

KATIE FRY HESTER
Legislative District 9
Carroll and Howard Counties

Education, Health, and
Environmental Affairs Committee

Chair, Joint Committee on
Cybersecurity, Information Technology
and Biotechnology



Annapolis Office
James Senate Office Building
11 Bladen Street, Room 304
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
410-841-3671 • 301-858-3671
800-492-7122 Ext. 3671
KatieFry.Hester@senate.state.md.us

THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

March 11, 2020

Testimony in Support of SB723 - Consumer Protection - Right to Repair

Chair Kelley, Vice Chair Feldman, members of the Senate Finance Committee:

Thank you for your consideration of SB723. This bill will require original equipment manufacturers to provide independent repair providers with documentation, tools, or other information necessary to repair a product. This would increase the longevity of equipment that many of us use, and prevent equipment manufacturers from shutting repair providers out of the marketplace, effectively creating a monopoly for their own benefit.

This legislation is modeled after a Massachusetts law passed by ballot initiative in 2012 to require that vehicle owners and independent repair facilities have access to adequate vehicle diagnostic and repair information. After that law went into effect, car manufacturers and independent repair shops voluntarily entered a national agreement in line with the Massachusetts law. Essentially, this policy has been in effect in Maryland since 2014 for the auto industry. This bill intends to apply that same model to all consumer electronics and equipment, extending the right to repair to a broader range of products. I will note that some members of the industry are voluntarily moving in this direction, but others are lagging behind. This legislation keeps industry moving at a steady pace towards these goals for the benefit of all our constituents.

As you will see in the accompanying testimony, this legislation has the potential to make our consumption of manufactured goods more sustainable, the ability to repair more accessible, and the repair market as a whole more competitive. On behalf of Maryland's consumers and citizens, **I respectfully urge a favorable report for SB723.**

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Katie Fry Hester".

Senator Katie Fry Hester
Howard and Carroll Counties