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ANTHONY G. BROWN
Attorney General

July 10, 2025

Transmitted via e-mail: Emily.Shrieves@calvertcountymd.gov

Calvert County Board of County Commissioners
175 Main Street
Prince Frederick, MD 20678

Re: OAG's Response to your Request for Assistance Regarding Gas Price
Disparities in Calvert County

Dear Commissioners Hance, Ireland, Cox, Grasso, and Hart:

Thank you for your letter regarding complaints by residents that gas prices in Calvert County exceed those in neighboring jurisdictions. I certainly understand the concerns of Calvert County consumers who are paying more than consumers in neighboring jurisdictions. However, as long as the service stations are accurately displaying the prices they are charging for gasoline, they are operating within the framework of the law.

During the 2023 legislative session, the General Assembly enacted Chapter 630 (House Bill 775), which gives my office the authority to take action against price gouging. However, the final bill requires the Governor to declare a state of emergency and create a list of the items that are covered by the price gouging prohibition, neither of which is the case here.

During the 2024 legislative session, the General Assembly passed Chapter 451 (House Bill 882), which requires service station signs that display gas prices to display the credit and debit price per gallon in addition to the cash price. Both my office and the Comptroller's Field Enforcement Bureau have the authority to take action against service stations that do not accurately display their prices in accordance with this statute. However, this statute does not address your concerns about prices in Calvert County being higher than those in neighboring jurisdictions.

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Additionally, the Comptroller's office has the authority to take action against service stations that are selling gas *below* their wholesale costs, but that office has no authority over other pricing issues, including stations that are setting high prices for their gas.

Unfortunately, the Office of the Attorney General is unable to address your constituents' concerns under existing law. Prices for gasoline may be based on a number of factors, including transportation costs (the further from the terminal, the greater the cost to the retailer from the supplier), whether the gasoline is reformulated, supply and demand, and other economic factors.

If you would like more insight as to the reasons for the difference in prices between Calvert County and its neighboring jurisdictions, you may reach out to Michael O'Halloran, via e-mail at mike@mapda.com, who represents the Mid-Atlantic Petroleum Distributors Association.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "AG Brown". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

Anthony G. Brown