In support of HF 1337 - Digital Fair Repair / Right to Repair

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As a new home owner in Saint Paul, I'm writing to support the Digital Fair Repair Act and make sure there aren't provisions thrown in for "security" that aren't actually increasing security but ARE increasing the difficulty and expense associated with owning products designed to deliver security.

The home I moved into in Saint Paul in 2021 came with motorized security gates. I wanted to give remote controls for the gates to my parents and sister, which meant I had to add more remotes to the system and program the buttons to open one or the other of the two gates. I spent upwards of 25 hours trying to figure out which controllers to purchase and how to add them to the front and back gates. The "manual" available online is written in a way that seems to deliberately skip important steps, possibly for security reasons. They are security gates, after all.

I was only able to suss out how to add a new remote control by combing through reviews written by other consumers on sites like Amazon and Reddit. I still cannot program the controllers to open one gate with button A, the other gate with button B, and both gates with button C the way a trained technician could. A single visit from a trained technician to come program remotes would cost $600 and take about 20 minutes. That's ridiculously expensive.

I know other people are having the same problem adding new remotes. How? Once I figured out how to add a new remote - which isn't difficult with the right instructions - I wrote it up in a blog post to save other consumers the 25 hours of trial and error I went through. I get about 5-10 readers to that post per week.

Please help homeowners like me, surrounded by an increasing number of digital appliances and gadgets, perform basic household maintenance by encouraging providers to sell OEM parts directly to consumers, with fully legible manuals. I'd love some instructions, too, but at least with a manual, I can teach myself how to fix the items I own, whether I bought them or inherited them.

To a company that says they cannot maintain security if consumers can get access to parts and instruction sets, I say: there's no security in obscurity, but there are information asymmetries. Security is certainly a valid goal, but in my case, I'm much more secure when I can get in there and fix the gate controller myself than when I either have to wait for a service appointment and spend a whole lot or just give up on the gate altogether and leave it open.

Thank you for your consideration.