

Support for Maryland Senate Bill 723

Finance Committee

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March 10, 2020

Hello, my name is Andrew Rogers from Linthicum Heights, Maryland and I am voicing my support for Maryland Senate Bill 723. I am a computer engineer that works on embedded systems and software for analytics for Mahlet Consulting in Burtonsville, Maryland, though my opinions expressed today are my own and not necessarily those of my employer.

The Right to Repair one's own equipment is something that is very important to me, as I personally have found that repairing and upgrading my own equipment has saved myself and my family thousands of dollars over the years that would have otherwise had to have been spent on replacing defective or underperforming desktop computers, laptops, phones, and audio/visual equipment.

However, recently I've noticed that I have had to become more selective about which equipment I purchase, due to a worrying trend in devices made by electronic manufacturers. Repair documentation and schematic diagrams have become scarcer and scarcer for popular electronics like those made by companies like Apple. Parts that used to be freely available have become difficult to find on the open market due to manufacturers intentionally locking down their supply chains, enabling them to essentially become the only party that is able to perform the repair in many markets, often at exorbitant prices. I believe this is morally reprehensible and should not be permissible in a free society with an open market. Often these prices are so cost-prohibitive for many individuals that they have no choice but to buy a new device, often incurring debt in the process, as many cannot risk not being connected in today's fast-paced society. If parts and documentation was more readily available, individuals and independent repair shops could repair these devices at fractions of the draconian prices demanded by the original equipment manufacturers.

Many will tell you that the unauthorized repair of these devices is too difficult or hazardous, when, in fact, nothing could be farther from the truth. Since elementary school onwards, I personally have repaired scores of Macintosh and PC-based desktops, as well as at least four of my own smartphones. If sixth-grade me can repair his own Apple iBook with nothing more than his trusty toolset and some pictures from iFixit's website, believe me, you can, too. A few years ago, when I was in between computer jobs, working at a UPS package

handling facility to make ends meet, I dropped my LG phone onto the concrete floor while on the job, shattering the screen in the process. This happened twice in the same year, but each time I was able to go online, purchase a screen for \$40.00, and install it myself, saving hundreds of dollars in the process and essentially keeping two phones from being disposed of in landfills.

Anyone who also suggests that there is some vague national security threat to allowing personal or third-party repair is not being honest with you. If you have any questions about security of your devices, I would be happy to answer any of your questions myself or connect you to one of my expert friends in our local information security industry.