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Tuesday, March 2, 2021

From: Recycling Advocates, Policy Subcommittee

In support of: HB 2698: Relating to a right to repair consumer electronic equipment; prescribing an effective date.

Dear Chair,

We are writing on behalf of Recycling Advocates, Oregon's oldest grassroots nonprofit organization dedicated to creating a sustainable future through local efforts to reduce, reuse and recycle. Our board and members live, work, and play across Oregon. Recycling Advocates supports HB 2698, informally known as Right to Repair because it will: support Oregonians in waste prevention; reduce the flow of toxics to Oregon landfills and waterways; and help mitigate climate change.

Waste from consumer electronics is the fastest growing waste stream in the world, including here in Oregon. Research shows that e-waste contains at least 20% hard-to-recycle plastics, meaning the material will likely never be recycled. Through Right to Repair, Oregonians will have access to the materials and tools necessary to repair their personal electronic devices, therefore reducing the amount of waste generated. Beyond plastic, e-waste contains significant amounts of toxics, including many identified in Oregon DEQ's priority toxics list, such as lead, mercury, and cadmium. When disposed of, these toxics are released into Oregon landfills and waterways. Again, through repair and reuse, fewer toxic materials have the potential to make their way into our environment. Finally, Right to Repair will help mitigate climate change. When Oregonians are able to repair their goods, fewer new products are purchased, reducing the amount of energy used in manufacturing, which reduces the amount of greenhouse gas emitted. Oregon has seen firsthand the impacts of climate change in the last year alone - from devastating fires to unprecedented winter weather. HB 2698 is essential to a state-wide shift to a circular economy and ecologically sustainable future. Through reuse and waste reduction, Oregon can lead the nation in Right to Repair.

The State of Oregon has a long history of leadership through environmental stewardship and legislation. The opportunity to fix and repair owned consumer electronic equipment is key to a robust system in which Oregonians create less waste, save resources, both financial and natural, and help mitigate climate change, for today and for the future of Oregon.

Thank you for reviewing our support and I encourage you to support HB 2698.

Recycling Advocates, Policy Subcommittee