralyzed veterans' spokespersons and metro area residents who will be adversely impacted by this narrow and inadequately conceived Special Interest tailored proposal.

Since 1951, we Oregonians and citizens of New Jersey (1949) have shared the unique motorist protection ban against the dangers to health and safety inherent in unsupervised self-service flammable gasoline dispensing.

There are sound and REAL AND LEGITIMATE REASONS TO LOOK BEFORE YOU LEAP INTO UNINTENDED AND REVENUE IMPACTFUL CONSEQUENCES OF MAYHEM AT THE GAS PUMPS--with the inevitable public backlash that would follow!

Having hundreds of thousands of Oregonians often forced to pump their own gas while congested lines of cars seeking preferred assisted service vastly outnumber self-service customers is poor public policy.

It is assumed that "choice" over which fuel dispensing device will be preferred will be equivalent. But will it? Tell that to the majority of middle and elder aged female and male drivers, young mothers' who would have to leave children in their cars while pumping gas. Tell that to seniors who suffer from arthritis, balance instability risking falls on gas-spilled pavement, and other issues. Tell that to pregnant women drivers who would inhale carcinogenic Benzene fumes while pumping their own gas!

Read the Oregon current ORS legislation's list of reasons for restricting self-service. Readers' Digest has a recent list of reasons. Read the New Jersey statute--a literal Magna Carta of motorist safety protections.

There are crime risks as well. in inner cities at night, robbery and assault, "skimming" credit card information for identity theft, quick grab, SNATCH and flee theft while distracted drivers fool with payments and pumping.

Did you know that re-entering and then exiting your vehicle while gas is dispensed builds up electrical charges on the body which can transfer to the nozzle--risking dangerous explosion? Mothers and others are most apt to exit, re-enter and then exit again incurring this needless hazard!

Is this bill harmless?? Tell that to the 50% of gas station attendants whose jobs will disappear once this economy recovers, and vacant positions will evaporate. I deeply admire the crew of attendants who serve us in South Eugene at our local Chevron station. They comprise all races, genders and ages. This bill has the capacity to fire 50% of them ultimately. They are decent and hardworking Oregonians doing often unpleasant but important jobs!

The fuel dispensing industry comes before the Oregon Legislature biennially asking for self-service--like the Spring crocus. During the past 35 years many accommodations have been made where true needs in rural or underserved counties and towns warrant this. Card- lock access expansion, evening access from 6PM-6AM, grandfathered counties initially under 40,000 population, etc. But it's never enough!

Yes, there have been some transient employment shortages of late due to supply chain, Ukraine and sundry pressures. But a permanent and radical change to a proud and successful long standing policy is not the solution.

Honorable Chair and Committee members, please reach out and avail the broad Oregon populace which stands to be adversely impacted by this narrow crafted bill.

I well remember, if I am correct, some of the real concerns (HB 2017/HB 2482?) expressed by former Office of the State Fire Marshall Permits & Regulation Manager Anita Phillips--perhaps the preeminent expert in the Agency's history- which included predicted greater revenue needs for statewide individual gas station pump safety inspections and the expanded need for requiring enhanced station owner liability protection, etc.

Unsupervised dispensing of Class 1 flammable gasoline is more often accompanied by smokers. Do we really want this?

In summation, Members of the Committee: Just as we Oregonians are proud of our landmark laws. Initiative and referendum, the Beach Bill and Governor Oz West's earlier foresight in protecting this priceless resource, our model clean-election access, access to expanded and essential healthcare, our ethical clean politics, bottle bill and so much more--so also should we be proud of our historic ban on self-service gasoline.

Maybe it's quaint or a bit different. But is that really so bad?

**PLEASE DO NOT PASS THIS BILL AS WRITTEN AND PLEASE DEFEND
OUR PROUD OREGON BAN ON SELF-SERVICE!**

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION.,