

Right to Repair Act Reintroduced

The Motor Vehicle Owners' Right to Repair Act, legislation that allows consumers to continue to choose where they have their vehicles repaired, was reintroduced into the 111th Congress on April 22, 2009.

"HR 2057, known as the Right to Repair Act, goes to the heart of American property rights and ownership. When motorists purchase their vehicles, they should have the right to own their vehicles' electronic, diagnostic and repair information so that they can make affordable and convenient repair choices, whether that choice is an independent repair shop or a car dealership," said Ray Pohlman, president of the Coalition for Auto Repair Equality (CARE). "As vehicles become more and more computerized, soon consumers will be very limited on repair options. In some cases, they will be forced to take the vehicles back to the new car dealerships even when their vehicles are out of warranty."

Vehicles that are 1994 and newer (and some earlier models) are equipped with computers that control the

or the freedom to use an automotive independent repair shop or a car dealership to meet their auto needs."

The Automotive Aftermarket Industry Association (AAIA) conducted a 'first-of-its-kind' study which illustrated the enormous cost-benefit to consumers when

their vehicles are repaired in the independent repair industry. The study clearly showed that repairs conducted at new car dealerships cost consumers

on average 34 percent more than at the independent repair shops, resulting in \$11.7 billion in excess costs annually.

"With dealerships closing at unprecedented rates, the ability for consumers to obtain convenient and affordable repairs from their local independent vehicle repair shops is more important than ever," said Aaron Lowe, vice president of Government Affairs for AAIA. "Right to Repair ensures that independent shops have access to the most up-to-date information, tools and software so that they can continue to maintain and repair their customers' late model vehicles."

A broad coalition of consumer-oriented and small business groups support passage of The Right to Repair Act, among them: American Automobile Association (AAA), National Federation of Independent

Business, RetireSafe (which represents 400,000 seniors nationwide), the Tire Industry Association, National Grange and 60s Plus Seniors. ♦

The Right to Repair Act, HR 2057, is in the House Energy and Commerce Committee's Subcommittee on Commerce, Trade and Consumer Protection. Information on the legislation can be found on: www.righttorepair.org



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Edolphus Towns

U.S. Representative, New York

repair and service information on most of the vehicles' systems, including, but not limited to: airbags, brakes, emissions (check engine light), tire pressure, oil changes, electronics, ignition systems and keys and transmissions. In many cases, the only way for motorists to have these systems repaired is to return to the new car dealership.

U.S. Representative Edolphus Towns (D-NY), the lead Right to Repair sponsor, said, "By guaranteeing access to vehicle repair information, we can empower consumers and give them the opportunity to choose where, how and by whom their vehicles will be repaired. We reintroduced The Motor Vehicle Owners' Right to Repair Act so (drivers) can have the option of self-servicing their vehicle,