



## **New Jersey Drivers May Soon Be Able to Pump Their Own Gas**

**By: Kristina Behr, March 1, 2022**

**TRENTON, NJ** - New Jersey drivers may soon be able to pump their own gas.

Legislation sponsored by Assembly members of both parties, Carol Murphy (D-7), Ned Thomson (R-30) and Annette Chaparro (D-33) was introduced Monday allowing for a hybrid fueling model in New Jersey.

The “Motorist Fueling Choice and Convenience Act” would allow gas stations the option of offering self-serve, while still requiring stations with more than four dispensers to continue to offer full-service gas pumps, giving consumers the option to pump their own gas if they wish.

“Simply put, this bill will provide choice, convenience, and cost-savings to New Jersey drivers,” said Murphy. “By providing a hybrid model, we can give consumers the option to do what they prefer when it comes to filling their gas tanks, while also giving them the opportunity to save money.”

“With New Jersey opening up more and residents going back to work, now more than ever they should have the freedom to choose how to save time in their busy schedules,” said Thomson. “Motorists in every other state are able to pump their own gas, and if a consumer wants to choose to not wait for an attendant, that choice should not be denied to them by state law.”

**“New Jersey is the last state in the United States to only offer full-service gas pumps,”** said Sal Risalvato, of Fuel Your Way NJ, and Executive Director of New Jersey Gasoline, C-Store, and Automotive Association. **“It’s time to bring New Jersey up to speed with the rest of the country with this commonsense approach.**

**Over 300 million people already have the freedom to pump their gas, why shouldn't the people of New Jersey be included?"**

**Risalvato says this change is a long time coming.**

The official ban on self-serve gas in Jersey began in 1949 with the Retail Gasoline Dispensing Safety Act, citing safety concerns like fire hazards. However, some believe gasoline price fixing is the real reason.

New Jersey is only the state where it is illegal to pump your own gas, with a first offense costing the proprietor of the gas station \$250.

**"It should have been passed years ago," said Risalvato. "Over the last 10 years it has gotten more inconvenient to fill your car up with gas, because you have a tremendous amount of wait time when you get to the gas pumps. Often when that happens, you see other pumps that are blocked by cones. And they are blocked not because there is no gas at that pump, but because there is no employee at that pump."**

Under the current law, New Jersey requires an employee to pump the gas at all times. Long before the current worker shortage issues stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic, gas stations have had trouble filling positions. Without the positions being filled pumps have to close.

"It is shameful that so many gas stations have had to close even during daytime hours, because they do not have enough staff to keep their stations open," said Chaparro. "It's time to save our small business community and get rid of the stigma. Jersey girls can do anything – including pump their own gas. Jersey girls like to save money just like everyone else."

Gasoline retailers believe that by moving to a hybrid model, the price of gas in New Jersey will be reduced by at least 15¢ or more per gallon. Every cent counts, as AAA New Jersey reports the current average price for gas in New Jersey sits at \$3.65.

**Risalvato says he believes there's a good likelihood of the bill being passed.**

**"It's part of New Jersey culture. And that's the only reason why legislators would balk at supporting this," he said.**

If enacted, the measure would go into effect 90 days after it was signed into law.