



NJ Gasoline, C-Store, Automotive Association  
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May 8, 2024

**To:** New Jersey Lottery Commission  
**From:** Eric Blomgren, Chief Administrator & Director of Government Affairs  
New Jersey Gasoline, Convenience Store, Automotive, Association

**Re:** Objection to a “It’s a Jersey Thing” Ticket Design

On behalf of many of the lottery retailers our association represents, NJGCA must strongly object to the design of one of the new “It’s a Jersey Thing” tickets—specifically the ticket with a gas pump and the phrase “NO SELF SERVICE”.

Several different retailers have reached out to me to express their strong feelings, including the fact that they were, frankly, offended by the design of the ticket. The state’s anachronistic prohibition on self-serve gas in all forms has been a serious burden to them for years.

Gasoline cannot be legally sold in the state without a station employee pumping it. Station owners have been desperate to find people willing to work as attendants, sometimes being forced to work the pumps themselves or have family members do it since the alternative is to close the pumps down. The mandate forces the cost of their fuel up, making them less competitive against the giant corporate chains they are already disadvantaged against. They need to keep gas prices as low as possible in order to attract customers who will go on to purchase everything from coffee to lottery tickets in the store.

That is why, for years now, many of them have been engaged in ongoing political activism to effectuate a change in that law. It is inappropriate for the Commission to be wading into that or arguably any political dispute. It’s one thing when a t-shirt shop on the boardwalk prints out that message, it’s something else entirely when a State entity does it. I presume the Commission wouldn’t issue a “MAGA” branded ticket, even if it would sell well to a certain audience.

This ticket will, in effect, lead to some retailers being forced to advertise and promote a public policy message that they strongly object to. A message which in many cases they have previously protested publicly against.<sup>1</sup>

Furthermore, many lottery customers find the full-serve mandate to be a burden. Legislation with bipartisan support to allow self-service was introduced last session and was sponsored by 14

<sup>1</sup> <https://why.org/articles/some-n-j-gas-stations-lower-price-to-demonstrate-self-serve-savings-at-the-pump/>

members of the Legislature. A Monmouth University poll found 54% of NJ residents would support allowing self-service, 70% would use self-serve if it was cheaper, and 43% think it's either a bad thing or have mixed opinions on being the only state with this ban.<sup>2</sup>

**We request that you allow retailers to not accept this specific ticket design, to be able to send back these tickets at no cost, and to not print any more with this design or on this topic.** Surely there are other things about our state we can be proud of? Perhaps the fist can be clutching a best-in-the-nation bagel?



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<sup>2</sup> [https://www.monmouth.edu/polling-institute/reports/monmouthpoll\\_nj\\_041122/](https://www.monmouth.edu/polling-institute/reports/monmouthpoll_nj_041122/)