



Henry Welch

Rhode Island Public Interest Research Group Right to Repair Campaign Associate

Testimony in Support of H. 7476, House Corporations Committee

March 12, 2026

Dear Chair Solomon Jr., Vice Chairs O'Brien and Caldwell, and esteemed members of the Rhode Island House Corporations Committee,

My name is Henry Welch, I am a Right to Repair campaign associate representing the Rhode Island Public Interest Research Group, we are a non-partisan, non-profit organization dedicated to the health, safety, and well being of Rhode Island consumers. I am writing today to urge you to **support H. 7476, the Agricultural Equipment Right to Repair Act**, to ensure Rhode Island farmers can fix their agricultural equipment without having to go back to the manufacturer.

When something breaks, you fix it. That's common sense. But when the manufacturer withholds what you need to complete repairs -- the diagnostic data, or special computer software, the manuals or technical bulletins, or just spare parts -- that gives the manufacturer control over your repair options. You might be unable to find any viable repair alternative to the manufacturer's authorized dealership, and without competition, they can charge you a lot more.

RI PIRG has supported other Right to Repair bills in Rhode Island, and U.S. PIRG has been working to pass and enact bills very similar to H.7476.

**H.7476 is good for Rhode Island farmers.**

PIRG has done extensive research into Right to Repair issues on a number of fronts, including for farmers:

We've engaged with hundreds of farmers in our campaign. We hear one thing consistently when discussing Right to Repair: the danger of equipment downtime during key windows.

There can be limited windows to plant or harvest a large amount of land, and if the equipment you need is down, you could miss that window, and with it, your livelihood. There are often bottlenecks for repair during key windows, because when one farmer needs to be out planting, likely all the area farms are in the same boat. All the



dealership technicians could be occupied and you could be waiting for weeks for assistance.

PIRG released a report in 2023 which found that equipment downtime -- fueled by lack of repair options -- costs [\\$1.4 million annually for Rhode Island farmers.](#)

Farm equipment manufacturers have promised for years and years to address this issue, but continue to withhold from farmers the software and technical bulletins they give to dealerships. While manufacturers, specifically Deere, have added features to the software you can lease for 1 year, it isn't the full tool they let dealers have. On their website there is an asterisk when showing this paid tool, which leads to fine print that reminds you not all the features are available.

It's quite frustrating to farmers to pay extra for repair tools only to learn that they can't complete certain repairs, get certain technical information, and still need to call the dealer. It's time we solved this issue.

That's why we urge the committee to pass H.7476 to ensure Rhode Island farmers can repair their agricultural equipment.

Thank you,  
Henry Welch