

February 13, 2023

Minnesota State Legislature
State Capitol
St. Paul, MN 55155



Dear Legislators,

The Association of Recycling Managers (ARM) is submitting this letter in support of HF1137/SF1598: Digital fair repair, also known as digital right to repair.

ARM is a Minnesota nonprofit that brings together city, county, and state recycling staff. We meet regularly to share recycling strategies and educational resources with our members to ensure quality waste reduction and recycling programs throughout Minnesota.

We know that most modern repairs involve electronic components: any product that can have embedded electronics, will most likely have embedded electronics. Repairing those electronics requires information, parts, and other specifications related to the digital repair from the product designers. Many manufacturers make it impossible - whether inadvertently or intentionally - for consumers or independent repair technicians to fix their products, leaving consumers with few other options than to buy new. Reusing and repairing items rather than buying new is essential for the cities and counties that make up ARM to meet our waste reduction and diversion goals.

Counties are tasked with implementing solid waste management plans. Many recognize the need for a greater emphasis on reuse as a meaningful way to reduce the amount of material that is landfilled or incinerated. In addition, many cities have their own goals and action plans to reduce environmental impact. Right to repair creates greater opportunities to do that.

Several ARM members representing counties operate fix-it clinics, which are peer-to-peer opportunities for repairing personal items such as small kitchen appliances, lamps, and personal electronics. One barrier to success for these events and 'do-it-yourself' efforts can be availability of parts and tools necessary for repair. While right to repair may be an issue primarily of smartphones and laptops now, it will quickly become a greater issue throughout our homes as more and more consumer goods incorporate electronics into their designs.

ARM supports enforcement of this legislation by the attorney general. As this law would help ensure consumer protection, it is appropriate for the attorney general to be in the enforcement role. In addition, this bill is modeled after legislation in other states, which also include attorney general enforcement.

In summary, to help support successful waste diversion programs, the Association of Recycling Managers urges the legislature to pass HF1137/SF1598 Digital fair repair.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Laura Horner', written in black ink.

Laura Horner
Chair of the Association of Recycling Managers