



## Protecting consumer choice for repairing electronic devices

Rep. Mia Gregerson and Sen. Derek Stanford

### *The problem: Restricted repair choice. Environmental impacts.*

- **Manufacturers are not providing parts and information to the public and independent shops.** When something breaks, you fix it. That's just common sense. But when the manufacturer or their "authorized technician" refuses to share the parts, tools or information needed to fix your device, they monopolize the market, pushing up prices and encouraging people to buy new. Repair restrictions make it harder to keep the laptops, cell phones, and appliances we use every day in working condition. The result is surging repair costs and a massive amount of waste – over [174,000 tons](#) every year in Washington alone.
- **Electronic waste is the fastest growing waste stream in the world.** The U.S. EPA reports that e-waste is now the fastest growing part of our [domestic municipal waste stream](#). E-waste contains toxic heavy metals like [lead, mercury, and cadmium](#) which can end up in our landfills and then seep to the bottom, potentially impacting groundwater or leachate quality. New electronic devices rely on critical minerals which means more mining and manufacturing.

### *The legislation this year focuses on consumer electronics & home appliances*

**Washington's Right to Repair bill** requires manufacturers of digital electronic products to provide the parts, tools, and information necessary for an independent repair provider to repair consumer electronics. The bill language mirrors the 2024 Right to Repair law Oregon passed with support from Google. Home appliances that include digital components and consumer electronics like cell phones, laptops, and tablets are covered by this bill.

### *Benefits of repair*

- **Repair saves families \$\$\$.** Research shows that repair can save the average household ~\$382 per year, totaling almost [\\$1.15 billion](#) per year for Washington families. Keeping and repairing devices leaves more money in consumers' pockets at a time when costs are rising.
- **Repair reduces emissions and avoids landfilling.** Making a single phone produces the planet-warming equivalent of [122.7 pounds](#) of CO2 and requires 295 pounds of raw materials. If Americans held on to our phones one year longer, it would have the climate benefits equivalent to taking [636,000 cars off the road](#).
- **Repair helps small businesses.** When manufacturers unfairly restrict repair information only to their authorized providers, small businesses are shut out, leaving them unable to repair people's devices. Not only do these businesses struggle to stay afloat, but their local communities are left without repair options. Repair restrictions do not allow for sufficient competition, which leads to [lower prices and higher quality service](#). Repair creates local jobs!
- **Repair bridges the digital divide.** In an age where being connected is increasingly necessary for one's success, access to affordable electronic devices can make a big difference. Repair increases access to affordable refurbished electronics and decreases costs of fixes, avoiding expensive purchases of new products. School districts need access to repair parts and information, so they can maintain equipment, saving taxpayer dollars and improving digital access for students.

### *FTC dispels data privacy, IP risk myths*

**The Federal Trade Commission (FTC)** studied Right to Repair for two years and considered evidence from proponents and manufacturers. The result? A [unanimous report](#) confirming that repair restrictions hurt consumers and small businesses, and that manufacturers' arguments against Right to Repair – such as assertions that repair access undermines safety, privacy, security or intellectual property – are unfounded, with "scant evidence" to support them. This issue has been fully vetted and it's time for action.

### *Bottom line*

Right to Repair protects consumers and small businesses, keeps devices affordable, and cuts toxic electronic waste. Five states - New York, California, Colorado, Minnesota, and Oregon - have passed laws protecting consumers' Right to Repair their electronics. [Seven out of ten Washington voters](#) support the Right to Repair. Washingtonians deserve the same access to repair that these other states now enjoy.

