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Letters to the editor

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Right to repair crosses party lines: president of auto group

With talk of a restructuring plan for the automotive industry, I would like to contribute positively to that dialogue.

Little notice has been given to a massive looming economic and consumer issue. There is legislation making the rounds called Bill C- 273, the Right to Repair Bill, which protects Canadians' right to choose where they repair their vehicles while preserving thousands of jobs.

This right to repair crosses all party lines. From an economic standpoint, the impact is clear. The automotive aftermarket employs 45% of the entire industry, for a total of more than 410,000 workers across Canada.

These workers and businesses are looking to Parliament to see if their segment of the industry has a future.

The consumer choice issue is even more evident. Vehicle manufacturers are restricting access to the tools, training and diagnostic-and- repair software to the dealer network and leaving out independent installers and retail chains.

This prevents the aftermarket repair facilities from repairing late model vehicles, effectively eliminating consumer choice (the car owner has no choice but to go to a dealer to service the car).

Car companies produce this information to fix something on a vehicle that the consumer already owns.

Therefore, the consumer has the right to access the software, tools and training to support their own investment when they seek out repairs, regardless of where they go for those repairs.

The aftermarket is simply asking for the opportunity to keep running their businesses in communities across the country.

Business should thrive or fail based on quality of service and consumer demand. The highly trained technicians who work in the aftermarket should be given access to the tools of their trade.

The legislation will be debated in Parliament on May 11 and voted on May 13.

Canadians are strongly encouraged to contact their members of Parliament to request all-party support for consumer choice and jobs preservation.

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president of the Automotive Industries Association

of Canada (AIA)

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