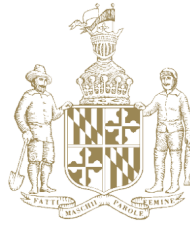


CHERYL C. KAGAN  
Legislative District 17  
Montgomery County

Vice Chair  
Education, Energy, and  
the Environment Committee

Joint Audit and Evaluation Committee  
Joint Committee on Federal Relations



Miller Senate Office Building  
11 Bladen Street, Suite 2 West  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
410-841-3134  
800-492-7122 Ext. 3134  
Cheryl.Kagan@senate.state.md.us

THE SENATE OF MARYLAND  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

**SB382: Wheelchair “Right to Repair”**

Senate Finance Committee  
Thursday, February 6, 2025 1:00 PM

Too often, manufacturers prevent customers from repairing their own products. Consumers are forced to ship their devices or take them to an authorized service shop-- if they happen to live near one. The monopolization in the repair market means that users often wait **months**-- even for simple fixes.

For users of powered wheelchairs, any delay in repairs is “not only a quality-of-life issue, but a matter of life and death,” according to a [2022 U.S. Public Interest Research Group \(PIRG\) report](#). There are more than 3 million wheelchair users in the United States; of those who responded to the U.S. PIRG survey, 40% said that it took more than seven weeks to get repairs. Some waited more than 24 weeks! U.S. PIRG also reported that 93% of users needed service on their chairs in the past year.

The powered wheelchair market has experienced significant consolidation over the last decade. It is now largely dominated by two private, equity-backed companies. Using a powered wheelchair is not a choice for many due to the rising cost to own and fix them. According to the Maryland Independent Living Network, “this bill would sustain the independence of individuals who use powered wheelchairs.”

According to U.S. Census data, Maryland has 30,000-40,000 residents with mobility impairments. The bipartisan [SB382](#) will allow manufacturers to protect trade secrets, as long as doing so does not compromise a consumer's ability to obtain basic repairs. Information, parts, and tools must be made available.

Various iterations of “Right to Repair” legislation have been introduced in 30 states and passed in seven ([California](#), [Colorado](#), [Massachusetts](#), [Maine](#), [Minnesota](#), [New York](#), and [Oregon](#)). Wheelchair-specific legislation has been enacted in both Colorado (2022) and California (2024).

As Del. Aaron Kaufman testified in the House, “if repairs are delayed and/or done incorrectly, wheelchair users can develop pressure sores or respiratory illness that can lead to hospitalization, or worse.”

As U.S. PIRG states, “by fixing our laws, we can make it easier to fix our stuff.”

**I urge a favorable report on SB382.**