

February 9, 2023

Testimony in Support of SB 542 Right to Repair

Chair Sollman

Vice-Chair Findley

Honorable Members, Senate Committee on Energy and Environment

Thank you for the opportunity to share my support for SB 542 on behalf of Garten Services, Inc., a not-for-profit providing employment, training, and other opportunities to Oregonians with significant disabilities since 1970. Garten serves approximately 500 people with disabilities annually through our (3) Salem branches and our branches in Eugene and Dallas, Oregon.

One way Garten provides jobs and training opportunities for people with and without disabilities is through our Recycling business. Garten's commitment to sustainability brings together our mission to create job opportunities with our recycling services, refurbishing of discarded electronics and sustainability education. We help our communities not only learn how to better recycle, but also that re-use of products is better environmentally than recycling.

I appreciate your consideration of this bill based on these factors:

- This bill will allow more items an extended lifespan, decreasing both resource consumption and pollution in the need to manufacture new items, as well as the environmental impact of discarded items.
- This bill supports social justice by decreasing costs to consumers—most positively impacting historically marginalized communities and lower income citizens.
- This bill supports small business entrepreneurs and jobs by providing the simple tools needed to economically repair and resell products that otherwise would be a cost to society.
- This bill provides cost savings to government and Oregon citizens by reducing the overall cost to recycle or dispose of items. The more items which can be repaired/refurbished and resold reduces the replacement and disposal costs to the entity as well as the overall system.
~To illustrate: Garten's resale of refurbished electronics not only provides jobs for technicians, and in retail and online sales, but it also is crucial to cover the cost to process and recycle the high percentage of items which cannot be refurbished and are recycled at a loss.
- This bill will grow and protect local jobs. Making it easier to repair items will increase Garten's opportunities to hire people with disabilities to refurbish and resell electronics and also help small local electronics businesses and computer repair shops to repair and re-sell items locally. These businesses are also often customers who buy parts from Garten, creating further job opportunities.

Thank you so much for your interest in supporting Oregon consumers and our beautiful state environment in considering this bill. This bill will help Garten provide meaningful training and jobs for people with disabilities and reinforce statewide sustainability habits by making it easier for us all to fix things rather than throwing them away.

Timothy Rocak, CEO Garten Services, Inc.

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