



Rhode Island Automobile Dealers Association

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March 12, 2026

Chairman Joseph Solomon, Jr.
House Corporations Committee Members

RE: House Bill No. 7180 – AN ACT RELATING TO COMMERCIAL LAW -- GENERAL
REGULATORY PROVISIONS -- DIGITAL ELECTRONICS RIGHT TO REPAIR ACT

Dear Chair Solomon and Members of the House Corporations Committee,

On behalf of the Rhode Island Automobile Dealers Association (RIADA) we write to express our concerns surrounding House Bill No. 7180, the Digital Electronics Right to Repair Act, as it relates to the automotive industry and franchise automobile dealers.

Rhode Island's new car and truck dealers support more than 3,300 direct jobs, another 2,600 indirect and induced jobs, and we help generate approximately \$290M in annual sales tax for Rhode Island. Our franchised dealers support consumer access to safe, reliable, and affordable vehicle repairs. Our members serve customers in every region of the state and employ thousands of Rhode Islanders as technicians, service professionals, and support staff. We share the goal of ensuring vehicle owners can have their vehicles repaired at the facility of their choice.

While not specifically focused on the automotive industry, we do believe HB-7180, could have negative consequences for the public as it relates to the automotive industry and raises serious privacy and security concerns. Moreover, a national repair access framework already exists in the industry and has functioned effectively for more than a decade.

In 2014, industry entities entered into a memorandum of understanding extending the principles of the Massachusetts automotive right to repair law nationwide. That agreement has been publicly reaffirmed and continues to govern manufacturer-independent repair access in all 50 states, including Rhode Island. As a result of this agreement, independent repair facilities have access to a variety of manufacturer tools, including service manuals, wiring diagrams, and technical service bulletins, as well as diagnostic software and scan tools that are available through manufacturer service platforms. Additionally, replacement parts are broadly accessible through established distribution channels, and subscription-based systems allow independent repairers to obtain the same repair information provided to franchised dealers.

This framework has provided meaningful access to repair information while preserving safeguards related to vehicle cybersecurity, safety system integrity, intellectual property, and

"SERVING RHODE ISLAND'S NEW CAR AND TRUCK DEALERS"

consumer data protection. As a result, the United States already has one of the most open and competitive repair ecosystems in the world. For passenger cars, independent repairers perform 74% of out-of-warranty repairs, and every piece of information needed to diagnose and repair today's vehicles is available through existing service information tools, scan solutions, and established industry data-sharing programs.

Modern vehicles are sophisticated, software-driven systems. They generate vast amounts of sensitive information: location, driving behavior, cabin interactions, biometric indicators, personal contacts, and more. As we understand it, this legislation would force automakers to make that data remotely accessible to any designated third party, without limiting access to information needed to repair a vehicle. The bill also lacks meaningful restrictions on how third parties may use, resell, store or monetize that data, creating major privacy and commercial exploitation risks for millions of drivers.

Critical functions—including braking, steering, advanced driver assistance systems (ADAS), airbag deployment, emissions controls, and over-the-air software updates—are managed through encrypted electronic control units and telematics architecture. Mandating standardized open remote access to these systems introduces significant cybersecurity considerations. Connected vehicles operate as mobile networks.

Expanding digital access pathways without uniform national cybersecurity standards may create vulnerabilities that expose vehicle owners—and the broader motoring public—to unnecessary risk. By expanding third-party digital access universally, as we believe this legislation allows, it raises important questions: How will consumer consent be obtained and verified? How will sensitive vehicle data be stored and secured? Who bears responsibility in the event of a data breach or misuse?

Rhode Island consumers deserve clarity and strong protections regarding how their vehicle data is accessed and safeguarded. Therefore, we respectfully urge the Committee to carefully reconsider HB-7180 as currently drafted and pursue a balanced, collaborative approach. If additional statutory clarity is deemed necessary, we urge an approach that builds upon the existing national repair access framework rather than replacing it with sweeping electronic digital access mandates.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ted Kresse". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

Ted Kresse
Executive Vice President
Rhode Island Automobile Dealers Association