

SB 303 Letter of Support.pdf

Uploaded by: Karen Straughn

Position: FAV

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February 5, 2026

To: The Honorable Pamela Beidle
Chair, Finance Committee

From: Karen S. Straughn
Consumer Protection Division.

Re: Senate Bill 303 – Business Regulation – Sale of Motor Fuel – Pricing Signage
(SUPPORT)

The Consumer Protection Division of the Office of the Attorney General submits the following written testimony to support Senate Bill 303 submitted by Senator Cheryl C. Kagan. This bill standardizes signage for service stations when prices may be reduced as a result of additional purchases or membership programs to ensure that passing motorists can clearly determine the price they will pay before exiting the roadway.

The Gas Price Clarity Act passed in 2023 intended to ensure transparency by gas stations by requiring the posting of both cash and credit/debit prices on signs that were readily visible from the roadway. However, stations often offer reduced pricing for membership in loyalty programs or for the purchase of additional items, such as a car wash. As a result, many stations now advertise their reduced conditional price in a manner that could be deceptive to travelers who may not be eligible for the reduced price.

This bill attempts to rectify this bait and switch pricing by ensuring that stations are advertising their standard price, prior to any reductions, in a manner clearly visible to traveling motorists. Stations may still advertise their conditional price, but it may not be more prominent than the standard price, allowing travelers to compare prices more readily. This brings greater price transparency to consumers and allows them to make a knowledgeable choice if price is a factor in their decision.

For the reasons set forth, the Consumer Protection Division requests that the Senate Finance Committee issue a favorable report on this bill.

cc: The Honorable Cheryl C. Kagan
Members, Finance Committee

Sen. Kagan Testimony SB303_ Gas Price Update (1).p

Uploaded by: Sen. Cheryl Kagan

Position: FAV

CHERYL C. KAGAN
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SB303: Gas Price Clarity Act Update
Senate Finance Committee
Thursday, February 5, 2026, 1PM

In 2024, we passed the Gas Price Clarity Act ([SB651/HB882](#)) with the support of WMDA-CAR, a coalition of independent owners of service stations and auto repair shops. After numerous conversations about enforcement with both the Attorney General's and Comptroller's offices, it became evident that the law's wording was not precise enough to accomplish our intended goal.

The bill was meant to prohibit gas stations from "bait & switch" signage. Its intent plainly stated numerous times, through:

- Repeatedly using the words "prominently," "clearly," and "visibly";
- Requiring uniformity of numerals, even listing dimensions such as size and thickness;
- Specifying that signs must be "readable by passing motorists"; and,
- Stating that if only one price is listed on a sign, it must be the higher (credit) price.

Frustratingly, many gas stations are using **still** signs that subvert this intent-- whether deliberately or in effect. The lower **cash** price is usually featured on the station's primary sign, which is elevated, often illuminated. The higher **credit** price is far more likely to be displayed on a sandwich board on the ground, blocked from view by shrubbery, traffic, garbage bins, parked cars, or other station advertising. Even when the dimensions of the numerals are identical on the two types of signs, this disparity undermines clarity and visibility.

The 2024 law did not address reward clubs, car wash, and other discounts. These "specials" are now often the most prominently advertised prices. SB303 makes small clarifying revisions to ensure that the intent of the original legislation is met. Let's close the door on bait-and-switch signage and stop gas stations from misleading Marylanders on the real cost to fill their gas tank.

I urge a favorable report on SB303.

Testimony SB303 Price signage.pdf

Uploaded by: Kirk McCauley

Position: UNF



WMDA/CAR Service Station
and Automotive Repair Association

Chair Pamela Beidle and members of Senate Finance

RE: SB303 – Sale of Motor Fuel – Price Signage

Position: Oppose

My name is Kirk McCauley, my employer is WMDA/CAR, we represent service stations, convenience stores, and repair facilities across the state as a non-profit trade group established in 1937.

SB303 changes the bill passed in 2024 session HB883 that worked out between stakeholder and sponsors. SB303 adds membership programs or any rewards app that changes price. Rewards apps, membership programs, discount with car wash have all become normal. Most retail businesses offer some type of discount or loyalty program.

Maryland retailers sold 2 billion, 557 million, 965 thousand, 959 gallons of gas in FY2024* 2,557,965,959. Divide that amount by a very liberal 16 gallon per fill up at retail pumps and it comes out to 159,872,872(one hundred and fifty-nine million, eight hundred seventy-two thousand, eight hundred and seventy-two) transactions. There were 51 complaints recorded at comptroller's office that price on sign did not match price at retail. 159,872,872 divided by 51 equals 3,134,762. **One (1) complaint for every 3,134,762. (three million, one hundred thirty-four thousand, seven hundred sixty-two) transactions, the numbers speak for themselves.**

Gasoline retailers would be the last retailer to trick, bait and switch or in general deceive motorists, they must depend on repeat business and motorists' loyalty.

WMDA/CAR asks for an unfavorable vote on SB303.

*[Motor Fuel Tax And Motor Carrie Tax \(IFTA\) Annual Report](#) Page 11

Any questions, contact to Kirk McCauley, 301-775-0221 or kmccauley@wmdacar.com

SB303 - LOI.pdf

Uploaded by: Matthew Dudzic

Position: INFO



Letter of Information

Senate Bill 303 – Business Regulation – Sale of Motor Fuel – Pricing Signage *Finance Committee* *February 5, 2026*

The Comptroller of Maryland is respectfully submitting this letter of information regarding Senate Bill 303 – Business Regulation – Sale of Motor Fuel – Pricing Signage. SB303 alters the requirements for motor fuel signage to indicate that the standard price, defined as the offering price available to all customers without conditions, must be the price most prominently displayed.

The Comptroller of Maryland's field enforcement bureau (FEB) is responsible for the enforcement of the signage requirements for the sale of motor fuel. Under the current law, if the price for credit and debit sales of motor fuel is higher than the price for cash sales, retail service stations are required to have a sign that displays the credit and debit price and that meets all signage requirements under § 10-315 of the Business Regulation Article. These requirements specify the size and uniformity of the numerals but otherwise do not provide limitations on the types of signs that may be used. Therefore, FEB's officers have determined that non-illuminated "A-frame" signs that meet the size and uniformity requirements of § 10-315 do not constitute a violation of the Business Regulation Article, even if they are less prominent than the illuminated signs advertising cash-only prices. In addition, § 10-315 includes no provisions for the display of other discounted prices, such as membership discounts or discounts that require the purchase of a car wash.

SB303 explicitly states that any discounted price for the sale of motor fuel that is dependent on certain conditions being met, such as cash payment or the purchase of a car wash, may not be displayed more prominently than the standard price. If the intent of the legislature is to prevent retail service stations from using less visible alternate signage to comply with the requirements of B.R. § 10-315 and to apply these provisions to all alternative pricing, SB303 provides important clarification for our FEB officers.

We would like to thank Senator Kagan for working with our office on this issue, and for including sponsor amendments that make the process for issuing violations consistent with other violations of Title 10 of the Business Regulations Article.

Thank you. If you have any questions, please reach out to Matthew Dudzic, Director of State Affairs, at MDudzic@marylandtaxes.gov.

