

March 8, 2023

On behalf of the Auto Care Association, I want to thank you for your support of right to repair legislation, a global movement that spans sectors from consumer devices to heavy duty trucks. My name is Tod Moore, and I manage advocacy and grassroots for the Association.

We are a national trade association comprised of more than 3000-member companies and affiliates that manufacturer, distribute and sell motor vehicle parts, accessories, services, tools, equipment, materials, and supplies. The Auto Care Association is the voice of the auto care industry – a \$400 billion plus industry comprised of more than 4.5 million American professionals. In Maryland, our industry includes 42,117 jobs, generates \$6.7 billion in economic activity, and provides \$2.7 billion in wages.

At least twenty states have filed some form of “right to repair” legislation, bills which seek to give consumers and businesses the right to diagnostic and repair information about their products and thereby protect the long-standing principle that if you own something, you should have the right to maintain and repair it yourself.

Advances in automotive technology since 2013 are now raising new challenges for access to in-vehicle data that did not exist previously. Car companies are now building proprietary firewalls around their on-board diagnostic systems such that independent shops and the tools they use must request authorization from the manufacturer before accessing critical repair data, thus increasing manufacturers' control over access to data. The multi-year automotive development cycle means that legislators must act now to save the competitive aftermarket for the future. Without a vibrant aftermarket, there will be lack of choice for vehicle owners, and a lack of competition for better services which will result in higher repair costs and reduced choices for vehicle maintenance and repair.

A 2020 study found that, on average, the same repairs performed by franchised automotive dealers were 36.2 percent more expensive than those done by independent shops. As Americans face inflation, ways we can ensure competition and lower prices should be pursued. In addition, when consumers do not have to travel further out to dealers but instead could visit local repair shops, this saves the consumer time and money. If repair is affordable and accessible, consumers are more likely to have the repairs done, meaning vehicles on the road are safer.

Right to repair is an existential issue for the automotive aftermarket and for consumer choice. We appreciate your attention to and consideration of this important issue.