

The Importance of Repair

Background: Independent electronic repair businesses struggle to remain self-reliant because of limited access to repair information and tools. Right to Repair allows businesses to compete in the market and consumers to choose where their products are repaired. We need to support local repair businesses' ability to repair our products.

If a product cannot be economically repaired, consumers have to replace their products more and more frequently.

Consumers have the right to 1) repair their own products and 2) have them serviced at independent repair businesses.

1. Product owners have the right to choose who repairs their products.
2. Right to Repair will spur local job growth through an economy that extends the lifespan of manufactured products.
3. Right to Repair will benefit the environment by conserving natural resources and reducing landfill waste.



Policy Objectives: Provide consumers and independent repair businesses with the same diagnostics, information, and parts as manufacturers and authorized repair facilities. This includes:

1. Manuals
2. Parts: available at fair, reasonable, non-discriminatory prices.
3. Diagnostics: troubleshooting and diagnostic tools, codes and service software
4. Software updates: machine code and firmware updates
5. Licenses: Prohibit contract language (EULA) that removes these rights

Key Issues

- Support small business: Right to Repair allows for competition with manufacturers and authorized repair firms.
- Guarantee free market access: Right to Repair protects local repair shops that are vital to the American way of life.
- Protect local jobs: Most manufacturers produce their products overseas. Right to Repair will create local jobs.



Why states? States control contracts and so are stakeholders in their fair and equitable terms and conditions. Many repair limitations originate from purchase contracts.

Expert Guidance

A 2012 study by engineering association VDI shows that cannibalization of electronics sales will not occur because there are different markets for new products and reused products.

Right to Repair is also a market-based solution to climate

change by preventing millions of tons of carbon emissions.

An Illinois Economic Activity survey showed that electronic repair creates 13 times as many jobs as electronic recycling. Increased refurbished cell phones sales could also generate \$9.4 billion annually in economic opportunity.

Potential Obstacles

Warranties: Manufacturers' warranty policies will not change. Most independent repair firms fix post-warranty products.

Product Replacements: Right to Repair will not hinder innovation. It simply gives consumers the choice to keep their products for longer. Right to Repair will push manufacturers to truly innovate.



Intellectual Property: Right to Repair does not infringe upon intellectual property. This includes using manufacturer-provided diagnostics, patches, and fixes. Right to repair is also independent of copyright issues.

Opposition: Many manufacturers will oppose Right to Repair as it disrupts the practice of replacing "obsolete" products. But in the end, free market competition is beneficial for everyone.

Political Landscape: This is a bipartisan issue, but Right to Repair with the aftermarket auto industry in Massachusetts succeeded because of the state's pro-consumer history. We believe free-market conservatives will value open markets and their ability to generate jobs.

Three Reasons Right to Repair will Drive Job Growth

1. Repair businesses will prefer to reside in states with repair-friendly statutes.
2. Tech-heavy businesses will settle in states with Right to Repair because they can manage their tech ownership costs.
3. Repair jobs have been lost in many markets as a result of product replacements. But thousands of electronic repair shops using iFixit repair guides have been created around the country in the last few years, generating tens of thousands of new jobs.



Memorandum of Support for Minnesota SF 64 - Right to Repair

The Repair Association represents the combined interests individuals and businesses making their living repairing, refurbishing, reselling and recycling electronic equipment.

With growing limitations on repair, our members can no longer do their work on behalf of consumers and business. The use of electronics is exploding but repair jobs are being crushed. The result is our homes, schools and businesses are filled with electronics we can't fix, and our repair options are dwindling rapidly. Meanwhile, we have a shrinking number of technicians who can keep our electronics going. This bill helps turn this tide.

Monopolies on repair are just as devastating to consumers as any other monopoly. Competition drives fair pricing, creates incentives for excellence in service and availability, and stimulates innovations throughout the marketplace. Consumers already have the legal right to repair their purchases under federal copyright and patent law, but without access to the proper parts, tools and documentation face significant barriers.

Our association and our members are excited to help support this bill.

Sincerely,

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