

Submitter: Matthew Koppenhaver
On Behalf Of: Self
Committee: Senate Committee On Energy and Environment
Measure: HB2426

Chair Sollman, Vice-Chair Findley and Members of the Committee,

My name is Matthew Koppenhaver, and I live in Baker City. I listened to the testimony provided during the hearing, and I oppose HB 2426-A for various reasons. Unlike other people who testified before the committee, I come from the perspective of working as a fuel attendant and clerk at a local fuel station, adjacent to Interstate 84, for more than twenty years.

First, my mother, who was employed as a fuel attendant in the late 1980s, prefers to have a fuel attendant dispense her fuel instead of doing it herself. She feels modern fuel equipment is far more complicated to use than when she was an employee more than three decades ago. The problem she has encountered with the current system is she can go to certain stations where she can rely on an attendant to provide assistance; however, there are other stations who do not provide assistance not for a lack of employed attendants but for an apathetic staff who do not want to provide assistance regardless of the request to provide assistance.

Second, the problem with some filling stations providing self-service is the fact their equipment may be too old to allow for self-service filling to take place. One particular location in Baker City, has six dispensers dating to the Reagan Administration, with mechanical number displays. In order for an operator to update their equipment, they face costs of nearly \$18,000 per dispenser replacement, not to mention the cost of updating related infrastructure. This is the reason why some small operators, especially in rural parts of Oregon, still turn off the pumps after the store closes for the day.

Third, a fuel attendant on duty would be knowledgeable about the characteristics of the location's equipment, including the location of emergency shut off switch, nearest available fire extinguisher, and absorbent in the event of a fuel spill and would be able to assist the customer with any problems during the fueling process.

Fourth, hiring 16 and 17-year-olds as fuel attendants provides young individuals the opportunity to learn work habits as they become adults. Because many locations have an attached convenience store, the restricted sales of alcohol and tobacco products restricts the tasks these young adults can do.

Having an attendant on duty helps address some issues a strictly self-service station employee may run into. They can help in the deterrence of theft and robbery, provide

assistance if there is a fall or incident on the property, and mitigate customers from engaging in actions which should not be conducted while at the pump. This includes smoking or vaping at the pump, using their phone at the dispenser (when signs instruct otherwise) and using the pump with the nozzle's latch-open feature and leaving their vehicle to refuel unattended while shopping or using the restroom facilities in the store. There have been incidents where customers will leave the fuel island with the dispenser nozzle still in their tank opening and cause the nozzle and/or hose to break-away from the dispenser, rendering it inoperable and creating a fire hazard, not mention property damage.

I realize the current employment climate is creating a hardship for many retailers in many sectors, but HB 2426-A is not the solution we need. I ask the Committee to vote against it.

Respectfully,

Matthew L.G. Koppenhaver
Baker City