

The Active Consumer

Understanding “Right To Repair” Legislation

(NAPSA)—Today’s modern vehicle is a complex machine and nearly every system on it is controlled and monitored by computers. In fact, advances in vehicle technology are demanding new tools, an increased amount of technical information and software in order for professional technicians to service, diagnose and repair these vehicles.

With the increased use of computers and electronics, car companies are garnering a greater ability to control access to the information and tools necessary for the independent service industry to stay competitive. The problem with this control is that the big car companies are not making enough profit selling new cars and they have set their sites on selling more service and parts.

On May 3, 2005, the Motor Vehicle Owners Right to Repair Act (HR 2048) was introduced in Congress by Rep. Joe Barton (R-TX), Rep. Edolphus Towns (D-NY) and Rep. Darrell Issa (R-CA). The legislation will provide car owners with the right to decide where and how their vehicle is serviced, whether at a new car dealer or independent service facility. Under the bill, the Federal Trade Commission would develop regulations requiring car companies to share the same information and tools that they make available to their franchised dealers, with the independent service industry and car owners.

“This act is about keeping the decision as to where vehicles are maintained and repaired with the consumer and not with the vehicle manufacturer,” said Kathleen



New legislation will protect consumers’ right to choose where to have their cars repaired.

Schmatz, president and CEO of the Automotive Aftermarket Industry Association (AAIA). “Over two-thirds of car owners patronize independent service facilities, rather than new car dealerships, after their warranty has expired due to price, convenience and trust. If we are not careful, consumers could lose the right to get their vehicle serviced at their neighborhood repair shop and be forced to take it back to the dealer—an option that will lead to increased repair costs and reduced convenience.”

Schmatz continued, “Don’t let this freedom be taken away. The most American thing that consumers can do is to contact their congressmen or their senators and let them know how they feel about their ability to choose a local independent shop to repair their vehicle.”

Visit www.righttorepair.org to learn more about the Motor Vehicle Owners Right to Repair Act (HR 2048).