



March 11, 2020

The Honorable Delores G. Kelley, Chairman
Senate Finance Committee
3 East Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Re: SB 723 - Consumer Protection – Right to Repair - Oppose

Dear Chair Kelley:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on SB 723. On behalf of the Marine Trades Association of Maryland representing over 350 marine businesses in Maryland we ask that you oppose this bill as written.

As an industry, we are always striving to give the consumer a better experience by having certified technicians work on specific engines and to keep the boater out on the water with less down time when their boat is in the shop. This is why the recreational boating dealerships and manufacturers have together invested millions of dollars in educating, training and certifying technicians. What was once repaired with a screwdriver and some 'know-how' has been replaced with highly specialized technical skills and computer software. If a technician is not up to date with manufacturer repair and service practices, they could unwittingly be putting the user and their families at risk when they are out on the water. There is a reason that these R2R bills across the country exempt automobiles – because it was recognized how dangerous it would be to tamper with the 'chip' that controls steering or fuse load. So yes, we support the right to repair, but we don't support doing so without the proper training or doing so in a way that results in unsafe boating. Modifying engines also can damage confidence in pre-owned inventory for our industry.

As drafted, this 'Right to Repair' legislation would apply to all off-highway engines and have serious effects on the wellbeing of the recreational boating businesses and customers. We understand the origination of these R2R bills across the country was to allow for access to cell phone repairs. We understand the motivation there. However, granting untrained consumers access to the schematics for boats could result in unsafe boating and improper emissions. Therefore, we cannot support this bill.

The Marine Trades Association of Maryland is a 501(c)(6) organization representing the boating trades and the recreational boater in Maryland. The industry is a \$3.5 billion industry in Maryland and supports nearly 18,000 jobs.

I appreciate your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Susan Zellers
Executive Director

cc: Members, Senate Finance Committee