



Maryland Chapter
P.O. Box 278
Riverdale, MD 20738

Committee: Economic Matters

Testimony on: HB 712 “Consumer Protection – Right to Repair – Farm Equipment”

Position: Support

Hearing Date: February 22, 2023

The Maryland Chapter of the Sierra Club submits this testimony in support of HB 712, a bill that would require an original equipment manufacturer to make available certain documentation, updates, or information to an independent repair provider or owner of farm equipment to allow for the diagnosis, maintenance, or repair of the farm equipment.

“Right-to-Repair” includes the concept that products should be designed and built for maximum life rather than planned for obsolescence; durable products that break can easily be repaired because the manufacturers make their service manuals and replacement parts available. HB 712 will extend the life of farm equipment, reduce waste, conserve resources, reduce repair costs, allow farmers to get repairs done in a more timely manner, and create reuse and repair jobs right here in Maryland.

Manufacturers currently have far too much control over privately-owned farm equipment repair work. They essentially determine who does the repair, when it is done, and the cost. The high cost and delays of repair can make a difference in decisions on whether to repair equipment or replace it. Farmers operate on a tight schedule and budget. They do not have the time or money to transport their equipment for repair during the growing season. Farmers should be given the ability to make repair choices, including making their own repairs or choosing an independent local repair shop, to reduce downtime, save money, and extend the life of their equipment.

HB 712 would give farmers access to local repair shops with the parts, tools, and software they need to repair their equipment, extending its life and reducing waste. In addition, the bill would help the economy by generating new jobs in independent repair shops, creating competition in repair services, and ultimately saving money for farmers and consumers.

We respectfully request a favorable report.

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Founded in 1892, the Sierra Club is America’s oldest and largest grassroots environmental organization. The Maryland Chapter has over 70,000 members and supporters, and the Sierra Club nationwide has over 800,000 members and nearly four million supporters.