



# Oregon Citizens' Utility Board

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**Testimony of Samuel Pastrick  
Regarding Oregon Right to Repair (HB 2688)  
Before the House Committee on Business and Labor  
Chair Barker, Vice Chairs Byan and Barreto, Member of the Committee**

My name is Samuel Pastrick and I'm the Outreach Manager at Oregon Citizens' Utility Board (CUB). I'm speaking today to encourage your support for Oregon "right to repair."

Oregon consumers and third-party repair shops deserve equal access to the same repair information as product manufacturers. Unsurprisingly, the manufacturers are dead-set on maintaining their repair monopoly. Adopting a right to repair law in Oregon would benefit all Oregonians by ending this inappropriate monopoly.

CUB, along with our allies on this topic, the Oregon Public Interest Research Group (OSPIRG), Free Geek, Garten, iFixit, and many others championed HB 2688 during this legislative session. This committee chose not to take up the issue. CUB, OSPIRG, and others now set our sights on 2020.

The central idea behind "right to repair" or "fair repair" is far more straightforward than opponents portray. In fact, you can distill right to repair down to the principle of "if you own it, you should be able to fix it."

Regardless of whether a consumer purchases a smartphone or a tractor, they don't truly own whatever they choose (or often need) to purchase unless they're empowered to either repair the product themselves or pay someone else to repair it for them. The reality, however, is that an increasing number of manufacturers refuse to share essential repair and diagnostic information with consumers and non-affiliated repair shops, for the simple reason that it benefits their bottom line.

Powerful corporations and a growing cadre of special interest groups all oppose right to repair laws – both at the state and federal level – because they stand to lose money. Wiping out competition to corner a product's market from end-to-end is good for business, but bad for you and me.

Consumers pay again and again, both up and downstream the product supply chain. Not only does a new iPhone today cost upward of \$1,000, the consumer who purchases the phone must then accept that if anything goes wrong, even something as common as a broken screen, their only viable repair option is an Apple or Apple-affiliated store. The same is true for various other products from a growing list of manufacturers.

Thankfully, states can rewrite this story. In fact, Massachusetts already paved the way in 2012 regarding automobile repair. As a direct result of that state-level bill, which simply required repair information transparency from the auto manufacturers, the industry adopted a nationwide policy beginning in 2019 for all new vehicles. The same can happen here in Oregon, especially if the Legislature starts with digital electronic devices (phone, tablet, e-reader, etc.).

Right to repair for digital electronic devices recognizes that we live in a digital world where people need daily access to the Internet, at minimum. In addition to reducing electronic waste, bringing right to repair to Oregon would create a new market for used digital electronic devices. This is important because roughly 20 percent of Oregonians go without a broadband (high speed Internet) subscription. In several Oregon counties, that number is higher than 30 percent.

While many factors contribute to Oregonians' low broadband adoption rate, the inability of many households, particularly those from rural and lower-income communities, to acquire inexpensive digital electronic devices aggravates the situation.

With Oregon right to repair, not only would consumers be able to extend the useful life of their various devices, they would find greater incentive to donate their old devices to third party repair shops, who would then distribute the used devices to individuals and families at low- or no-cost.

In fact, a handful of community organizations like Free Geek, Garten, and Next Step Recycling already do this important work but continue to lack essential repair and diagnostic information from the device manufacturers. Right to repair would provide these organizations, consumers generally, and a groundswell of new repair businesses across the state with the appropriate tools and resources to repair Oregonians' digital electronic devices.

For these reasons and more, CUB looks forward to advocating for Oregon right to repair in 2020.

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