

April 22, 2019

To: The Oregon House Committee on Business and Labor

Re: HB 2688

Chair Barker and Members of the Committee:

Garten Services is a nonprofit providing employment supports to adults with intellectual and cognitive disabilities. We have locations in Salem, Dallas and Eugene and serve individuals from Lane, Benton, Linn, Polk and Marion counties. Our mission is to support people with disabilities in their effort to contribute to the community through employment, career, and retirement opportunities. *Our actions increase society's awareness of human potential.*

You may be familiar with Garten, our folks pick up the recycling at state buildings and recycle the State's electronics, including computers, laptops and phones. The State awarded Garten the electronic recycling contract in 2007, not only because recycling provides great training and paid employment for people who otherwise might rely solely on state support, but also because keeping the material local gave Oregonians the chance to acquire affordable computers and electronics. We currently refurbish and sell computers and electronics to residents, small businesses, and schools. There is a significant demand in Oregon for reliable, affordable electronics.

We strive to refurbish and find new homes for as many of the items that come to us as possible. However, everyday, we see hundreds of relatively new electronics come in the door that we cannot refurbish. Sometimes it's because the manufacturer has made the casing very difficult to open without destroying key parts. Sometimes it's because the configuration is slightly different from standard and we cannot spend the labor required to learn a new machine by taking it apart. Lately we've noticed that many newer phones have personal information stored in such a way that it is impossible to guarantee it's completely erased and we must destroy them. The list goes on. Over the last decade and a half, we've seen manufacturers accelerate their designs for obsolescence so that today only a small fraction of the millions of pounds of electronics we receive can ever get back into consumer use.

The Right to Repair legislation would help give us the tools we need to keep electronics out of the trash into the hands of Oregonians who need them. The availability of a manual would help Garten and consumers repair more computers, phones and electronics and keep those materials out of our landfills and trash burners.

The State purchases millions of dollars worth of electronics a year. Let's keep those assets working as long as possible for the people who helped pay for them.

Sincerely,



Gaelen McAllister, Resource Development Manager

P.S. I'd love to show you what I mean. Call me for a tour of our facility. 503-581-1984

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