

Power At the Gas Pump!

Oregon lets drivers fuel their own cars

AP-For the first time in 72 years, Oregon motorists can grab a fuel nozzle and pump gas into their cars on their own, since a decades-old ban on self-serve gas stations has been revoked. Gov. Tina Kotek signed a bill on Friday allowing people across the state to choose between having an attendant pump gas or doing it themselves. The law takes immediate effect. "It's about time. It's long overdue," said Karen Cooper, who lives in Salem, said shortly before the bill was signed. "I've spent a lot of time in California," Cooper said. "I know how to pump my own. Everybody should know how to pump their own gas."

Kacy Willson, 32, who has lived in Oregon her whole life, said she doesn't have much interest in pumping her own gas. She's only tried it a few times in her life. "It's kind of nice to have someone do that," she said at a Portland gas station Friday. "I don't real-



AP photo credit courtesy of Claire Rush

ly leave Oregon very much, and when I do, I have to ask someone how to pump gas, and I feel weird." When Oregon prohibited self-service in 1951, lawmakers cited safety concerns, including motorists slipping on the slick surfaces at filling stations subject to

Oregon's notoriously rainy weather. A union representing workers at grocery store fuel stations in Oregon predicted job losses and called the the law a "blatant cash grab for large corporations." "With over 2,000 gas stations in Oregon, laying off just one employee per loca-

tion represents millions of dollars a year that giant corporations are not paying in wages, benefits and public payroll taxes," said Sandy Humphrey, the secretary-treasurer of UFCW Local 555. Under the new law, there can't be more self-service pumps at a

gas station than full-service ones. And prices for motorists must be the same at both types. Still, opponents of the measure worry that it could lead to the demise of full-service pumps, depriving older adults and people with disabilities of that option.



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