



Auto News



Why You May Lose The Right To Repair

(NAPSA)—When deciding where to have their car repaired or ser-vised, most people choose a repair shop they trust and one that's convenient to their home or work, so they can fit such visits into their already busy schedules.

Most people assume they will always be able to choose where their cars are repaired, but that may not always be the case.

Cars are run by computers and car manufacturers don't always want to release the computer codes that are required for anyone to determine what is wrong with a car, and the necessary information for the shop to properly complete the repair.

Without these codes, independent repair shops may not be able to compete and car owners may have to bring their cars to the dealership, no matter how far away it is or how much it costs.

There are nearly 225 million vehicles in the U.S. and only 21,640 car dealerships. In addition, there are 132,000 businesses that repair cars for a living. Without access to the computer codes they need, such repair shops would eventually be forced out of business because there will be fewer and fewer repairs on an automobile that they can fix.

Some members of Congress understand the implications of

this problem and are working to pass the Motor Vehicle Owners Right To Repair Act.

The bill would require the car companies to share the same information and tools with independent repair shops that they provide car dealers, while protecting the car companies' trade secrets.

If the thought of only being able to take your car to a dealership causes concern, you may want to discuss this proposed legislation with your elected officials. Lobbyists for large car companies and new car dealers have been very vocal about how this bill would affect them. Last year, the act had 100 Congressional supporters, but Congress did not pass the bill before it adjourned.

"If the driving public does not speak up, they may lose the right to choose where to have their vehicles serviced and repaired," said Kathleen Schmatz, president and CEO of the Automotive Aftermarket Industry Association. "Something as simple as sending a letter to one's Congressional representatives would have great impact."

For more information on this bill, known as the Right to Repair legislation, visit www.righttorepair.org. At the site, people can send a message to their representatives supporting their Right to Repair.