

GOOD AFTERNOON MR. CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE. THANK YOU FOR HAVING ME HERE TODAY. MY NAME IS PAT HEFLIN AND I AM THE MARYLAND REGIONAL MANAGER FOR GLASS AMERICA, A NATIONAL AUTO GLASS COMPANY WITH SIX LOCATIONS THROUGHOUT MARYLAND. WE INSTALL APPROXIMATELY 10,000 PIECES OF VEHICLE GLASS IN THE STATE IN AN AVERAGE YEAR.

I AM HERE IN SUPPORT OF SENATE BILL 445 FOR A NUMBER OF REASONS INCLUDING THIS VERY IMPORTANT ONE: THE AUTO GLASS REPLACEMENT SAFETY STANDARD KNOWN AS THE AGRSS STANDARD FOR SHORT. THE AGRSS STANDARD IS AN ANSI STANDARD THAT EVOLVES WITH CHANGING TECHNOLOGY. AT NO TIME HAS VEHICLE TECHNOLOGY BEEN CHANGING AS FAST OR AS ELABORATELY AS IT IS TODAY.

TAKE, FOR EXAMPLE, THE RELATIVELY NEW ADVANCED DRIVER ASSISTANCE SYSTEMS, ADAS FOR SHORT. THESE SYSTEMS DO EVERYTHING FROM ALERT DRIVERS IF THEY ARE DRIFTING OUT OF THEIR LANE TO SLOWING THE CAR DOWN AND BRAKING IF THEY NEGLECT TO DO SO. YOU MAY HAVE SOME OR ALL OF THESE SYSTEMS IN YOUR OWN VEHICLE, DEPENDING ON ITS AGE.

A VERY SMALL CAMERA, USUALLY MOUNTED IN THE CENTER OF THE WINDSHIELD, WORKS IN TANDEM WITH THE CAR'S COMPUTER TO KEEP THE ADAS SYSTEMS OPERATING PROPERLY. SOMETHING AS SIMPLE AS CLEANING

THE CAMERA LENS CAN THROW THE SYSTEM OFF.

WHENEVER THE CAMERA LOOKS THROUGH A NEW SUBSTANCE, SUCH AS A NEW WINDSHIELD, IT MUST BE RE-CALIBRATED TO BE SURE IT IS OPERATING PROPERLY. THIS IS AN IMPORANT SAFETY ISSUE AS HAVING THE CAMERA POSITIONING OFF EVEN A MINISCULE AMOUNT CAN AFFECT ITS PROPER OPERATION. THIS PROBLEM OFTEN CAN SHOW UP WELL AFTER IT WAS TOUCHED.

GLASS SHOPS PERFORMING SAFE INSTALLATIONS KNOW HOW TO HANDLE ADAS. IT IS ADDRESSED IN THE AGRSS STANDARD AND CONTINUES TO BE UPDATED IN RESPONSE TO THIS NEW TECHNOLOGY. IT'S VERY TOUGH FOR THE COMPANIES THAT DO THIS WORK PROPERLY AND SAFELY TO SEE OTHER TECHNICIANS WHO SAY THINGS LIKE 'WE DON'T TOUCH THE CAMERA SO WE DON'T NEED TO RE-CALIBRATE.' THEY ARE JEOPARDIZING THEIR CUSTOMER'S SAFETY. THESE TECHNICIANS WILL OFTEN SAY THAT THERE IS 'NO LAW' THAT THEY HAVE TO FOLLOW THE STANDARD, SO THEY DON'T.

BY MAKING SENATE BILL 445 LAW, YOU FURTHER PROTECT THE DRIVING PUBLIC AND SHOW ALL INSTALLERS THAT, BY LAW, THEY MUST DO IT RIGHT.
THANK YOU.

Speaker Biography

Pat Heflin has been in the glass industry for 27 years, beginning his career at Cherrydale Glass Shops in 1993. In April 2005, he moved to Glass America and became the manager at its Laurel, Maryland location. He became the regional manager, responsible for all of Maryland, in January 2021. He has been married 27 years to his wife Debbie and has 3 children.