

January 24, 2024

Representatives Kislak, Shallcross Smith, Spears, Ajello, Speakman, Carson, Cotter, Caldwell, Giraldo, and Potter

Members of the Innovation, Internet and Technology Committee

Re: Support for H 7095 - Digital Electronics Right to Repair

Thank you all for your interest in making sure that owners of “stuff” in Rhode Island are allowed to repair, resell, reuse and enjoy their purchases without having to beg the manufacturer for permission.

Ownership of things is central to this legislation. When we buy things, as distinct from renting them, we become responsible for all matters of use – including being responsible for our own safety and security. It is up to us to keep our purchases in good working order, or not. If we damage the value of our owned items – that’s our problem. Manufacturers that sell things are keen to avoid being responsible for your mistakes as disclaimed in their contracts. Marketing policies that tell you otherwise are, by definition, unfair and deceptive.

The legislation under consideration is carefully crafted to avoid conflicts with federal law. The requirements of the legislation are specific to restoring choice of repair services back to the legal owner. There are no changes to copyright, patent, or trade secret protections for manufacturers. There are no conflicts or changes to personal injury law. Cyber security, physical security and data security are not changed despite unsubstantiated projections.

Our more than 400 business and charitable organizational members collectively represent the secondary market for resale, reuse, refurbishment, repair and recycling of electronics used by consumers, education, business, industry, and government. We have worked together without partisanship for over a decade as a team dedicated to restoring our rights to repair the things we own. I hope you will take a few minutes to consider our perspectives.

If you have any questions about any particular products, technology, or services, our members are true experts in their fields. We have been called upon to testify before Congress, before the US Copyright Office and the Federal Trade Commission. The attached letters should provide some useful background for you on why Right to Repair is so important.

Regards,

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